



United States  
Department  
of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Canyon Lakes  
Ranger District

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File Code: 1950-1

Date: December 1, 2006

Dear Interested Party:

The Canyon Lakes Ranger District of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests is seeking your comment on an application from Larimer County to build a public safety radio communication facility on the summit of Middle Bald Mountain. The issues, concerns, and information you submit during this public comment period will help with the Forest Service's analysis of and the eventual decisions made on this proposal.

### General Description of the Analysis Area

Middle Bald Mountain is located approximately 40 miles northwest of Fort Collins and approximately five miles southwest of the Red Feather Lakes area in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 9, Township 9 North, Range 74 West (see attached map). The summit of Middle Bald Mountain, approximately 11,000 feet above sea level, is accessible via the Killpecker Creek Trail. The nearest motorized access is within approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile of the summit on low-standard National Forest Service Road 517 (NFSR 517).

There are no recreation facilities on Middle Bald Mountain. The area is used by hikers and horseback riders traveling on the Killpecker Creek Trail. The trail rises very briefly above tree-line on the western flank of Middle Bald Mountain, and then dips back into the trees. There is not a trail across the alpine tundra meadow to the rock-outcrop summit. Visitors have expansive views from Western Colorado to Kansas and from southern Wyoming to central Colorado from the summit (see photos).



Figure 1: Looking east toward Middle Bald summit from treeline on the Killpecker Trail



Figure 2: Looking southeast into Cache la Poudre Canyon from Middle Bald summit

### Description of County's Proposed Facility

Radio communication in the upper reaches of the Cache la Poudre Canyon is currently spotty. Emergency radio communication is increasingly essential in that area because of increased recreational use and residential development in and around the canyon. Rural, County, State, and Federal fire personnel, the County Sheriff's Department, multiple-agency emergency management personnel, public



works employees, and others are experiencing the need for increased radio communication capability both within the Canyon and between agencies. In addition, the Department of Homeland Security is mandating interagency radio communication operability for security purposes. Toward that end, the County has elected to phase in transition from VHF to the State's 800 MHz radio communication system and several omni-directional antennas.

Installation of an 800 MHz radio communication facility on Middle Bald Mountain, in combination with other recent improvements in the Larimer County radio communication network, will improve both County radio communications within the upper reaches of the Canyon and the County and State's interagency communication capability.

Larimer County is proposing to construct a public safety communication facility at the summit of Middle Bald Mountain. Many specifics of this action are subject to refinement as the Forest Service's study proceeds. As currently envisioned, an approximately 40-60 foot, three-legged, lattice-style, non-reflective tower would be fixed on top of the rock outcrop at the Middle Bald Mountain summit. There would be no guy wires. That tower would carry two microwave dishes approximately six feet in diameter with grey covers. A 360-square foot building to house the radio equipment and emergency generator would be located on a nearly-level area of alpine tundra below the rock outcrop of the summit. It would be constructed of a concrete slab floor and pre-formed, exposed-aggregate walls.

Electrical power for the facility would be provided by overhead lines to be constructed along the north side of the NFSR 517 from the Elkhorn Creek Trailhead at County Road 162 to tree-line on Middle Bald Mountain. The powerline would then be cabled underground across the alpine tundra meadow above tree-line to the building.

For construction, and operation and maintenance, an access road would be needed from NFSR 517 to the summit. The proposal is to restrict access to site maintenance personnel use only.

Middle Bald Mountain is not designated in the 1997 Forest Plan Revision as a communication site. A Forest Plan amendment may be required.

### **Call for Interest from Potential Site Users (Site Prospectus)**

Forest Plan direction and Forest Service policy are to maximize utilization of communication sites. The Canyon Lakes Ranger District is seeking input from other electronic communication providers who would be interested in locating at this site, if it were designated. Facility options could include:

- 1) Public safety facility (restricted to government and emergency service providers), **or**
- 2) Low-power commercial facility (government and emergency service providers + non-government low-power radio providers like ham radio, AM radio, commercial wireless voice, data carriers, etc.), **or**
- 3) High-power commercial facility (the above + high-power telecommunication providers like FM radio, television, cellular, etc.).

### **Suggestions on Scope**

The Forest Service invites citizens, agencies, and organizations to make suggestions about the specifics of the scope of the analysis. We would like to hear from you:

- What alternatives should be considered?
- What other actions should be considered?
- What environmental effects should be considered?
- What steps to reduce potential adverse impacts should be considered?

The analysis will address the estimated impacts of the County's proposed facility, the estimated impacts of alternative actions that would meet the need, the No Action alternative, and the estimated impacts of any connected actions.

After we have analyzed your inputs, determined the study scope, and formulated some draft alternatives to the County's proposed facility, we anticipate holding a public meeting to discuss what alternatives and issues the analysis will address.

When completed, analysis results will be published and available for public review.

To be fully considered in the project analysis and to keep the planning process on schedule, comments should be received prior to January 12, 2007.

Please send comments to the attention of:

Communications Site  
Mangi Environmental Group  
7915 Jones Branch Dr  
McLean VA 22102

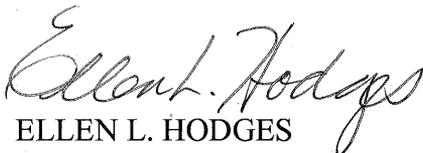
OR

Send e-mail comments to: [larimercounty@mangi.com](mailto:larimercounty@mangi.com)

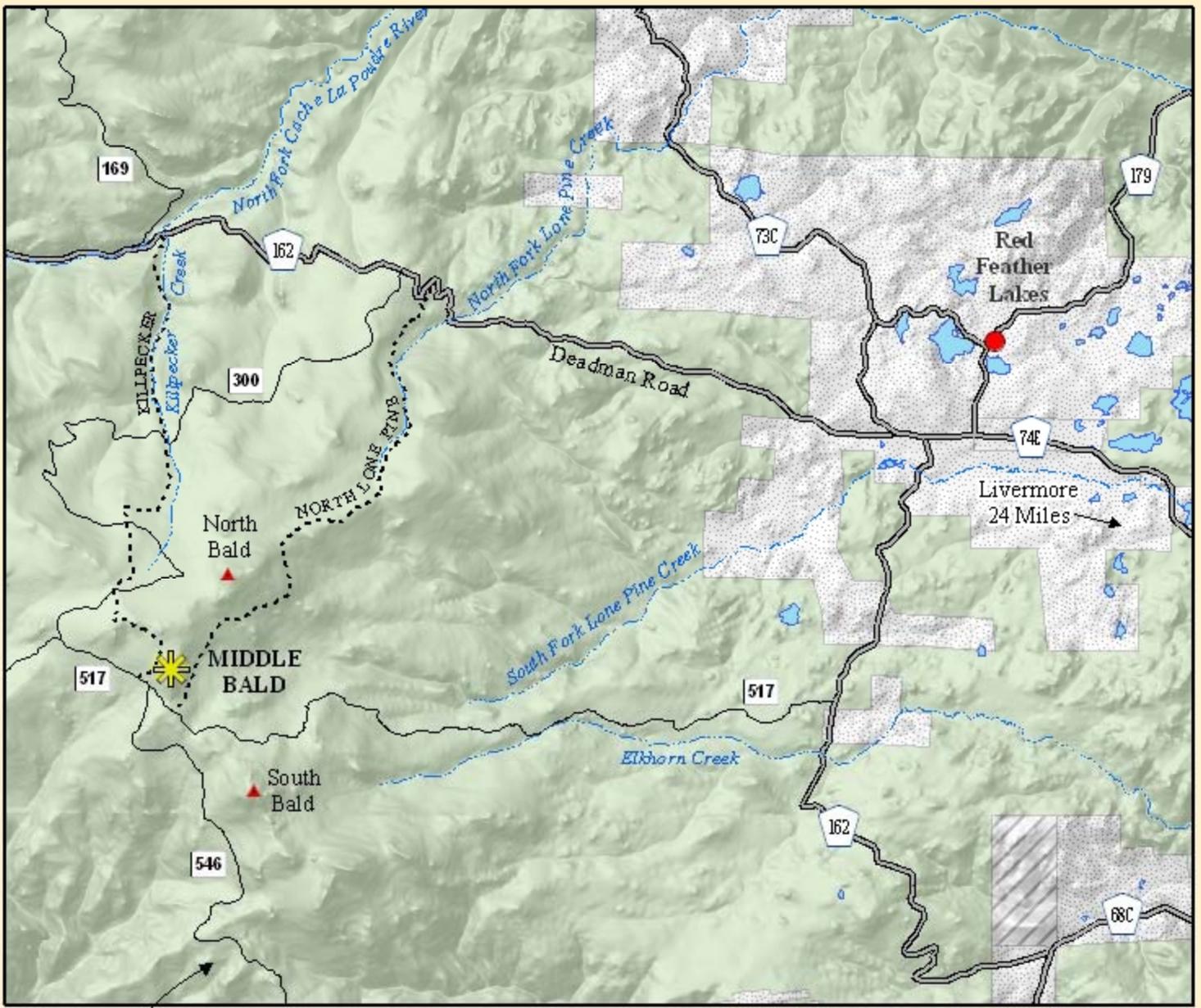
If you need further information on the County's proposed facility, please see <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/arnf/projects/ea-projects/clrd/commsite/index.shtml>, or contact Carol Kruse at [ckruse@fs.fed.us](mailto:ckruse@fs.fed.us) or 970-295-6663.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to object to the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 218.6. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address.

Sincerely,

  
ELLEN L. HODGES  
District Ranger

cc: Carol Kruse, Ellen Hodges, Karen Roth, [drowe@larimer.org](mailto:drowe@larimer.org)



## Vicinity Map



### Disclaimer

The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised. Using GIS products for the purposes other than those for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification. For more information contact: Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, Pawnee National Grassland, 2150 Centre Avenue, Building E, Ft. Collins, CO 80526, (970) 295-6600

### Legend

- County Road
- National Forest System Road
- Trails
- National Forest Land
- Private Land
- State Land
- Lakes
- Streams
- Town of Red Feather Lakes

0 1.5 Miles

## Larimer County Comm Site



UTM Projection  
NAD 1983  
Zone 13N, meters

Created Using ArcGIS 9.0  
By Janice Naybr, November 20, 2006