



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Idaho Panhandle
National Forest

Coeur d'Alene River
Ranger District

P. O. Box 159
Smelterville, ID 83868

2502 East Sherman Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

File Code: 1950

Date: May 30, 2008

Hello –

Enclosed is your copy of the **Blue Alder Environmental Assessment** (EA). A number of you were instrumental in working with us in developing the need for action in this wildland urban interface area and the management opportunities that were appropriate for responding to the need. I want to thank the Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce, who helped establish the Coeur d'Alene Forest Coalition, a public collaborative forum that allowed us to engage a diverse group of interested and affected parties early on in the project planning process. Participants to the forum spent many an hour in public meetings and field trips; it was an educational process for all of us and I know it brought forth a better product. The input gathered from the collaborative effort and more formal public comment periods was considered in developing the range of alternatives and assessing environmental impacts from the alternatives. This information is documented in the EA.

The EA was prepared under the authority of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA, PL 108-148). The HFRA provides a pre-decisional administrative review process (referred to as the “objection” process) pursuant to 36 CFR 218, subpart A. It is not subject to notice, comment and appeal provisions pursuant to 36 CFR 215 (see 36 CFR 218.3).

Legal notice is being published in the Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper announcing availability of the document and describing the objection process. The publication date of the legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (36 CFR 218.9(a)). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. At a minimum, an objection must include the following (36 CFR 218.7(d)):

1. *The objector's name and address, with a telephone number if available;*
2. *A signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for Email may be filed with the objection);*
3. *When multiple names are listed on the objection, identification of the lead objector (verification of the identity of the lead objector will be provided upon request);*
4. *The name of the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the name(s) of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s) on which the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project will be implemented; and*
5. *Provide sufficient narrative description of those aspects of the project that are objected to, to identify specific issues related to the proposed project and to suggest remedies that resolve the objection (36 CFR 218.7(b)).*

Incorporation of documents by reference will not be allowed in the objection (36 CFR 218.7(c)).

An objection, including any attachments, must be filed in writing (regular mail, fax, Email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the Reviewing Officer within 30 days of the date of publication of the legal notice (36 CFR 218.9(a)). The Reviewing Officer for this project is Thomas L. Tidwell, Northern Regional Forester. Objections may be submitted to him by mail at: USDA Forest Service, Northern Region, P.O. Box 7669, Missoula, MT 59807; by fax at (406) 329-3411; or by e-mail at appeals-northern-regional-office@fs.fed.us. The acceptable formats for submitting an electronic objection are: MS Word, Word Perfect, or RTF. Please type “Blue Alder Resource Area Objection” in the



e-mail subject line. Hand-delivered objections will be accepted at the Regional Forester's Office, 200 E. Broadway, Missoula, MT, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All objections will be open to public inspection during the objection process (36 CFR 218.7(a)).

As you can see, the EA and associated documents are being provided on compact disk (CD), which offers a number of convenient features. The document is "book marked" so the viewer can easily navigate from one section of the document to another. The viewer can also "zoom" in on maps and other materials, which make them considerably easier to read. In addition, the charts and graphs are nearly all displayed in color, while the printed copy of the EA displays most charts, graphs and photographs in shades of gray.

I would encourage you to first try the CD format if you have access to a computer. If not, printed copies will be provided to those who request them. If you received a CD but need to have a printed copy, please contact Kerry Arneson at our Fernan Office (208-769-3021). For the convenience of our interested public and in an effort to conserve paper and reduce publication costs, documents related to this proposal are also available to the public on our Forest's internet web page: <http://www.fs.fed.us/ipnf/eco/manage/nepa>.

The Responsible Official for this proposal is Forest Supervisor Ranotta K. McNair (3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815; telephone 208-765-7223). For more information, please contact Project Team Leader Matt Bienkowski at (208) 664-2318. After consideration of any objections raised to the Reviewing Official and his associated response, Forest Supervisor McNair will issue a decision for the Blue Alder Resource Area.

Sincerely,

Randall G. Swick

RANDALL G. SWICK
District Ranger

enclosure

