

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENS FOR FDR 597 IMPROVEMENTS, UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), is seeking public comment on the proposed improvement of Forest Development Road (FDR) 597, also known as Badin Lake Road, from the intersection with McLeans Creek Road (FSR 544) north to the intersection with Shamrock Road (SR 1179). The improvements under consideration would provide a wider two-lane paved road and a bridge over Reeves Spring Branch, as well as replace or reconstruct existing culverts under the road. These improvements would bring Badin Lake Road to current NCDOT design standards, thus enabling NCDOT to take over maintenance of the road in the future and provide a safer road for public travel.

The Environmental Assessment for the proposed improvement of FDR 597 has been completed, and will be made available to the public on **February 24, 2009**. This report describes the purpose of the project, the alternatives analysis process and preferred alternative, existing resources, and anticipated impacts on those resources. To view the document you can: download a copy from www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/recreation/uwharrie --> *Forest Service Announcements* or from www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov, request a personal copy on CD by contacting Teresa Gresham by telephone at (919) 677-2194 or by email at teresa.gresham@kimley-horn.com, visit the District Rangers' office at 789 Highway 24-27 in Troy or 160A Zillicoa Street in Asheville, or visit the Montgomery County Public Library at 215 West Main Street in Troy.

During the 30-day public comment period, all interested persons will be given the opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed improvements. Please submit your comments to:

Lisa Landers
Federal Highway Administration
Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
(817) 978-0571
Lisa.Landers@fhwa.dot.gov

Copies of the EA will also be sent to applicable Federal, State, and local agencies for their review and comment. If you have any additional questions concerning this announcement, please contact Lisa Landers at the number listed above. Please have all comments postmarked or submitted no later than **March 25, 2009**.