

Project Timing

Construction of the picnic area is anticipated to begin during the summer of 2013 and continue through 2014. The length of this construction period accounts for the migratory bird nesting season and winter snowfall.

Foxtail will remain open each winter during the construction period for winter snow play.

During construction, campers may continue to use Hilltop and Fletcher View Campgrounds. Picnickers may use Cathedral Rock and Sawmill Picnic Areas. For more information on prices and reservations, please go to www.recreation.gov or call (877) 444-6777.



Questions or Comments?

If you have questions or comments, we would love to hear them! Comments are most useful if they are received by October 14, 2011.

Please email your comments to foxtail@fs.fed.us, or mail them to the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130. If you prefer to speak with us by phone, at the SMNRA office, or at the proposed project site, please feel free to contact Frank Leoni at (218) 349-1642.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who commented will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection.



USDA Forest Service
Spring Mountains National Recreation Area
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89130



Note from the Deputy Forest Supervisor

Greetings,

I am seeking your input regarding the proposed Foxtail Group Picnic Area Reconstruction Project. This project is located on the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (SMNRA) of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, approximately 16 miles west of the intersection of Lee Canyon Road (State Route 156) and U.S. 95. If you are interested in this area, or would like information about these projects, please read this Scoping Notice carefully.

This Scoping Notice includes maps and information about our proposed action. The Scoping Notice summarizes the purpose and need for the projects and describes our proposed action for meeting the purpose and need. **Please keep in mind that what is outlined in the proposed action is only a proposal, not a final decision.** I will not make a decision on the proposal until my staff and I have reviewed public comments, considered alternatives to the proposed action, and analyzed the effects of the alternatives.

When making my decision on whether or not to implement the proposal, or to implement modifications to the proposal, I will consider your comments. Your comments are important for me to make an informed decision about the proposal. **I need your comments on this project by October 14, 2011** so that I can have the best information available to make a decision.

If you have information, concerns, or questions about our proposed action, I strongly encourage you to let us know. To be most helpful, your comments should be as site specific and project specific as possible and relate only to the Foxtail Group Picnic Area Reconstruction Project.

If you know of anyone else who may be interested in the proposal, please share this information with them. This document will be posted to our web site at www.fs.usda.gov/goto/htnf/projects.

If you respond to this scoping notice and provide comments on our proposal, I will provide you a copy of the environmental analysis and my final decision document. I expect to make a decision regarding these projects in May 2012.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Phillips
Deputy Forest Supervisor
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Spring Mountains National Recreation Area Foxtail Group Picnic Area Reconstruction

Project Background

Foxtail Group Picnic Area was constructed in 1974 as a group day-use area. The site contains 3 group units that accommodate approximately 75 people each for a total capacity of approximately 225 people and 102 vehicles in the summer.

Many of the groups that reserve the sites at Foxtail are much smaller than 75, leading to the under-utilization of individual picnic sites.

The picnic area has not been improved since it was constructed, except for the installation of a heated, flush-toilet restroom building in 2001. This restroom is not adequate to meet the needs of users during peak visitation.

Without maintained asphalt trails to restrooms and parking areas, users create their own trails that trample vegetation and compact the soil, degrading the forest landscape.

In the winter, Foxtail is the only designated sledding area on the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area; however, the current design of the facility does not optimize winter parking and site furniture is located too close to the sledding run-out zones.

The location of the entrance station does not allow enough cars to line up safely, and vehicles have become stuck in icy patches as they wait.



Sledding runs are located too close to trees, rocks, and other obstacles



Sledders ride over and into picnic tables and grills



Poorly located entrance booth contributes to traffic congestion on SR 156 during winter months

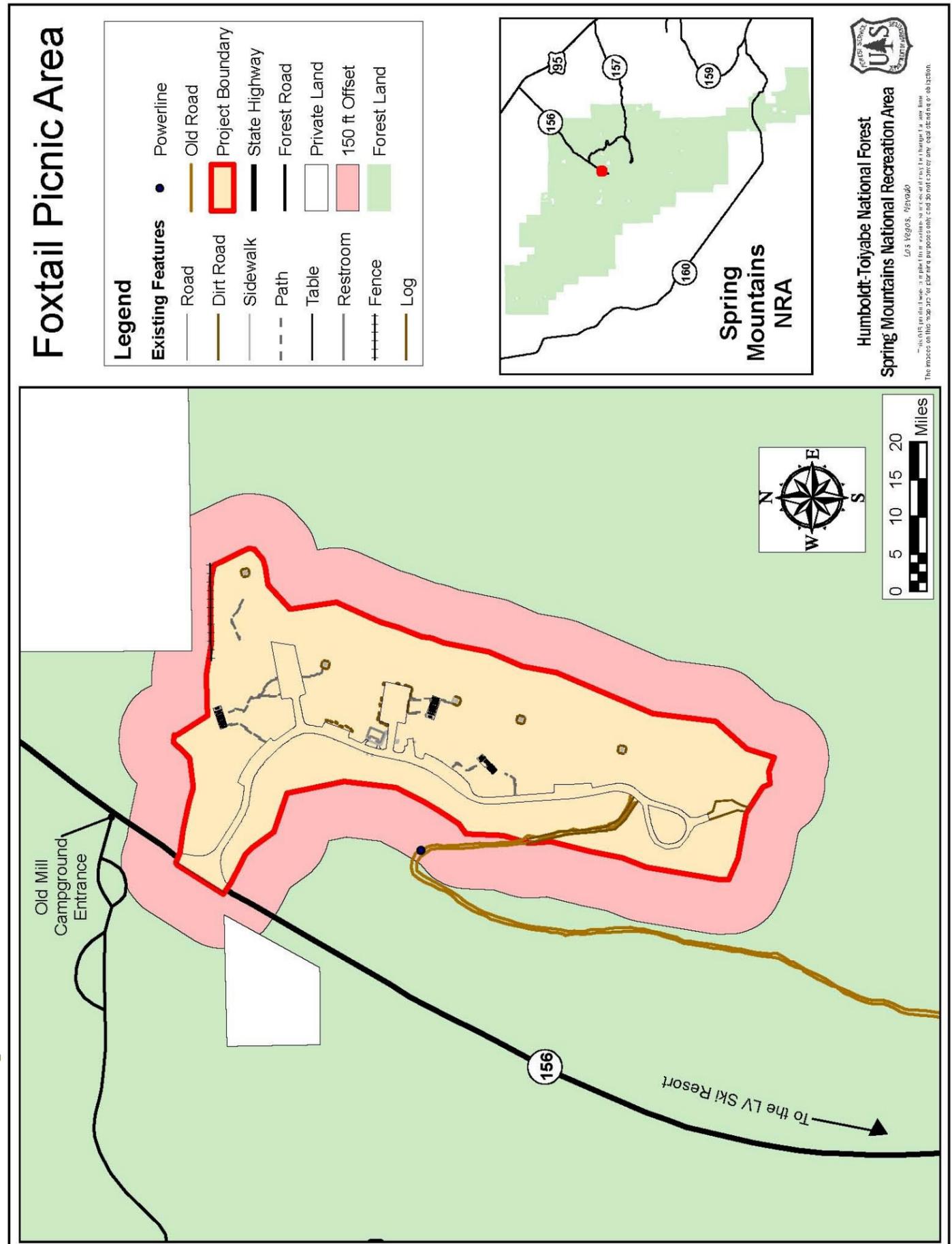
Photos courtesy of Shawnee Hinman

Proposed Action

In order to better maximize the use of Foxtail as a group picnic area in the summer time and provide a quality sledding area in the wintertime, I am proposing the following actions:

- Replace all picnic area furniture, roads, parking areas, and asphalt trails
- Provide 4 to 6 group picnic areas that accommodate between 20 to 75 people each
- Maximize parking spaces to the extent practicable
- Construct hardened surfaces for picnic tables and grills
- Provide an adequate number of heated restrooms that are dispersed throughout the area
- Provide a year-round entrance station with electricity and phone service
- Widen the entrance road to at least 3 lanes and/or construct a round-about to improve traffic at the entrance
- Relocate the entrance station to minimize traffic backups on State Route 156
- Provide infrastructure for sale of various sundries
- Develop activity, summer play, and snow play areas
- Construct a large picnic shelter with a fireplace
- Remove trees as necessary to create areas for snow play
- Provide for snow removal and storage for all parking areas and road surfaces
- Construct internal, hardened trails as necessary
- Implement a vegetation management plan to promote healthy trees, shrubs, and other vegetation within the site

Project Map



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