

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**for the**

**Red River Ski Area Lift Realignment  
and Boundary Modification**

**USDA Forest Service  
Carson National Forest  
Questa Ranger District**

3/28/00

There are no perennial streams within the RRSA with the exception of a portion of Pioneer creek which is near the NW boundary of RRSA and is not in proximity or influence of the proposal being analyzed.

RRSA is managed through a Special Use Permit to Red River Ski Area, Inc. The project area is in Forest Plan Management Area 16 -- Recreation Sites and a small portion of Forest Plan Management Area 15 -- Potential Recreation Sites [2].

## Red River 1

### PROPOSED ACTION

The Questa Ranger District, Carson National Forest proposes to approve a proposal by RRSA [3] to realign the location and extend the length of the existing "Green" chairlift. In order to realign the Green chairlift, it will be necessary to make a modification to RRSA's permitted ski area boundary. The RRSA has proposed to reduce approximately 22 acres from their presently permitted area and are requesting the permitted area boundary be modified to include approximately 42 acres in the top area of new lift alignment, in effect resulting in approximately a 20 acre addition to the currently permitted area. The final acreages will be determined after further field evaluation is conducted.

The realignment of the lift would require the clearing of 2.75 acres of aspen trees and the extension of the existing trail system would result in 1.4 acres of clearing, for a total of approximately 4.15 acres. The new lift alignment would be approximately 3000 feet in length. The existing Green chair is 1200 feet in length. Approximately 1500 feet of trails would be cleared to tie in the existing trail network and serve the new lift alignment. In the future, as needed, the existing ski area snowmaking pipe and electrical system may be extended to serve the area. No additional service roads would be required, with the possible exception of a short (approximately 350 feet in length) service road from an existing service road to the top of the lift (NOTE - the service roads in the ski area are not open to the public for vehicle use and are used only on a limited basis for maintenance needs). This exception will only be needed if the final lift design includes a top drive terminal. At this time, a bottom drive terminal is preferred, however the final decision on the drive location will be based upon lift availability and cost effectiveness. This realignment will not be visually noticeable from the Town of Red River and will be designed to blend in with the terrain and vegetation to reduce visibility from other areas.

### PURPOSE AND NEED

The realignment of the Green lift would provide better access to terrain in the current ski area boundary (facilitating access to more beginner to low intermediate terrain), access terrain that has good natural snow cover during years of less than average snow fall, provide an opportunity for the ski area to upgrade the Green lift, and allow full utilization and optimum use of the existing trail network. The realignment of the Green chairlift would not change the ski area capacity as the realigned lift will have a very similar capacity as the existing lift.