

Monticello District Ranger decisions:
San Juan Record, Monticello, Utah
 Price District Ranger decisions:
Sun Advocate, Price, Utah
 Sanpete District Ranger decisions:
Sanpete Messenger, Manti, Utah

Payette National Forest

Payette Forest Supervisor decisions:
Idaho Statesman, Boise, Idaho
 Council District Ranger decisions:
Adams County Record, Council, Idaho
 Krassel District Ranger decisions:
Star News, McCall, Idaho
 McCall District Ranger decisions:
Star News, McCall, Idaho
 New Meadows District Ranger
 decisions:
Star News, McCall, Idaho
 Weiser District Ranger decisions:
Signal American, Weiser, Idaho

Salmon-Challis National Forest

Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor
 decisions for the Salmon portion:
The Recorder-Herald, Salmon, Idaho
 Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor
 decisions for the Challis portion:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho
 Challis District Ranger decisions:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho
 Leadore District Ranger decisions:
The Recorder-Herald, Salmon, Idaho
 Lost River District Ranger decisions:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho
 Middle Fork District Ranger decisions:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho
 North Fork District Ranger decisions:
The Recorder-Herald, Salmon, Idaho
 Salmon/Cobalt District Ranger
 decisions:
The Recorder-Herald, Salmon, Idaho
 Yankee Fork District Ranger decisions:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho

Sawtooth National Forest

Sawtooth Forest Supervisor decisions:
The Times News, Twin Falls, Idaho
 Fairfield District Ranger decisions:
The Times News, Twin Falls, Idaho
 Ketchum District Ranger decisions:
Idaho Mountain Express, Ketchum,
 Idaho
 Minidoka District Ranger decisions:
The Times News, Twin Falls, Idaho
 Sawtooth National Recreation Area:
The Challis Messenger, Challis, Idaho

Uinta National Forest

Uinta Forest Supervisor decisions:
The Daily Herald, Provo, Utah
 Heber District Ranger decisions:
The Daily Herald, Provo, Utah
 Pleasant Grove District Ranger
 decisions:
The Daily Herald, Provo, Utah
 Spanish Fork District Ranger decisions:
The Daily Herald, Provo, Utah

Wasatch-Cache National Forest

Wasatch-Cache Forest Supervisor
 decisions:

Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City,
 Utah

Evanston District Ranger decisions:
Uinta County Herald, Evanston,
 Wyoming
 Kamas District Ranger decisions:
Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City,
 Utah
 Logan District Ranger decisions:
Logan Herald Journal, Logan, Utah
 Mountain View District Ranger
 decisions:
Uinta County Herald, Evanston,
 Wyoming
 Ogden District Ranger decisions:
Ogden Standard Examiner, Ogden,
 Utah
 Salt Lake District Ranger decisions:
Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City,
 Utah

Dated: October 11, 2005.

Stephen J. Solem,

Acting Deputy Regional Forester.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Dry Fork Vegetative Restoration Project, Lewis and Clark National Forest, Cascade and Judith Basin Counties, MT

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA Forest Service is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to further address issues associated with old growth associated with the Dry Fork Vegetative Restoration project on the Belt Creek Ranger District of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. This project proposes treatments including timber harvest and prescribed fire to move vegetative conditions such as age class and stand structure towards those that would most likely occur in the absence of fire suppression.

DATES: The Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is expected January 2006 and the Supplemental Final EIS and Record of Decision are expected April 2006.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Lesley W. Thompson, Forest Supervisor, Lewis and Clark National Forest, P.O. Box 869, Great Falls, Montana 59403. Copies of the SEIS will be available at the Supervisor's Office, 1101 15th Street North, Great Falls, Montana 59403. Electronic copies will also be available on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/>

r1/lewisclark in the Projects and Plans area.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions about the proposed action should be directed to Jennifer Woods, Environmental Coordinator, (406) 791-7765; or Al Koss, Belt Creek District Ranger, phone (406) 236-5511.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

A landscape assessment conducted by the Forest identified risks and opportunities for the Belt Creek assessment area in the Little Belt Mountains south and east of Great Falls. It showed that trends in some types of vegetation, the age distribution, stand structure and vegetative mosaic deviated notably from what might have occurred under natural conditions. The purpose and need for the Dry Fork Vegetative Restoration project is to move vegetation in a portion of the assessment area toward desired conditions using prescribed fire and timber harvest. An emphasis would be given to areas where there would be improved diversity in vegetative structure, species and age class. In addition, there is a need to reduce wildfire hazards to public and to fire fighters and better protect private lands within and adjacent to the forest.

Proposed Action

Approximately 3,416 acres would be treated using commercial timber harvest and prescribed fire treatment. Road reconstruction would take place on 4.9 miles of existing road and 1.7 miles of new system road would be constructed. No timber harvest would be conducted within inventoried roadless areas. Approximately 20.6 miles of road closures would be implemented through gating, signing, reclamation and change of use.

Alternatives

Alternatives that were considered in detailed study include the No Action Alternative and five additional alternatives that considered a variety of types and amounts of vegetation treatments. In addition, seven other alternatives were considered, but did not merit further evaluation due to lack of feasibility, economics, or because they did not meet the purpose and need.

Responsible Official

The Responsible Official is Lesley W. Thompson, Forest Supervisor, Lewis and Clark National Forest, P.O. Box 869, Great Falls, MT 59403.

Nature of the Decision To Be Made

The scope of the actions in the decision are limited to vegetative treatment measures within the analysis area that would result in a change in age class and structure of the current vegetative conditions, including timber harvest and use of prescribed burning, as well as road management determinations, including road construction and reconstruction.

Scoping Process

The proposal was developed with input from state congressional offices, county commissioners, and local community members, who formed an association as a forum for ensuring community viewpoints were communicated. Two public field trips and two public meetings were held at which approximately 100 people attended. A formal scoping letter was sent to interested parties in April 1998 and a Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact was released in June 2000. Three appeals were received and the vegetative portion of the decision was reversed to better address effects of the project to soil resources.

The USDA Forest Service published a notice of intent to conduct an EIS for the Dry Fork Vegetative Restoration project in the **Federal Register** on November 17, 2000 (Vol. 65, No. 233, page 69496).

The Forest Service released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in April 2001. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision were released in November 2001. The project was administratively appealed and the Forest Supervisor decision was upheld through administrative review. On June 19, 2003, The Ecology Center and Native Ecosystem Council filed a complaint in the district court for the District of Montana seeking declaratory and injunctive relief. In February 2004, the District Court ruled in favor of the Forest Service. Plaintiffs in that case appealed to the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. On August 10, 2005, the Court of Appeals reversed the District Court and remanded the case to the Forest Service. The Court of Appeals made the following determinations:

1. The Forest Service failed to demonstrate that the project was consistent with the forest plan's old growth forest standard, and thus failed to comply with the Forest Act.

2. The Forest Service failed to demonstrate that the project was consistent with the forest plan's goshawk monitoring requirements. The Supplemental EIS will address issues associated with the forest plan old

growth standard as it relates to the proposed action. A forest plan monitoring report will address issues associated with forest plan goshawk monitoring requirements.

Preliminary Issues

Key issues that were identified include the possible negative environmental effects to soil and water quality and fisheries resources, effects of treatments for addressing forest health issues, effects of actions on wildlife species and their habitat, and effects to recreational activities and opportunities.

Comments Requested

The Draft Supplemental EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in January 2006. At that time the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft Supplemental EIS in the Federal Register. The comment period for the Draft Supplemental EIS will be 45 days from the publication date of the NOA. A Supplemental Final EIS and new Record of Decision will then be prepared.

Early Notice of the Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage 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, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *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 them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental

impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (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).

Dated: October 11, 2005.

Lesley W. Thompson,

Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District, Georgetown, CA; Notice of Intent To Prepare a Supplement to the Rock Creek Recreational Trails Final Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare a supplement to the 1999 Rock Creek Recreational Trails EIS. The supplement will be limited to the cumulative environmental effects on the Pacific Deer Herd. Specifically, the supplement will analyze the cumulative effects of the existing proposed action and all alternatives, in combination with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, as bounded by the mapped range of the Pacific Deer Herd.

DATES: Scoping is not required for supplements to environmental impact statements (40 CFR 1502.9(c)4(4)). The draft supplemental environmental impact statement is expected to be issued in January 2006 and the final supplemental environmental impact statement is expected June 2006. Comments on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement must be received by 45 days after publication.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Tim Dabney, District Ranger, Georgetown Ranger Station, 7600 Wentworth Springs Road, Georgetown, CA 95634, Attn: Rock Creek Supplement.