



File Code: 1500/2700

Date: June 26, 2008

Pinedale District Permit Holders

RE: 2008 National Rainbow Gathering in Big Sandy Area

Dear Permit Holder:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Rainbow Family has selected the Big Sandy area on the southern end of the Pinedale Ranger District for its 2008 Rainbow Gathering. The Rainbow Family, which essentially identifies itself as a non-affiliated, unorganized group of people with generally similar views, selects a site for a national gathering each year on public lands.

Because this event is unorganized, it is difficult to estimate the actual number of individuals who will choose to attend this event in any given year. As many as 30,000 individuals have attended past national gatherings. The main portion of this group will gather on July 4<sup>th</sup> and remain at the gathering site through that weekend. However, we know from past experience and anticipate that many individuals will choose to remain near the gathering area throughout the summer months until snowfall.

As you are aware, the Big Sandy area is a popular site for local and out-of-State visitors and includes the Big Sandy Resort, 17 Recreation Residences in the Temple Creek Area, the Big Sandy Trailhead/Campground, and a popular dispersed camping area in the Big Sandy Openings. In addition, this area was pre-selected by the Boy Scouts of America several years ago for a Forest Service sponsored Order of the Arrow Scout Project in July of 2008.

Earlier this month, the Forest Service met with Rainbow Family members in an attempt to persuade them to move the 2008 Gathering to another site on the Bridger-Teton National Forest in order to avoid potential impacts to non-Rainbow affiliated Forest visitors and the Boy Scout work project within the popular Big Sandy area. However, the Rainbow Family has decided to remain in the Big Sandy area for their 2008 Gathering in spite of other areas offered.

An Incident Management Team has been assigned to this event to address the 2008 Gathering in coordination with other cooperating agencies such as the Sublette County EMS. This Incident Team is made up of Forest Service Law Enforcement Officers, an Information Officer, and a Resource Specialist familiar with Rainbow Gatherings from past years. This Team will coordinate with the Pinedale Ranger District staff and me throughout this event.

The Incident Team's primary objectives are to:

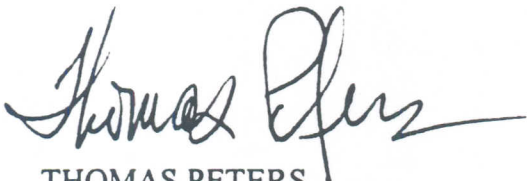
1. Ensure the safety of Forest Service and other agency employees and the public in relation to this event;



2. Establish and maintain communications between cooperating agencies, private landowners, permittees, business, the communities, and those who attend the Rainbow Gathering; and
3. Protect resources and coordinate rehabilitation efforts.

It is understandable that some of you may be concerned regarding your personal safety and protection of your private investments on National Forest System lands near this incident. We share those concerns. I recommend that you speak directly with the National Incident Management Team, Incident Information Officer, Rita Vollmer, if you have specific questions or concerns regarding this event at 801/791.2390.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Peters", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

THOMAS PETERS  
Pinedale District Ranger



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAY 28 2008

To All:

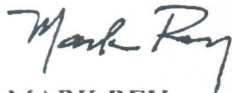
As we prepare for the 2008 Annual Rainbow Family Gathering in Wyoming, several Gatherers have suggested that it would be helpful to again clarify the Forest Service's approach to the 2008 Gathering:

The Agency's authority to require group use permits is in place and has been upheld by the Courts. However, the Forest Service does have discretion with respect to the enforcement of this authority. Pursuant to that discretion and a previously negotiated protocol recognizing the unique nature of the Rainbow Family, we will implement the following process to facilitate a Gathering in accordance with the Forest Service Regulations:

1. The Forest Service has forwarded several sites on the National Forests in Wyoming for the participants in the 2008 Gathering to consider as gathering sites.
2. The participants in the 2008 Gathering will select 2 or 3 alternate locations for the Forest Service to consider as soon as possible. Initial scouting of sites is being done in cooperation with local Forest Service personnel.
3. The Forest Service will quickly evaluate the sites (if other than the recommended Forest Service sites) and give the participants in the 2008 Gathering an answer on suitability before Spring Council.
4. Beginning at Spring Council and after a site has been mutually agreed upon, an operating plan would be prepared in advance of the Gathering in collaboration with the participants in the 2008 Gathering. The plan would be subject to mutual modifications as the Gathering sets up. For this purpose the Forest Service is committed to meeting on the land daily with Gatherers involved with the 2008 Gathering during the Gathering.
5. No permit would be issued. The Forest Service would exercise its discretion and refrain from any enforcement of a permit requirement provided that the operating plan is followed. Failure to comply with the operating plan will result in enforcement of the current regulations.

6. All laws will be enforced on the National Forests similar to other recreation gatherings and forest visitor use.
7. The Gathering will be managed thru the Forest Service Incident Command System for the purpose of addressing social and resource impacts.

Please feel free to circulate within the region and with Gathers involved with the 2008 Gathering. Welcome home.



MARK REY

***Rehabilitation Plan***  
***2008 National Rainbow Family Gathering***  
***Bridger-Teton National Forest***  
***Pinedale Ranger District***

This plan provides specifications, methods, and guidelines to facilitate the clean up and rehabilitation of the areas impacted by the Rainbow Family Gathering participants. This plan is intended to be a guide to assist Rainbow Family members and Forest Service personnel to better understand the objectives and expected end-results of the cleanup and rehabilitation process.

The National Incident Management Team was given a Delegation of Authority by the Forest Supervisor to manage the Rainbow Family Gathering on the Bridger-Teton National Forests. The Resource Advisors from the NIMT worked with the local district to become aware and identify any significant forest resources that may be impacted within the gathering site.

From the beginning, members of the Rainbow Family have been informed of sensitive resource areas and concerns within the Gathering site. Forest resource specialists will continue to work with the Family during the rehabilitation process. Many of the site-specific rehabilitation needs have already been identified. However, additional design work will be necessary after most of the event participants have departed and the actual site impacts can be determined.

It is expected that all rehabilitation work will be completed no later than 8/8/08.

**The following are rehabilitation objectives designed to return the site to near pre-Gathering conditions:**

1. Minimize or contain surface erosion, particularly if the project area is susceptible to accelerated erosion.
2. Avoid sedimentation in lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands
3. Maintain or re-establish nutrient cycling as quickly as possible. Vegetative cover should be re-established for nutrient uptake, and debris or mulch left for nutrient input.
4. Exclude or reduce infestations of noxious weeds or other invasive non-native species on disturbed sites.
5. Prevent permanent impairment of ecosystem structure and function (WO Amendment 2500-2000-2, Burned-Area Emergency Rehabilitation, 2523.02)
6. Maintain, wherever possible, natural structure and function of ecosystems and the integrity of plant genetics, especially in high quality conservation areas such as Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas, Wilderness

Areas, connection corridors for fragmented habitat, and critical habitat for federally listed Threatened and Endangered species.

### **RIPARIAN AREAS**

1. All water lines will be removed. Rehabilitation of the springs will be done as per methods identified by Forest Service personnel after the Gathering.
2. Remove all soil, rock, and vegetation used for water diversions or impoundments.
3. Stream crossings will be the last areas rehabilitated prior to leaving the site. This will ensure that no further damage will occur to the creek and riparian areas. Pull all constructed crossings and materials away from stream channels.
4. All creek crossings will be returned to pre-gathering condition. Seeding of riparian vegetation in these areas may be required. Erosion control measures will be designated on-the-ground by Forest Service personnel.
5. All borrow sites utilized for mud bridges repaired.

### **EROSION/SOIL COMPACTION**

1. To minimize erosion, all trail segments and disturbed areas on slopes over 5 percent will have erosion control structures in place prior to 8/6/08.
  - a. Space waterbars 25 feet apart on slopes greater than 30 percent and 50 feet apart on slopes between 5 and 30 percent.
  - b. Construct waterbars at a 30 to 45 degree angle to the trail.
  - c. A maximum 6-inch berm height is acceptable.
  - d. Downslope end of waterbar needs to be opened and of adequate length to allow free flow of water off the trail and to prevent runoff from re-entering the trail.
  - e. Construct waterbars on all stream crossing approaches, regardless of slope value. Ensure approach waterbar outlets are of adequate distance from streams to prevent discharge reaching water.
  - f. Place obstructions on any newly created trails entering the river.
  - g. Erosion mats or similar erosion control measures will be placed on all trails and disturbed areas on slopes greater than 45 percent or as determined by on the ground Forest Service personnel.

2. Ensure last crew down trail reconstructs any trampled waterbars.
3. All trails created or enlarged by the group will be obliterated. Trail sections greater than six feet in width will require seeding
4. Areas of exposed mineral soil will be scarified and seeded. To ensure revegetation within one growing season, seeding will be completed by 8/1/06.
5. Parking areas may require mechanical scarification and seeding. Detrimentially compacted portions of parking areas may require mechanical subsoiling and seeding. These areas will be identified by Forest Service personnel as lots are cleared.
6. Created roads will be blocked and returned to a natural condition.
7. Selected areas of concentrated use will need scarification. Concentrated use areas include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Kiddie Village
  - b. Bus Village
  - c. A Camp
  - d. Trading Village
  - e. All kitchen and large camp areas
  - f. Additional areas identified as participants depart

### **GARBAGE/WASTE**

1. Physical evidence of human presence created by the Rainbow Family will be removed from the site or rearranged to present a natural appearance.
2. All refuse, litter and foreign material will be removed and disposed of at a recognized sanitary landfill or recycling center in accordance with County and State regulations.
3. Fire pits will be filled with the native material that was removed from the pit. Rocks will be scattered to appear natural to the surrounding area. Holes where rocks were removed will be filled in.
4. Latrines will be covered with native material originally removed from the pit, and mounded with excess material to allow for settling. All fecal material will be completely covered with ash or lime before covering with soil.
5. Compost piles will only include natural decomposable material. Compost piles and gray water bumps will be covered with dirt and returned to a natural condition.

6. All structures and facilities will be totally dismantled. Man-made material will be removed from the site. Other material will be scattered to achieve a natural appearance.
7. All string, rope, wire, twine, etc. will be removed from trees and hauled to a landfill.
8. All abandoned animals will be removed by the Rainbow Family.
9. All abandoned vehicles will be moved to suitable facilities at the expense of the Rainbow Family.
10. Any fences and improvements damaged by Gathering participants will be repaired to Forest Service standards
11. **Ensure ALL garbage is removed and disposed of properly from the entire gathering area..**

**SEEDING SPECIFICATIONS**

1. Seeding is not required in heavily timbered areas (>60 ft<sup>2</sup> of basal area).
2. Seed mixtures shall be certified .04 percent or less weed free. Certification tags will be provided to Forest Service resource personnel.
3. The seeding rate will be at 20-25 lbs/acre. A proper seedbed will be prepared by scarification of the soil with appropriate tools, such as rakes. The seed should be spread and worked into the soil by raking. The seed should be covered by no more than 1/2 inch of soil.

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>% OF MIX BY WEIGHT</b>
Big bluegrass ( <i>Poa ampla</i> ) or Canby bluegrass ( <i>Poa canbyi</i> )	4
Mountain brome grass ( <i>Bromus marginatus</i> )	40
Blue wildrye ( <i>Elymus glaucus</i> )	33
Slender wheatgrass ( <i>Elmus trachycaulus</i> )	23



**2008 National Rainbow Family Gathering Incident Action Plan  
Bridger-Teton National Forest  
Pinedale Ranger District  
June 25, 2008 until amended  
0001-2400**

A stylized black and white logo of a mountain range. It features a central peak with a smaller peak to its right, and a jagged line representing a range of hills or mountains extending to the left and right. The logo is positioned behind the text.

**National Incident Management Team**