



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

National Forests in North Carolina  
Supervisor's Office

160A Zillicoa Street  
P.O. Box 2750  
Asheville, NC 28802  
828-257-4200

---

**File Code:** 1950/7720-1

**Date:** May 1, 2002

### **Dear National Forest Users:**

The Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are hosting a series of open houses over the next three months to obtain comments from the public regarding existing open passenger car roads under Forest Service jurisdiction. The first open house is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2002, from 3:00 pm until 7:30 pm, at the Doubletree Biltmore Hotel, 115 Hendersonville Road, Asheville, NC.

The information collected at the open houses will be used as part of a broad study of the road system that will help focus future maintenance expenditures and ensure that the national forest road system meets the current and future needs of Forest visitors and natural resource managers, while lessening impacts on the environment. Information gathered during this study also will be used in the next revision of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Management Plan, scheduled to begin in 2005.

We would like to hear which National Forest System (NFS) roads people use the most, which are their favorite roads and why, as well as any problems they have encountered on these roads. We in the Forest Service have a sense of road uses and conditions from our perspective as forest managers, but often the public has a different perspective and we want to capture that. Specific comments about specific roads will be most useful to us. Include information such as:

- Roads used most frequently.
- Likely reason(s) for use of the road (recreation, hunting, access a timber sale, special use, access private property, etc).
- Problems or concerns with the roads, such as road condition, safety, erosion or trash dumping.
- Suggestions about a specific road.

National Forest System (NFS) roads, in contrast to State roads and Federal highways, tend to be those roads that go through less developed parts of the national forests. The NFS road signs typically have a brown background with a three or four digit road number in a cream color. The study will focus only on open, National Forest System roads.

At the same time the Forest Service is gathering information from the public, national forest resource specialists will be taking a look at road related issues such as water quality impacts, wildlife-road interactions, and access needs for recreation and resource management. We will also be talking to local, state, and Federal agencies and Tribal governments as to how our open road system affects them.



A report documenting the study will be released sometime in the fall of 2002. The report will provide information regarding the existing road system, including road conditions that need improvement. The report may also suggest areas of the forest where more detailed study of the roads is needed to address social, economic, or ecological resource needs.

In addition to the Asheville open house, additional open houses are set for each ranger district to accommodate Forest users outside the Asheville commuting area:

June 6, 2002, 4 – 6 pm:	Cheoah Ranger District work center, Massey Branch Road, Robbinsville, NC
June 11, 2002, 4-6 pm	Appalachian Ranger District, Toecane office, US 19-E bypass, Burnsville, NC
June 24, 2002, 6:30-8:30 pm	Brevard Hampton Inn, 800 Forest Gate Center, Brevard, NC
June 26, 2002, 4-6 pm	Grandfather Ranger District office, Nebo/Lake James exit off I-40
June 27, 2002, 4-6 pm	Highlands Ranger District office, 2010 Flat Mountain Road, Highlands, NC (off US 64 east of Highlands)
July 1, 2002, 4-6 pm	Appalachian Ranger District, Hot Springs office, US 25/70 in Hot Springs
July 9, 2002 4-6 pm	Wayah Ranger District office, 90 Sloan Road, Franklin, NC (off US 64 west of Franklin)
July 10, 2002, 4-6 pm	Tusquitee Ranger District office, 123 Woodland Drive, Murphy, NC (two blocks off US 64 at Hiwassee Street)

People who drop by during the open house hours will be able to look at large maps of the open road system on the Forests and submit comments and suggestions at that time, or they may mail or e-mail comments later. People who are unable to drop by during the open houses are encouraged to submit comments to:

NP Roads  
National Forests in North Carolina  
PO Box 2750  
Asheville, NC 28802

E-mail comments will also be accepted. The e-mail address for comments has not been finalized, but when it is it will be available as a link on the web site for the National Forests in North Carolina, <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc>.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this issue and we look forward to hearing from you. For further information, call Ruth Berner, study team leader, at (828)257-4862.

Sincerely,

JOHN F. RAMEY  
Forest Supervisor