

**Legal Notice
Opportunity to Comment
Restoration of Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout
to Las Animas Creek Watershed
Gila National Forest
Black Range Ranger District
Sierra County, New Mexico**

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service, Gila National Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Region, and Turner Ranch Properties LP, has prepared a preliminary environmental assessment (EA) for Restoration of Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout to Las Animas Creek Watershed.

The project proponents propose to restore native Rio Grande cutthroat trout to approximately 32 miles of stream in the Las Animas Creek watershed located on the Gila National Forest and the Ladder Ranch in Sierra County, New Mexico. The project would entail the application of the chemical rotenone, a piscicide, to the project area streams to remove nonnative fish prior to restoration of the native trout.

Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from:

Bryan Bakevich, Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout Biologist
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
(505) 476-8058 or Bryan.Bakevich@state.nm.us

The proposed project is an activity implementing a land management plan and not authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and is subject to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B.

EA Availability

The preliminary EA is available on-line at each of the three participating agencies:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/gila/landmanagement/projects>

<http://wildlife.state.nm.us/recreation/fishing/index.htm>

http://www.fws.gov/southwest/federal_assistance/index.html

The preliminary EA and supporting documentation are also available for review at:

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
One Wildlife Way
Santa Fe, NM 87504

Gila National Forest – Black Range Ranger District
1804 N. Date Street
Truth or Consequences, NM 87091

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program
500 Gold Ave. SW, Suite 8514
Albuquerque, NM 87102

If you would like a hard copy of the EA sent to you, please contact Bryan Bakevich at the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish using the contact information above.

How to Comment

Specific written comments (§218.2) on the proposed project will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of this notice in the Truth or Consequences Herald. If the comment period ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Only individuals or entities (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) about this proposed project or activity during this or another public comment period established by the Responsible Official will be eligible to file an objection. Other requirements to be eligible to submit an objection are defined by 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(3) and include name, postal address, title of the project and signature or other verification of identity upon request and the identity of the individual or entity who authored the comments. Individual members of an entity must submit their own individual comments in order to have eligibility to object as an individual. A timely submission will be determined as outlined in 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(4). It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted. Names and contact information submitted with comments will become part of the public record and may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

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 (36 CFR 218.2).

Specific written comments must be submitted in person or by mail, fax, e-mail to:

Steve Robertson, Chief, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 1306, 500 Gold Ave. SW, Ste 8514, Albuquerque, NM 87103.
Telephone: (505) 248-7465, FAX: (505) 248-7471
e-mail to: fw2_wsfr@fws.gov

In the subject line, please refer to “NMDGF Las Animas Project Draft EA”

Electronic comments including attachments may be submitted by email in MS Word (.doc), Word Perfect (.wpd), Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), and hypertext markup language (.html).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider and employer.