Requester	Product	Field test location
Texas Department of Health; Rhone Merieux, Inc.; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.	A live, genetically engineered, vaccinia-vectored rabies vaccine that expresses the rabies glycoprotein; the vaccine is enclosed in baits.	Dimmit, Zavala, Frio, Bexar, Atascosa, Wilson, Karnes, Goliad, Refugio, Aransas, San Patricio, Bee, Live Oak, McMullen, La Salle, Calhoun, and Maverick Counties, Texas.

The environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact have been prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) Regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA Regulations Implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) APHIS Guidelines Implementing NEPA (44 FR 50381–50384, August 28, 1979, and 44 FR 51272–51274, August 31, 1979).

Done in Washington, DC, this 1st day of February 1995.

George O. Winegar,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 95–2897 Filed 2–7–95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–M

Forest Service

North Fork Fire Salvage and Associated Activities, Kootenai National Forest, Lincoln County, MT

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The North Fork, 336, and Maxine Wildfire burned over 8000 acres of Kootenai National Forest system lands in the late summer of 1994. The Forest intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess and disclose the environment effects of opportunities designed to recover economic value of burned timber, reduce future fuels accumulations and the corresponding risk of severe reburn, rehabilitate existing sediment sources, improve hydrologic conditions in affected watersheds, and protect long-term soil productivity. These objectives would be accomplished through salvage harvest of fire-killed timber; reforestation of harvested and several burned areas; fuels reduction in harvested areas; restoration of non-essential roads, revegetation of road cuts and fill slopes, and drainage improvement on existing roads; providing for immediate and long-term recruitment of instream large woodly material within the North Fork decision area. The North Fork decision area is located approximately 20 air miles southwest of Eureka, Montana.

All proposals within the North Fork decision area would protect visual quality on stream segments eligible for classification under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, provide for wildlife habitat, and conserve fisheries habitat.

The proposal's actions to salvage fire-killed trees and reforest burned area, construct, reconstruct, and restore roads, reduce fuels and future fire hazard, and implement watershed recovery projects are being considered together because they represent either connected or cumulative actions as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.25). The EIS will trier to the Kootenai National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and Final EIS of September 1987, which provides overall guidance for achieving the desired forest condition of the area.

DATES: Written comments and suggestions should be relieved by March 10, 1995.

ADDRESSES: The Responsible Official is Robert L. Schrenk, Forest Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest. Written comments and suggestions concerning the scope of the analysis should be sent to Robert J. Thompson, District Ranger, Rexford Ranger District, 1299 Hwy 93 N, Eureka, Montana, 59917.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terry Chute, Planner, Rexford Ranger District. Phone (406) 296–2536.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: During the night of August 14–15, 1994, a lightning stormed started 207 fires on the Kootenai National Forest in northwest Montana. Several fires ranging in size from less than one acre to over 7000 acres occurred on the Rexford Ranger District. The North Fork Fire Recovery EIS is being prepared in response to conditions resulting from the largest of these fires, the 8000+ acre North Fork Fire Complex. An interdisciplinary landscape analysis team is using an ecosystem based approach to assess the fires affects and identify management opportunities that could be implemented to move the postfire landscape toward a desired ecological condition.

Burn intensities in the North Fork wildfires varied considerably. Within the fire perimeters approximately 5350 acres burned at high intensity (average 90% tree mortality), 1400 burned at moderate intensity (average 70% mortality), and 1300 acres burned at low intensity (average 30% mortality). The fires burned into or adjacent to the Wild and Scenic study corridors in Big Creek and South Fork Big Creek (eligible for Recreation classification), and North Fork Big Creek and Copeland Creek (eligible for Wild classification), all of which are pending Wild and Scenic River study. The fires also burned within the Big Creek Roadless area #701.

The North Fork decision area contains approximately 36,000 acres within the Kootenai National Forest in Lincoln County, Montana. All of the proposed projects are located in the Big Creek drainage with sub-drainages of North Fork Big, South Fork Big, Good, Mesler, Roberts, Copeland, and Drop Creeks, included. The legal location of the decision area is as follows: Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29, and 30 of Township 34 North, Range 30 West; Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 24 of Township 34 North, Range 30 West; Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 of Township 35 North, Range 30 West; Sections 1, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, and 36 of Township 35 North, Range 31 West; and Sections 21 and 32 of Township 36 North, Range 30 West; Principle Montana Meridian. The land in and adjacent to the decision area is entirely federal ownership under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service.

Proposed Action

The primary purpose of the project is to recover valuable timber products from trees burned by wildfires that occurred in 1994, with the secondary benefit of reducing the potential for future uncontrollable wildfires. Actions are also proposed to enhance watershed recovery and improve grizzly bear habitat security. The Forest Service proposes to harvest approximately 24–27 million board feet of timber by salvaging fire-killed timber and imminently dead trees on approximately 2119 acres of forest land outside riparian protection areas (draft PACFISH criteria) and wild and scenic eligible corridors. Only trees that were killed, or are expected to die as a result of the fires, would be harvested. The proposal includes prescribed burning of about 2006 acres, and excavator piling

on about 113 acres to reduce fuel loads in harvested areas, which would reduce the risk of future large, uncontrollable wildfires. An estimated 2000 acres of proposed salvage units would be planted with conifer seedlings to help meet desired conditions for species diversity. The Forest Service proposal also includes approximately 0.5 miles of temporary road construction, 1.8 miles of permanent road construction, and 2.5 miles of road reconstruction to access the specific harvest units. All temporary roads constructed for this project, as well as an estimated 39 miles of existing non-essential road are proposed for restoration to reduce sediment and water yields, and improve grizzly bear habitat security. Non-essential roads are those that are no longer considered a necessary part of the permanent transportation system. Drainage improvement activities (such as surface ripping, drainage structure improvement, seeding) would be implemented on an additional 4 miles of existing system roads, with the intent of restoring natural drainage and reducing sediment. These roads will be needed for future management access, and would remain a part of the permanent transportation system. Additional road access restrictions may be needed to provide adequate security areas for grizzly bears, however identification of specific road closure proposals is pending further analysis. In addition, projects to improve watershed recovery, reforestation of 475–550 acres of severely burned areas not proposed for salvage, revegetation of road cut and fill slopes, and repair of damaged hiking trails would be accomplished if adequate funds are available.

The decision area includes all or a portion of three roadless areas: the entire Big Creek Roadless Area #701, and portions of the Zulu Roadless Area #166 and Mt. Henry Roadless Area #666. Some timber salvage, fuels reduction activities, and reforestation would occur within the Big Creek Roadless Area; no activities are proposed within the Zulu or Mt. Henry Roadless Areas. No road construction is proposed within any roadless area. No proposed activities are located in areas considered for inclusion to the National Wilderness System as recommended by the Kootenai National Forest Plan or by any past or present legislative wilderness proposals.

Due to the high level of tree mortality in proposed harvest units, most harvested areas would resemble clearcut, seed-tree, or shelterwood silvicultural methods. Only those live trees which must be cut to facilitate logging fire-killed trees would be harvested. In addition to most live trees, 10–15 snags per acre would be retained in all harvested areas if available. Timber harvest would be done by skyline, forwarder or winter tractor, and helicopter, and designated to result in minimal ground disturbance, risk of erosion, and compaction.

The Kootenai National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan provides overall management objectives in individual delineated management areas (MA's). The decision area contains nine MA's: 2, 3, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, and 24. Briefly described, MA 2 is managed to protect and enhance roadless recreation use and provide wildlife values. MA 3 is managed to provide opportunities for dispersed recreation in naturally appearing environments using trails and primitive roads for access. MA 10 is managed to maintain or enhance habitat effectiveness for winter use by big-game animals and protect scenic quality in areas visible from major travel routes. MA 12 is managed to maintain or enhance the summer-range habitat effectiveness for big-game species and produce a programmed yield of timber. MA 13 is managed to provide the special habitat necessary for old growth dependent wildlife. MA 14 focuses on maintaining or enhancing grizzly bear habitat, reducing grizzly/human conflicts, assisting in the recovery of the grizzly bear, realizing a programmed yield of timber production, and providing for the maintenance or enhancement of other wildlife species, especially big game. MA 15 is managed primarily for timber production while providing for other resource values. MA 19 is managed to protect soil stability and water quality by maintaining the vegetation in a healthy condition and minimizing surface disturbance. MA 24 is managed to protect mid to high elevation sites with rocky, thin soils. This MA is also managed for any wildlife resources that may occur. Timber salvage and fuels reduction is proposed in MA 12, MA 14, and MA 24.

Preliminary Issues

Several preliminary issues of concern have been identified by the Forest Service. These issues are briefly described below:

- Water Quality—Streams in the decision area have been impacted by past management and large wildfires. How would the proposed action affect water yield, sediment production, stream stability, and recovery from past impacts?
- Timber Supply—An estimated 92 million board feet of timber was killed in the North Fork Fire complex. Much of this fire-killed timber will quickly lose its commercial value due to rapid deterioration. To what extent does the proposed action recover the commercial value of fire-killed timber to help meet local and national needs?
- Activity in Roadless Areas—What effect would the proposal have on the roadless character of the Big Creek Roadless Area and other roadless areas?
- Grizzly Bear—The decision area lies within the recovery area for the Cabinet/Yaak grizzly bear ecosystem. How would the proposal maintain and enhance grizzly bear habitat, and contribute to recovery efforts?
- Old Growth—An estimated 1500 acres of designated old growth was destroyed by intense, stand replacing wildfire. What options are available to manage for suitable levels of old growth habitat in the decision area?
- Fisheries—Some streams contain fisheries habitat and resident fish populations, including torrent sculpin (a Region 1 sensitive species), possibly bull trout (currently being considered for listing as a threatened or endangered species), and westslope cutthroat trout (likely hybridized). How would the proposed action affect fisheries habitat and populations?
- Future Fire Risk—The wildfires of 1994 killed more trees over a larger area than would be expected in this ecosystem. Over the next 20 years most of these fire killed trees will fall, creating high fuel loadings over an area that is unprecedented in scale. Recurrence of wildfires are anticipated within the next 50 years, and could produce more severe effects to soils, water resources, and vegetation than the 1994 fires. How would the proposed action reduce future fuel loads and the corresponding risk of severe, uncontrollable wildfire?

Forest Plan Amendment

The Kootenai National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan has specific management direction for the North Fork decision area. The North Fork proposed action is designed to maintain or improve resource conditions and move towards achieving desired ecological conditions, and is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan. Prior to making a NEPA decision, a thorough examination of all standards and guidelines of the Forest Plan would be completed and, if necessary, plan exceptions or amendments would be addressed in the EIS.

Decision To Be Made

The Kootenai National Forest Supervisor will decide the following:

Should dead and imminently dead trees within fire areas be harvested and if so how and where,

What amount, type, and distribution of watershed restoration projects, including road restoration, would be implemented,

What burned areas need to be replanted,

What road access restrictions would be implemented to provide security for grizzly bears, and

If Forest Plan exception or amendments are necessary to proceed with the Proposal Action within the decisions area.

Public Involvement and Scoping

Some public participation efforts have already been initiated. On October 1, 1994 a public field trip to the North Fork Decision Area was held to provide interested people with an opportunity to view the fire areas and ask questions of fire managers and resource specialists. On January 10, 1995, an open house and slide presentation was held with 25 individuals attending. Comments were requested during both of these public involvement efforts. An open house will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on February 21, 1995 at the Rexford Ranger District office, 1299 Hwy 93 N, Eureka, MT 59917, to provide an opportunity for the public to review of the proposed action. Consultation with appropriate State and Federal agencies has been initiated. Preliminary effects analysis indicated that the wildfires may significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and fire recovery activities have the potential to both intensify and reduce effects. These potential effects prompted the decision to prepare an EIS for the North Fork Fire Salvage.

This environmental analysis and decision making process will enable additional interested and affected people to participate and contribute to the final decision. Public participation will be requested at several points during the analysis. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, local agencies, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed projects. This input will be used in preparation of the draft and final EIS. The scoping process will include:

- Identifying potential issues.
- Identifying major issues to be analyzed in depth.
- Exploring addition alternatives which will be derived from issues recognized during scoping activities.
- Identifying potential environmental effects of this project and alternatives (i.e. direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).

The analysis will consider a range of alternatives, including the proposed action, no action, and other reasonable action alternatives.

Estimated Dates for Filing

The draft North Fork Fire Recovery EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by April, 1995. At that time EPA will publish a Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**.

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed by August, 1995. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making a decision regarding the proposal.

Reviewer's Obligations

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp.* v. *NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also environment objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon* v. *Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc.* v. *Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45 day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider and respond to them in the final EIS.

To be most helpful, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible and may address the adequacy of the statement or the merit of the alternatives discussed. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Responsible Official

Robert L. Schrenk, Forest Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest, 506 US Highway 2 West, Libby, MT 59923 is the responsible Official. I have delegated the responsibility to prepare the North Fork Fire Salvage Environmental Impact Statement to Robert J. Thompson, District Ranger, Rexford Ranger District. As the Responsible Office I will decide which, if any, of the proposed projects will be implemented. I will document the decision and reasons for the decisions in the Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations.

Dated: January 30, 1995.

Robert L. Schrenk,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 95–3046 Filed 2–7–95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

Zaca Mine Project; Toiyabe National Forest, Alpine County, CA

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and Alpine County Planning Department will be jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR) for the proposed development of an open pit/heap leach gold and silver mining project in Alpine County, California. Preparation of the EIS will be assisted by a third party contractor, funded by the proponent, Western States Minerals Corporation (WSM).

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing no later than March 27, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: R.M. ''Jim'' Nelson, Forest Supervisor, Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, Nevada 89431.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions about the proposed project and preparation of the EIS to Maureen Joplin, Project Team Leader, Toiyabe National Forest. Telephone: 702–355–5394.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Western States Minerals Corporation (WSM) has filed a proposed Plan of Operations (POO) for an open pit/cyanide heap leach gold/silver mine in Alpine County, California. The project is located approximately four miles southeast of Markleeville in sections 29,30,31 and 32, T10N R21E, M.D.M. Total area of proposed disturbance is