



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Santa Fe National Forest

Espanola Ranger District
P.O. Box 3307, Fairview Station
1710 N. Riverside Dr.
Espanola, New Mexico 87533
505-753-7331 FAX 505-753-9411

File Code: 1950

Date: February 10, 2014

Interested Persons and Organizations:

In cooperation with Los Alamos County, the Espanola Ranger District, Santa Fe National Forest, proposes to restore a reach of upper Rendija Canyon above Maple Street in the Ponderosa subdivision. Damage to the riparian area occurred in approximately 1,000 feet of this reach during the floods and flood control efforts of September 2013.

Specifically, during the week of September 9, 2013, Los Alamos and surrounding areas received heavy rainfall with reports claiming more than 17 inches of precipitation in some locations. While many areas in and around Los Alamos were affected by this storm, a drainage in Upper Rendija Canyon near Ponderosa Estates caused a particular concern to the County. Where the Canyon crosses Maple Drive, a culvert blockage caused water to nearly over top the roadway, which could have washed away the road.

On September 16, 2013, the county began to clear away the debris blocking the culvert, and cleared the drainage uphill from the culvert for about 1,000 feet. Although the original plan was to clear away the debris and sediment, the sediment could not be moved because it was too heavy as a result of being saturated. The plan at the time was to let the material dry on the channel banks and then remove it as soon as possible.

Until October, 2013, the Santa Fe National Forest had not been included in these activities because of the County's belief that this drainage was part of the subdivision. In fact, the National Forest boundary is just upstream from the culvert and so most of the drainage cleaning was on National Forest. When informed of this, the County stopped work in order to develop a plan forward in coordination with the Forest Service.

Consequently, the County and Espanola Ranger District developed the following proposal (see attached map):

- Remove material pushed out of the channel that is excess to what is needed to return the channel to a natural appropriate grade,
- Return the channel in this reach to a natural appropriate grade, and
- Plant willows and/or other appropriate riparian vegetation to stabilize the channel

Preliminary analysis shows that this proposal falls under a Categorical Exclusion (36 CFR 220.6(e)(19) which applies to projects that restore uplands, wetlands and riparian systems to pre-disturbance conditions, to the extent practicable, by removing debris, sediment, and hazardous conditions following disturbance events. No extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of the category have been identified to date. Therefore, analysis documented in an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement would not be necessary.



The purpose of this comment period is to allow the public early and meaningful participation on a proposed action implementing the land and resource management plan prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official. With this notice we are combining our scoping effort required by 36 CFR 220.4(e)(1) and the Notice and Comment requirement required by 36 CFR 215.

Copies of the proposed action, documentation of the evaluation used for the CE, and additional information about the proposed action can be obtained from the Espanola Ranger District office. The comment period ends 30 days following the date of publication of this legal notice in the *Albuquerque Journal*. Expected date of publication is February 12, 2014. This publication date is the exclusive means for calculating the time to submit comments on the proposed action. Those wishing to comment on this proposal should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source.

Only those who provide comment or otherwise express interest in the proposed action during the comment period will be eligible as appellants. Interest expressed or comments provided on this project prior to or after the close of this comment period can be considered, but will not constitute standing for appeal purposes. To be eligible for appeal, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Comments must meet the requirements of 36 CFR 215.6.

Comments (written or oral) must be submitted by the close of the comment period to Lynn Bjorklund, District Recreation and special uses staff, P.O. Box 3307, Espanola NM 87532; phone number: 505-753-7331; fax number: 505-753-9411. Comments may be submitted by email in word (.doc), portable document format (.pdf), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), hypertext markup language (.html), or any other format readable by Microsoft Word to: comments-southwestern-santafe-espanola@fs.fed.us. Comments may also be hand delivered weekdays 8:00 am - 4:30 pm at the above stated address. All comments received and the names and addresses of those who comment will be placed in the project file and become a matter of public record.

Thank you for your interest and participation.

Sincerely,


SANFORD HURLOCKER
District Ranger

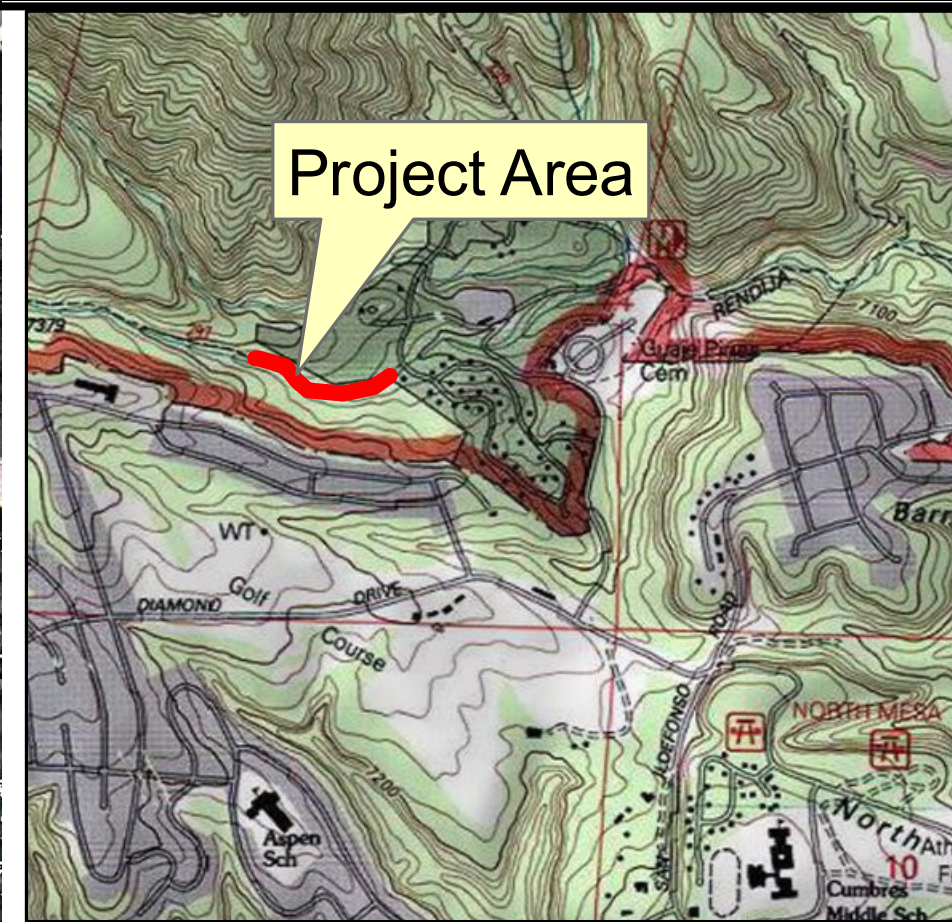


Española Ranger District
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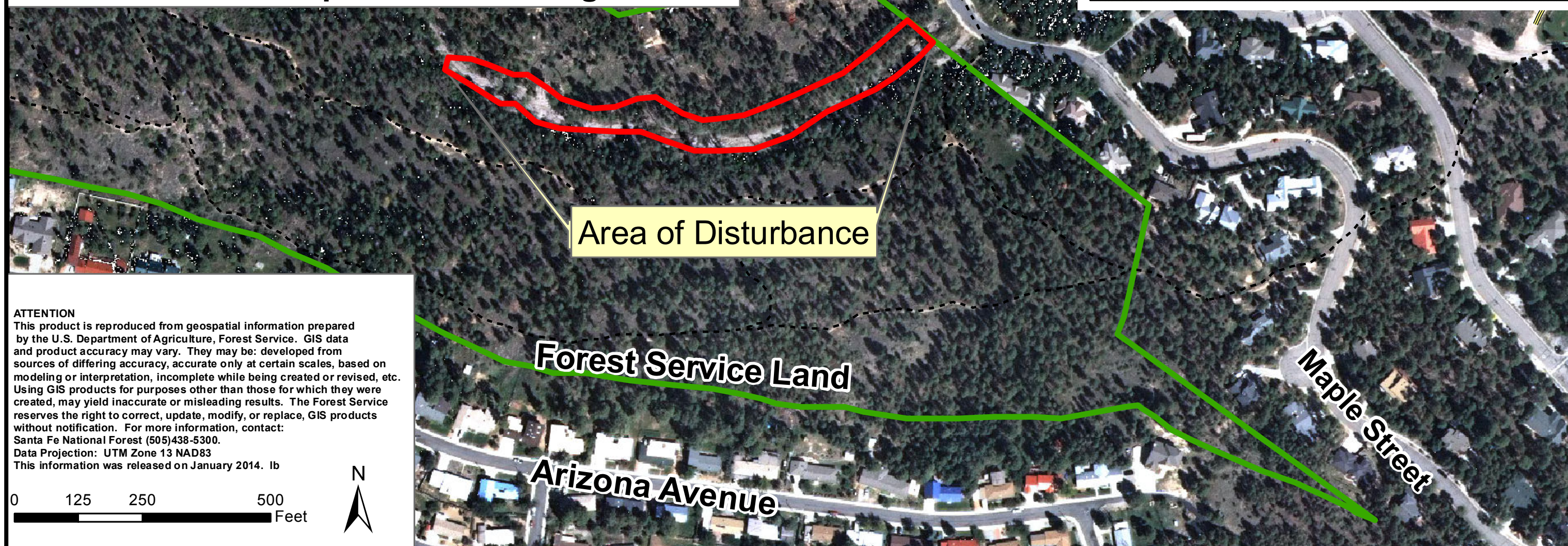
Rendija Drainage Restoration



Photo from Maple Street looking West



Project Area



Area of Disturbance

Forest Service Land

Arizona Avenue

Maple Street

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Data Projection: UTM Zone 13 NAD83
This information was released on January 2014. 1b

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