



File Code: 1950

Date: August 30, 2006

Hello –

Enclosed is your copy of the **South Grouse Environmental Assessment (EA)**. This project is designed to reduce threats from catastrophic wildfire and to improve forest health. I think our team has done a good job addressing the comments and concerns that were brought up during the collaborative process. A key change from earlier proposals is that all road construction is now temporary in nature, and would be decommissioned at the end of the project. Furthermore, the total amount of proposed road construction has been reduced.

This EA is being conducted 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 Spokesman-Review newspaper announcing availability of the document and describing the objection process. Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted written comments specific to the proposed project during scoping or other opportunity for public comment (36 CFR 218.6). 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 Abigail R. Kimbell, Northern Regional Forester. Objections may be submitted to her by mail at: USDA Forest Service, Northern Region, P.O. Box 7669, Missoula, MT 59807; by fax at (406) 329-3411; or by Email 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 “South Grouse Objection” in the e-mail



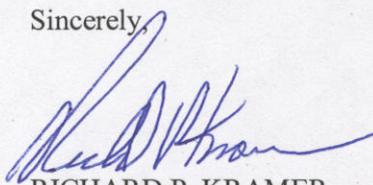
subject line. Hand-delivered objections will be accepted at the Regional Forester's Office, 200 E. Broadway, Missoula, MT, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All objections will be open to public inspection during the objection process (36 CFR 218.7(a)).

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). She will make a decision on the project following the objection period. A copy of this decision will be mailed to those who indicated an interest in the project.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact A.J. Helgenberg (208-265-6643). Thank you for taking the time to review the Environmental Assessment.

Sincerely,



RICHARD P. KRAMER
District Ranger

