



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Allegheny National Forest  
Marienville Ranger District

HC 2, Box 130  
Marienville, PA 16239  
(814) 927-6628  
FAX (814) 927-2285

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File Code: 1950/2350

Date: March 17, 2005

### **Russell City Trail Connector Project**

Dear Interested Party:

The Marienville Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest is starting the environmental analysis of an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trail connector from the Timberline ATV Trail into Russell City, PA (also known as DeYoung, PA). A property owner has opened a campground, is willing to allow access, and has asked the National Forest to designate an existing gated road corridor as ATV trail to connect with the Timberline ATV Trail. The proposed trail would provide access for goods and services from the ATV trail to Russell City.

**Proposal:** The proposed action is to designate approximately 0.6 mile (3000') of Forest Road (FR) 335.2 as ATV trail, and to designate about 0.15 mile (800') of non-system road that is currently used by the oil and gas industry as ATV and snowmobile trail. The 800' road segment will be stabilized with geotextiles and pit run stone and surfaced with limestone. A special use permit will be issued to the campground owner for maintenance of the trail connector. The proposed trail is in Warrants 3779 and 3783 of Highland Township, Elk County, Pennsylvania, and is located in Management Area 3, within an intensive ORV (off road vehicle) use area as noted in the Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The project location is shown on the enclosed project map.

#### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of this project is to allow legal access from services in Russell City to the Timberline ATV Trail by designating an existing road corridor as a connector trail. Gas, food, and a public telephone are available in Russell City, as well as camping and parking. There is public demand for a camping area where people are able to ride their ATVs directly to the trail system, without having to trailer an ATV to a designated trailhead. Current trailheads available for undeveloped camping are insufficient to meet the demand. This proposal will allow National Forest lands to remain unencumbered by providing facilities on private property.

This proposal will achieve Forest Plan (FP) objectives related to recreation:

- The primary purpose is to... "Provide a roaded natural setting for all types of developed and dispersed recreation opportunities, with an emphasis on motorized recreation activities." (FP p. 4-82)
- "Unlicensed ORVs are permitted only on designated ORV trails; all cross-country motorized vehicular use is prohibited." (FP p. 4-9)
- "ORV trails will be constructed and maintained in a permanent location to prevent erosion or impact to natural resources." (FP p. 4-9)



### Type of Analysis

We are planning to document this project analysis using a categorical exclusion (category 31.2 (1)). This category allows for construction and reconstruction of trails. The categorical exclusion is provided as a tool to improve planning efficiency (40 CFR 1500.4(p) and 1500.5(k)) where no significant adverse effects are anticipated based on past experience with this type of work.

The analysis will consider whether extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action warrant further consideration in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Resource conditions that will be considered include: Federally listed threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species; floodplains, wetlands, municipal watersheds; Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas; inventoried roadless areas; research natural areas; American Indian and Alaska Native religious/cultural sites; archaeological sites, or historical properties/areas (FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 30.3, Paragraph 2). The mere presence of one or more of these conditions does not preclude use of the category. Rather, it is the degree of the potential effect that determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist. **If no potentially significant effects are identified, a Decision Memo will be issued, which is not subject to appeal (36 CFR 215.12(f)).**

### Comments

If you wish to provide comments concerning this ATV trail connector proposal, please send site specific comments to: Russell City Trail Connector Project, ATTN: Leon Blashock, USDA Forest Service, Marienville Ranger District, HC 2 Box 130, Marienville PA 16239. Comments will also be accepted by telephone at (814)-927-6628 during business hours (Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), by fax at (814)-927-2285, and by e-mail at [comments-eastern-allegheny-marienville@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-allegheny-marienville@fs.fed.us). For e-mail comments, please include the project name in the subject line, your name and mailing address. Comments need to be received or postmarked by April 12, 2005.

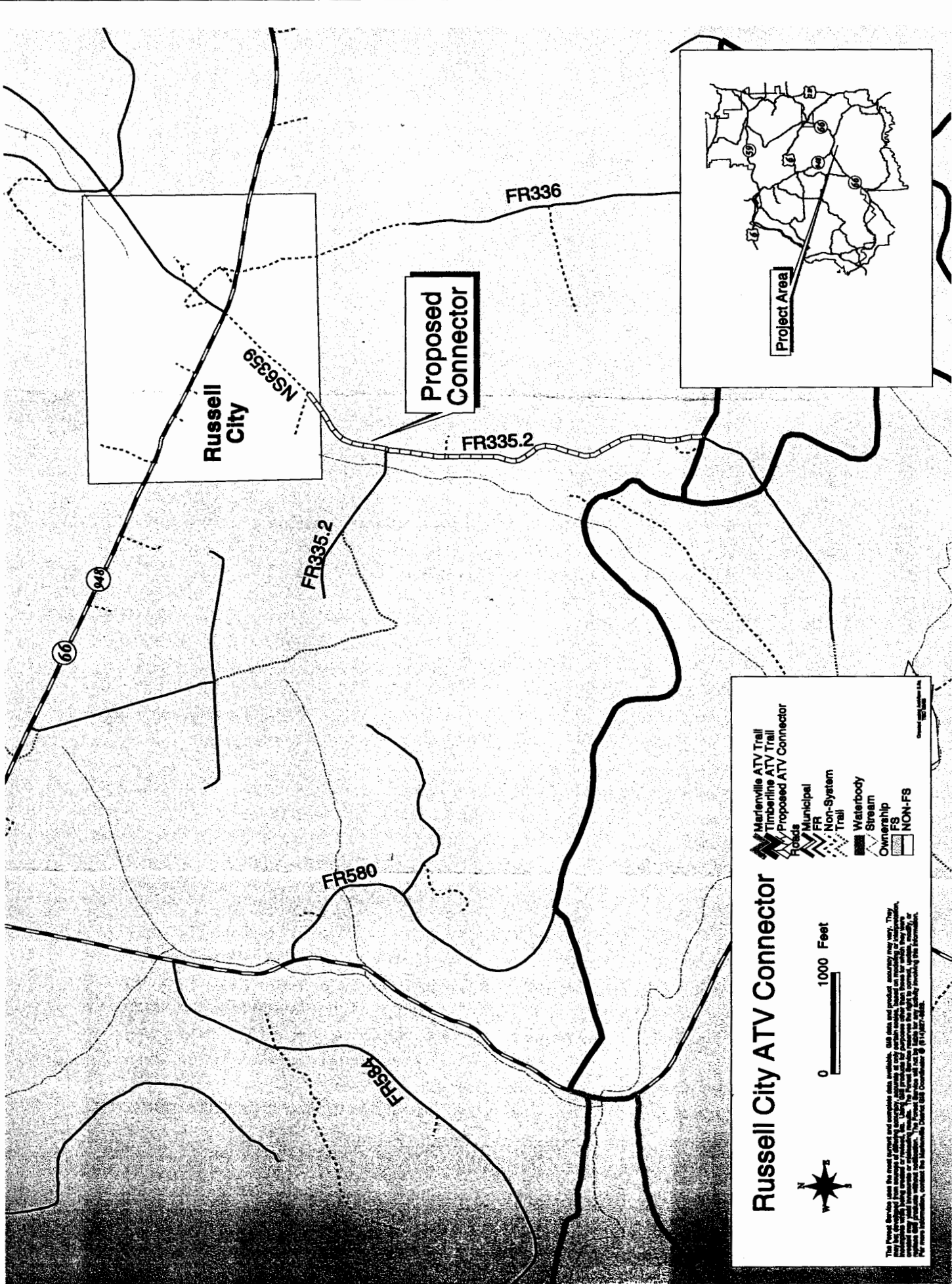
This letter and the attached map are also available on our website at [http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/recreation\\_projects/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/recreation_projects/). If you need additional information concerning this project, please contact Carol Burd at (814)-927-6628, x 133.

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Allegheny National Forest. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

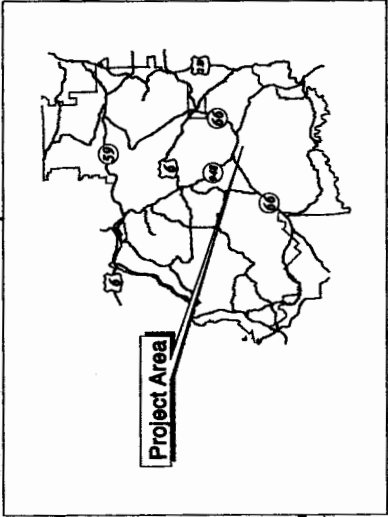


/s/ Leon F. Blashock  
LEON F. BLASHOCK  
District Ranger



**Proposed Connector**

**Russell City**  
NS6359



### Russell City ATV Connector

Marienville ATV Trail  
 Timberline ATV Trail  
 Proposed ATV Connector

**Roads**  
 Municipal  
 FR  
 Non-System  
 Trail

**Waterbody**  
 Stream  
**Ownership**  
 FS  
 NON-FS

0 1000 Feet

N

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