



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Green Mountain National Forest
Rochester Ranger District

www.fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl

99 Ranger Rd.
Rochester, VT 05767
Tel. (802) 767-4261
FAX (802) 767-4777

File Code: 1950

Date: May 9, 2018

Invitation for Comments Early Successional Habitat Creation Project

Dear Interested Parties:

I am pleased to provide you the opportunity to comment on the proposed Early Successional Habitat Creation (ESHC) Project located on the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF), Manchester Ranger District. The project includes management activities to achieve multiple resource benefits as provided by direction in the 2006 GMNF Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The project area is located on National Forest System lands within the towns of Arlington, Dover, Glastenbury, Jamaica, Landgrove, Manchester, Mount Holly, Mount Tabor, Peru, Pownal, Readsboro, Searsburg, Shaftsbury, Stamford, Stratton, Sunderland, Wallingford, Wardsboro, Weston, Wilmington, and Woodford in Bennington, Rutland, Windham and Windsor Counties, Vermont.

The project is designed to increase the acreage of the regenerating age class (0-9 years old) of vegetation in order to move the forest toward its desired future condition identified in the Forest Plan. It would also improve habitat for neotropical migrant passerine birds (or perching birds) and other wildlife species that require early successional habitats.

A detailed description of the proposal and associated maps showing where proposed activities are located can be found on our project website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53629>. The documents are also available for review at the Manchester Ranger Station located in Manchester Center, Vermont and at town offices for the towns in which project activities are proposed.

The ESHC project is subject to National Environmental Policy Act regulations requiring the preparation of an environmental assessment to disclose the resource effects from the proposed action. As the Responsible Official for this project, I am interested in hearing from you regarding any aspect of the proposal during the 30-day comment period. Your feedback will help us identify issues related to the proposal, determine whether any alternatives need to be considered, focus our effects analysis on resources of concern, and document the results in the environmental assessment as the basis for me to decide how to implement the project.

Comment Period

The ESHC Project is subject to the project level pre-decisional administrative review (objection) process found at 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B. This regulation states that in order to be eligible to submit an objection, you will need to provide timely specific written comments during any period designated for public comment. This 30-day comment period is the only designated opportunity for public comment that fulfills this purpose.

Comments will be accepted for a 30-day period following publication of the ESHC Project legal notice in the *Rutland Herald*, our newspaper of record. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the



exclusive means for calculating the comment period. Do not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period. Individuals or entities who submit comments during this 30-day comment period may be eligible to submit an objection when the draft Decision Notice for this project is ready for public review.

How to Submit Comments

Comments received in response to this invitation, including name and address of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public review.

In order for your comments to be considered, they must be submitted to me in c/o Brett Hillman, in one of the following ways:

1. Written Comments

- Mail: USDA Forest Service, ATTN: Brett Hillman, 2538 Depot Street, Manchester Center, VT 05255
- FAX: 802-362-1251, ATTN: Brett Hillman; ESHC Project
- Forest Service online comment system available at:
<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=53629>

2. Hand Delivered Comments

- Written comments can be hand delivered to the Manchester Ranger Station at 2538 Depot Street, Manchester Center, VT 05255 during normal business hours, Monday to Friday, excluding holidays (8:00 am – 4:30 pm)

Please be sure to include the following information with your comments to be eligible to submit an objection:

1. Name and postal address (phone number and email address is recommended but not required)
2. Title of the proposed action (ESHC Project)
3. Specific written comments regarding the proposed action (comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider)
4. Signature or other verification of identity upon request.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Brett Hillman by calling 802-362-2307, extension 7217 or emailing him at bretthillman@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your interest in the Green Mountain National Forest and the ESHC Project. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

/s/ David Francomb
DAVID FRANCOMB
District Ranger

Enclosures: Notice of Proposed Action and Opportunity to Comment
Project Maps