



**USDA Forest Service  
Pacific Southwest Region  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**



**Proposed Action  
for  
Scoping of the MojoMan Challenge  
Douglas County, Nevada  
El Dorado County, California**

**BACKGROUND:**

With passage of the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011, the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 was amended to clarify additional summer recreational uses of National Forest System (NFS) land may be proposed by permittees and considered for approval and implementation.

**EXISTING CONDITION:**

There is currently a lack of capacity and diversity of multi-season recreation opportunities at the top of the Gondola to respond to visitors' needs and changes in the market. The unmet demand for high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities in this setting far exceeds the current supply. Because the gondola is the predominant destination resort access point in winter and summer, a significant opportunity exists to provide a wider range of multi-season, resource-based activities for guests in addition to skiing and snowboarding.

**DESIRED CONDITION:**

There are increased high-quality options for summer activities accessed from the gondola and around the mountain.

**PURPOSE AND NEED:**

There is a need to respond to Heavenly's request for a temporary recreation event as described in the Operations and Avalanche Control Plan and the Ski Area Permit Act.

**PROPOSED ACTION:**

Heavenly Mountain Resort proposes to hold an adventure race known as the MojoMan Challenge. The MojoMan Challenge is an approximately 10.5 mile competition that will incorporate approximately 25-30 challenge obstacles along the course for participants to negotiate. Temporary obstacles will be constructed of natural and man-made elements, including water and mud pits, cargo nets and log piles.

The course will begin at the top of the gondola and will end at the base of the gondola in Heavenly Village. The course will generally run from the top of the gondola down to East Peak reservoir, back up to the gondola, down to Cal Dam reservoir, down to the

California Base Lodge and then over to the base of the gondola. The course will primarily use existing summer maintenance roads and trails while on NFS lands. Once the course leaves NFS lands at Heavenly's California Main Lodge, it will use paved City streets to reach the existing Keller-to-Kingsbury trail where it will connect with existing trails and roads in Van Sickle Bi-State Park. From there, it will cross the upper section of Loop Road and enter Heavenly Village using Heavenly Village Way to a finish area on Bellamy Court. An existing 300-400 foot-long segment of the Upper Comet ski trail will be used to facilitate a looped routing layout for the first section of the course. All NFS land areas proposed to be used are within the Heavenly Valley Special Use Permit Area.

The event will be open to the public where they will be encouraged to access NFS lands. Heavenly intends to host and celebrate members of the military as part of the event. There will be an elite division, team division, and a general public division. The event will include shorter-distance kids and teen challenge races that will also begin at the top of the gondola.

Course obstacles will be laid out in such a manner so as to not block road access in the event of an emergency on the mountain (e.g., locate obstacles in passing areas on roads, do not use obstacles for which equipment is needed to move it out of the way).

Heavenly will coordinate all necessary event logistics such as parking, shuttle service sanitation and any temporary use approvals with applicable local governmental agencies (such as the City of South Lake Tahoe, TRPA and Lahontan).

#### **PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES:**

Project design features are elements of the project that are applied to the project area as part of the Proposed Action. These features are developed based on Forest Plan direction and site specific evaluations in order to reduce or avoid negative environmental impacts of the proposed action. The following measures will be incorporated into the event in order to insure there are no significant environmental effects:

- 1) No permanent disturbance will result. Areas of temporary disturbance for the race and staging areas will be restored during the week following the event. Restoration would include providing ground cover, such as slash, wood chips or masticated material (spread no more than 6 inches thick);
- 2) Installation of temporary water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) would occur around appropriate course obstacles. These may include but will not be limited to: silt fences, straw wattles, coir logs, mulching, gravel/sand bags and construction fencing;
- 3) Course obstacles would be removed during the week following the event;
- 4) The event will not use any stream environment zone areas;
- 5) No tree removal will occur;
- 6) Any course elements attached to trees will be done in methods that do not penetrate or otherwise damage trees;
- 7) No areas of mapped archaeological features, noxious weeds or special status plants will be used. Off-limits areas will be identified and established jointly by

- Heavenly and Forest Service staff near these sensitive areas and lined with rope barriers in order to prevent access;
- 8) In areas that have not been surveyed for cultural resources, surveys would be done and the course adjusted to avoid any identified cultural resources;
  - 9) The existing segment of Comet Trail to be used for the event will be restored at the same time as the rest of the course using the adaptive management prescription approved by the Forest Service; and
  - 10) The race course will be monitored by personnel during the event for public safety purposes and to ensure participants remain on the course and do not inadvertently leave the course. Trained emergency medical personnel will be on-site during the event.

**REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION:**

CEQ regulations allow federal agencies to exclude from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) categories of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment, based on the agency's experience and knowledge. The proposed action fits under 36 CFR 220.6 (d)(8), "Approval, modification, or continuation of minor, short-term (1 year or less) special uses of National Forest System lands."

The Mojoman Challenge would fit within this category because the activities are located within the special use permit area for Heavenly Mountain Resort and it is a one-time event.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:**

Comments would be most helpful if received by the close of business on May 11, 2012.

**IMPLEMENTATION DATE:**

Implementation of this project is proposed for August 2012.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES:**

This decision is not within a category of decision that is required to be documented with a Decision Memo and is therefore not subject to notice, comment or appeal.

**CONTACT PERSON:**

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