

2022 Resource Design Criteria for Rainbow Family of Living Light National Gathering

Prepared by:
Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests

June 28, 2022

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Introduction

These design criteria have been developed to mitigate potential resource impacts associated with the 2022 Rainbow Family Gathering on the Routt National Forest. The event is located in and around Adam's Park in Routt County, CO, Township 10 North, Range 87 West, Sections 15, 16, 21 and 22. It is approximately 28 miles north of the town of Hayden, CO, off of Routt County Road 80.

This is the 50th anniversary of these annual gatherings. Forecasts are for 10,000 people at this week-long event. Numerous event participants are on-Forest for several weeks preceding and following the July 1-7 event. The event is not authorized by the Forest Service.

The extraordinarily high concentration of people for the duration of the event is expected to have substantial impacts to all aspects of the landscape, including water, soil, wildlife, plants, and cultural resources. Adherence to these guidelines will help reduce the negative impacts and hopefully avoid irreparable resource damage. The guidelines in this plan will be followed unless circumstances or subjects dictate that the Incident Management Team alters the plan in a safe manner. These decisions will be made during the event and based on the information available at the time. This plan is designed to follow the standards and guidelines of the Forest Plan and the Code of Federal Regulations applicable to National Forest System lands.

The primary goals of this plan are to:

- Protect the health and safety of all
- Minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources and leave the site as good or better than pre-gathering conditions
- Respect the rights and privacy of local private landowners and communities and all National Forest recreational users

The site rehabilitation meeting will occur on a date to be determined immediately following the gathering.

CFRs and other regulations

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) closures and other orders are instituted in the area to provide for public safety and resource protection. For example, CFR closures may be used to maintain emergency ingress and egress on roadways or to minimize potential resource damage to sensitive resource areas that have been identified by the Routt National Forest Staff. Any Code of Federal Regulations relevant to the safe management of the event, and protection of resources will be enforced.

Health and Safety

Emergency evacuation routes for the event are Routt County Road 80 to the north and south, Moffat County Roads 1 & 38 to the north. To ensure these critical routes remain clear, parking is prohibited anywhere on Routt County Road 80 for the duration of the gathering.

Colorado Department of Health requirements are expected to be met. The Rainbow Family Gathering will cooperate with State Health Officials to maintain adequate on-site sanitation.

Other health and safety reminders:

- Participants are responsible for their own health and safety.
- Participants of the Rainbow Family Gathering will be responsible for emergency medical coordination and evacuation with area medical facilities.

- The Rainbow Family Gathering attendees administering medical care will notify the Forest Service immediately of any contagious outbreaks.
- Biological wastes generated by Rainbow Family Gathering attendees administering medical care, will be disposed of at an appropriate medical waste disposal facility. No biological waste will be buried, remain on the site, or be disposed of with other trash. No burning of plastics or rubber material.
- Participants of the Rainbow Family Gathering are responsible to arrange public health services (e.g., garbage, recycling, medical, and supplies) as needed.

Sensitive Natural Resource Areas

Numerous sensitive resources occur in the area the Rainbow Family has chosen for their gathering. Sensitive resource areas include wildlife areas, cultural sites, streams, riparian areas and wetlands. Forest Service Resource Specialists have flagged (usually pink flagging) many but not all avoidance areas. To reduce the negative impacts of the gathering in these sensitive areas (whether flagged or not):

- **Keep entirely out of flagged areas and sensitive habitat.** This includes camping, walking, domestic animals, or motorized access
- **Avoid disturbance to any irrigation ditches in the area.** This includes any motorized vehicles or any other ground disturbance.
- **Cutting of live trees or other vegetation is prohibited.**
- **Leave standing dead trees and downed trees that are within 100 feet of streams.** They provide critical roosting and nesting habitat for many wildlife species, including neotropical birds
- **Do not collect sagebrush.** You are occupying habitat for sage-grouse, an imperiled species. Sagebrush provides critical food and shelter for the survival of sage-grouse and their young

Sensitive Cultural Resources

Cultural sites located on federal land are protected by a variety of federal and state laws (e.g., American Antiquities Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and Archaeological Resources Protection Act). These laws protect and preserve our nation's cultural heritage. Many of these cultural sites are important and shall be protected from all disturbance.

- **Do not displace, remove, alter, damage, burn or destroy any cultural materials or historic objects.** This includes any archaeological or historic features (i.e., structures, fences, artifact scatters)
- If during any activities or operations (including but not limited to establishing or using parking areas, campsites, campfires, etc.) any surface or subsurface archeological or cultural materials are encountered at any point during the event or subsequent cleanup, all activities and operations in the area will cease immediately, and a Forest Service official will be contacted to arrange evaluation of the inadvertent discovery
- **Do not collect culturally significant plants, including yampah, sweet cicely, sweetgrass and osha.** Collections by this large gathering can diminish populations of these culturally significant species to a point that would infringe on the Tribes' abilities to exercise their Treaty and Trust Rights for years to come.

Vehicle Traffic and Parking

Rainbow Family Gathering volunteers are responsible for organizing vehicles within the parking locations to ensure safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians into and out of parking areas, directing traffic, and providing security for the parking areas and ensuring the administrative area remain accessible to the Forest Service. Parking space is limited and will need to be used very efficiently.

All participants shall:

- Adhere to Parking/Traffic signs wherever posted
- Keep parked vehicles off Routt County Road 80. *This has been designated as two-way travel to provide for clear ingress and egress for the safety of all visitors. There will be no parking along this route*
- Keep all vehicles out of sensitive areas (such as wet and/or moist meadows, culturally significant areas, etc.), any areas designated as “no parking.” This is to ensure public safety, and minimize any oil, gas, or antifreeze chemicals leaking, infiltrating into the soil and entering the streams, and impacting water quality and aquatic species health/survival
- Keep all vehicles out of administrative areas

Vehicles parked in sensitive areas, areas specifically closed for parking, or parked in a manner that interferes with ingress/egress of normal vehicle traffic flow, Forest Service vehicles, or emergency vehicles will be towed at the owner’s expense. Any vehicles or other items deemed unauthorized by the Forest Service will be removed and impounded following Forest Service and/or State regulations

Trails/Foot Traffic

- Use established trails and open and closed roads for travelling between designated locations (closed roads are for foot and non-motorized traffic only). Creating new trails increases erosion and adversely impacts sensitive vegetation and water quality. Do not create new trails
- Keep out of sensitive areas such as wetlands, and areas identified with flagging (usually pink)

Camping

- **It is prohibited to camp or leave camping equipment and personal property on, or otherwise occupying National Forest System lands for a period longer than 14 days within a 30-day period. 36 CFR 261.58(a).**
- Camp on level, dry or hardened sites that are not creating resource damage such as mud bogs or trampling of plants, particularly in riparian zones.
- Wherever possible, camping and general gathering areas should use previously disturbed ground.
- Keep camping areas at least 100 feet from streams, wetlands, seeps, and springs to protect fish, amphibians, riparian plant species, and maintain water quality.
- Keep out of sensitive resource areas (streams, wetlands, sensitive species, archeological sites, etc.), which may be flagged with flagging tape and/or have a sign in place by the Forest Service at their discretion. Participants at the Rainbow Family Gathering are prohibited from camping, walking, or congregating within these sensitive resource areas.
- Do not remove items from sensitive resource areas, whether identified or not, by the Forest Service (e.g., plants, items over 50 years old, such as bottles, cans, shards, pottery, etc.).

- Do not camp or park in or construct any developments on Forest Service Designated Trails or trailheads.
- Avoid weed patches when possible. If unavoidable, ensure that weed seeds are not transported outside camp. Avoid administrative pasture areas that are fenced off.
- Keep food in airtight containers secured from wildlife. Never store food in your sleeping area. Keep campsites clean and do not store garbage.
- Gray or black water from campers or RVs must be disposed of in a State approved RV dumpsite.

Water Use

The Rainbow Family Gathering shall be in compliance with the Colorado Division of Water Resources (CO DWR) requirements for water diversions. On/Off valves should be utilized on all pipes so that water is only flowing when necessary.

It is prohibited to excavate or dig out around water sources, including excavation for water piping. Disturbance to these areas can alter the hydrology and harm aquatic organisms such as Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Boreal Toads, resident trout and amphibians.

Participants of the Rainbow Family Gathering will monitor all activities to ensure that soap, disinfectant, medical waste, or any other foreign material will not be introduced into surface waters. Please use only biodegradable soaps near streams, springs, or seeps.

Activities in and around water resources that increase turbidity are not allowed due to impacts to aquatic species such as Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Boreal Toads, resident trout and amphibians.

Kitchens

- Kitchens (including pits/trenches for gray water and compost) will be located on level ground at least 200 feet from all bodies of water (wetlands, streams, surfacing springs, wells, etc), and sensitive areas flagged on the ground.
- All design elements described in the section on Slit Trenches apply to kitchen pits and trenches. This includes the closure and decommissioning of pits and trenches. In addition, kitchen pits and trenches shall adhere to the following:
 - Pits will not be located on any meadow or field surface, the preferred location for pits are in forested areas.
 - Compost pits shall be covered at all times with 6 mil. polyethylene or similar material.
- Adequate hand washing facilities will be provided at all kitchens.
- To reduce ground disturbing activities and honor leave no trace ethics on the land, kitchen washing procedures are to follow Colorado Department of Public Health requirements. Drinking water should also comply with State health requirements.
- Keep all food in airtight containers or bear resistant food canisters and in vehicles when kitchen is unattended for long periods of time and during the night.
- Protect all sensitive cultural resources as described in the Sensitive Cultural Resources Section of this document.

Slit Trenches

This unauthorized event is expected to generate SEVERAL TONS of human waste. Sanitation needs to comply with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. To ensure the health and safety of participants in this unauthorized event, the following actions should be followed:

- Latrines shall meet the standards described below. If the gathering cannot maintain a sufficient number of latrines that meet these standards, the Rainbow Family Gathering shall provide portable toilets at their expense or relocate to a site where the above conditions can be met.
- Latrines should be located on level ground in dry, upland sites that are at least 200 feet from surface water, water bodies (streams, ponds, wetlands, wells, ditches etc.) and kitchens. The trenches shall not be located in sandy or muddy soils. The purpose of this is to avoid fecal coliform entering bodies of water in the area.
- Slit trenches or earth pit privies will be at least 18 inches deep but shall not exceed 6 feet in depth. Trenches should be approximately 12-18 inches wide.
- If ground water appears while digging any holes, the site shall be immediately refilled, abandoned, and moved to a different location, generally uphill.
- Protect all sensitive cultural resources as described in the Sensitive Cultural Resources Section of this document.
- Buckets of lime or wood ash shall be available for all trenches or privy sites and a layer of lime or wood ash shall be applied daily to the waste to control odors and reduce insect attraction.
- Once a pit or trench is filled to within 15 inches of the ground's surface, it shall be closed by covering with soil at least six inches above ground level.
- Each pit/trench shall include an escape ramp for wildlife that may have fallen into the trench and become trapped.
 - Escape ramps can be short lateral trenches, wooden planks, or large branches that slope to the ground surface.
 - Escape ramps slopes should be less than 45 degrees (1:1).
 - Long trenches shall have a ramp every 50 ft.
 - Rainbow Family Gathering participants shall monitor and inspect the pits and trenches daily and make reasonable attempts to rescue entrapped wildlife.
- A hand washing station draining into the latrine shall be provided at each location.

Trash

The Rainbow Family is responsible for removal of all trash resulting from their gathering. To reduce the impacts of this event on the ecosystem, and particularly the wildlife:

- Provide trash/recycling receptacles onsite, with periodic trash/recyclables removal at the Rainbow Family's expense.
- Remove trash/recyclables from the site as frequently as the local transfer station schedules allow and do not allow more than 20 cubic yards of trash/recycling to accumulate on site at one time. This ensures the unauthorized event does not accumulate trash/recycling that could attract bears and other wildlife, and lead to undesirable human-wildlife interactions, which can have detrimental effects on the wildlife.

- Trash and recyclable materials shall not be left at dumpsters at local businesses, campgrounds, residences, etc.
- Trash/recycling receptacles will be placed at least 100 feet or more from streams, wetlands or other surface water; keep all trash, recycling or any other foreign material out of streams or other surface waters.
- Do not burn trash.

Firewood

- Do not bring in firewood from outside the local area. Firewood can have non-native invasive insects, plant seed, or other diseases you may unknowingly introduce to the Forest.
- Firewood gathered on the Forest must remain on site and cannot be removed from the Forest without proper permits.
- Do not cut live, green trees or their dead branches to burn in campfires.
- Leave standing snags. Standing dead trees or snags, particularly aspen with cavities, provide birds and mammals with shelter to raise young and raptors with unobstructed vantage points.
- Leave all dead or down wood within 100 feet of any stream or within flagged avoidance areas. Downed wood is an important part of riparian systems. It provides wildlife habitat, increasing water storage, and catching sediment.
- Remember some of this wood will be needed for “naturalizing” bare soil areas during site rehabilitation.

Campfires

- Campfire areas shall be:
 - On level areas that have been scraped but not dug into the ground (scraped topsoil shall be retained for rehabilitation purposes)
 - Free of all flammable material within a 3-foot radius of the pit and surrounded by dirt or rock
 - Free of any overhanging materials
 - At least 200 ft from any streams or wetlands
- Protect all sensitive cultural resources as described in the Sensitive Cultural Resources Section of this document
- Community fires are encouraged over individual fires, and existing fire rings should be used instead of constructing new rings. Do not remove rock from lakes or streams to make campfire rings or any other structures
- **NEVER** leave campfires unattended (those leaving campfires unattended can be billed for the cost of fire suppression).
- Take suppression action on any escaped fire immediately and notify the Forest Service as soon as possible.
- When leaving, make sure your fire is DEAD OUT. Drown the campfire with water and stir charred material. Make sure no roots are smoldering; if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.

- If weather conditions are excessively dry, the Forest Service will implement appropriate fire restrictions at their discretion. The Rainbow Family Gathering will be subject to these restrictions, should those restrictions be applied to the public due to changing fire conditions

Domestic Animals (i.e., pets)

- Owners must keep their domestic animals under control at all times. This is to ensure public safety, protect natural resources, and minimize negative impacts to public health.
- Keep all domestic animals out of sensitive areas (wetlands, streams, wet meadows, riparian areas, etc.). This protects numerous wildlife species, and especially their young. Dogs drinking and cooling in streams can cause resource damage to fisheries resources.
- Keep dogs leashed when outside of tents or temporary residences. Off-leash dogs adversely affect wildlife by causing nesting birds to abandon their nests, harming small mammals and young wildlife, causing extreme (potentially lethal) stress to deer fawns or elk calves if chased.
- Clean up animal waste immediately. Dispose of animal waste in latrines.
- Always keep dogs far away from sheep herds and their guard dogs. Sheep guard dogs may kill domestic dogs that approach the sheep herds.
- Be aware that your dog may also be harmed by encounters with larger mammals including bear, coyotes and mountain lions.
- Clean pets by removing mud and seeds. For tough burs, coconut oil can be used to loosen the burs. Seeds and plant materials should be placed in garbage bags. Do not throw them on the ground or in compost pits.
- All abandoned domestic animals will be removed by participants of the Rainbow Family Gathering.

Fishing Regulations

The State of Colorado regulates fishing on the National Forest, including license requirements and bag limits. Consult the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Fishing Regulations or CPW website for the regulations.

Invasive Plants and Animals

Non-native and invasive species of plants and animals are a concern in natural ecosystems. To avoid spreading these undesirable species:

- Avoid moving soil dug in the area more than 10 feet from its original location.
- Participants should use caution along all roads to avoid the spread of non-native invasive plants (e.g., weeds).
- Remove seeds from shoes, clothes, and pet fur and dispose of seeds in the garbage. Do not throw them on the ground or in the compost pit.
- Washing vehicle undercarriages before entering Forest land can prevent the introduction of new weeds.

Wild Animals

The Rainbow Gathering is occurring in one of the largest elk calving areas in Colorado. The area is also important for fawning and calving of mule deer, pronghorn, bears, and moose as well as nesting of sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, and sandhill cranes. The gathering and associated disturbances will cause long-term cumulative effects to these important breeding and rearing areas

- **Never** pick up, handle, take into captivity, or otherwise harass any wildlife, especially young wildlife
- **Do not** feed or approach bears or other wildlife
- Keep all food and trash in airtight containers or bear and wildlife resistant food canisters and in vehicles when unattended for long periods of time and during the night
- Be extra cautious of any female bears, moose, or lions with young, who can be much more defensive and may charge. If any cubs or kittens are observed, carefully back out of the area the way you came and do not enter again. Tell others to avoid this area, and immediately inform the Forest Service
- If wildlife such as bear or mountain lions are observed near the camp, make loud noises to encourage them to leave the area. Please contact the Forest Service to inform of any bear or mountain lion observations or concerns
- **Let the insects live.** Insects are critical for pollinating and propagating native plants, decomposing vegetation/debris, and are food for other wildlife. Direct killing and application of insecticides to non-pest insects shall be avoided where human health and safety are not a concern

Restoration

- Compact soils, implement erosion control measures, and restore groundcover to pre-gathering conditions; do not spread seed without Forest Service approval
- Ensure all fire rings are removed and restored to pre-gathering conditions
- Work with Forest Service Resource Advisors on desired condition

Resource protection summary of restrictions

Management Area	Resource Protection Restrictions
Closed Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No motorized access on closed roads and non-motorized trails
Parking Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow parking posting signs and flagging - No parking within 100 feet of a stream, spring, or wetland or as flagged
Sensitive Resource Areas (e.g., sensitive wildlife areas, cultural sites, wetlands, rare plant habitat, noxious weeds, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No use or entry (motorized or foot) - No domestic animals - No camping - No camping permitted within 200 feet of occupied Raptor nests - Provide one wildlife escape ramp for each pit/trench created, or at least every 50 feet (15 meters) for larger/longer trenches
Creeks, streams, and riparian areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limit use - Use existing or designated footpaths - Do not damage wetlands, stream banks or riparian vegetation - No pumping from streams or springs - No camping within 100 feet of wetland or stream - No graywater within 200 feet of lake or stream and only on level ground - No slit trenches or waste within 200 feet of lake or stream
Forest Service System Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No obstruction of public use designated trails
General Forest Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No cutting or defacing of live trees or vegetation - Use only dead and down material for firewood

Safety of all Forest Service personnel, Rainbow Family Gathering participants, and members of the public is paramount during the event. This Rainbow Family Gathering plan is to be used as a guide to ensure important factors are taken into consideration during the planning of tactical operations. There are many intangible elements in evolving events that may have a bearing on the assessment process. This plan is based on information available and is subject to changes that may or may not be produced in writing.

I have read and understand the safety and resource protection measures identified in this document. This document will go into effect the date and time signed by the Responsible Party.

Signature of Responsible Party

MICHAEL
WOODBRIDGE

Digitally signed by
MICHAEL WOODBRIDGE
Date: 2022.06.28
11:05:55 -06'00'

Agency Representative
Hahns Peak/Bears Ears District Ranger
Routt National Forest

Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
Date: _____
Time: _____

Date: 6/28/2022
Time: 11:00 a.m.