

## **Topic: Integrated Management of Target Shooting on the Pike National Forest**

**Date:** January 6, 2021

The Pike and San Isabel National Forests Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands is proposing to manage target shooting (also called recreational sport shooting) on the Pike National Forest. The Integrated Management of Target Shooting on the Pike National Forest Project proposed action is available for public review. The public is invited to comment on the proposed action to help inform the analysis of environmental effects. Comments will be accepted as described in a legal notice published in the *Pueblo Chieftain*, the newspaper of record. The comment period will close 45 days after publication of the legal notice.

**Background:** The Pike National Forest (the Forest) encompasses more than 1.1 million acres in central Colorado. Much of the Forest is within a one-hour drive of Colorado's two major metropolitan areas: Denver and Colorado Springs. The population size of these areas has grown significantly in the past decade and is now more than 3.5 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019).

Dispersed target shooting, where forest visitors set up targets and practice shooting in an undesignated, undeveloped location, is a legal use of National Forest System lands increasing in popularity more than predicted by the population growth in the area. The increasing numbers of people recreating on the Forest has led to higher levels of user conflicts in general. Unfortunately, the number of recreational shooters who shoot in an unsafe manner has also increased. The increasing shooting activity has resulted in unacceptable levels of resource damage, including shooting-related wildfires, injuries, and at least one fatality. A description of the location and extent of resource damage that has occurred from target shooting, and photos showing examples of the damage, are available on a ArcGIS [StoryMap](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/adebf2853f6e43519bfb26e150750dd) (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/adebf2853f6e43519bfb26e150750dd>).

The Integrated Management of Target Shooting Project proposes to actively manage recreational sport shooting on National Forest System lands. The project will identify areas unsuitable for dispersed target shooting, identify sites on the forest for developed shooting ranges, and define a conditions-based adaptive management framework to manage and maintain access to recreational target shooting in the future.

The PSICC is a member of the Southern Shooting Partnership, a group of 11 federal and state agencies, county governments, and utility providers working to address issues related to recreational sport shooting on public lands. The project occurs in conjunction with activities of the Partnership. In 2019, the Partnership conducted a public outreach campaign, surveying public land users and recreational shooters about issues related to dispersed target shooting. The group held a series of public listening sessions in four counties. Public input from the outreach campaign helped develop the proposed action. In addition, the project is supported by a grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife for shooting range design.

Details of the Integrated Management of Target Shooting Project, including the description of the proposed action, maps, and Question and Answers, are available on the project [website](https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57807) <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57807>.

For more information on the project, please contact Jennifer DeWoody, NEPA Planner, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, 719-477-4216, or by email at [jennifer.dewoody@usda.gov](mailto:jennifer.dewoody@usda.gov).