



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Idaho Panhandle
National Forests

St. Joe Ranger District
222 S. 7th St. Suite 1
St. Maries, ID 83861
(208) 245-2531

File Code: 1950

Date: March 27, 2008

Dear Friends and Neighbors of the St. Joe Ranger District:

The St. Joe Ranger District is proposing prescribed burning with the Heller-Cascade Landscape Burning Project to improve stand conditions, improve big game forage, and reduce natural fuels. Please refer to the enclosed "Notice of Proposed Action for 30-Day Comment Period" for details about the Heller-Cascade Landscape Burning Project. I'd like to get your input on the proposal, and you will need to comment on this proposed action to have standing for appeal. The project area is in the upper St. Joe River Drainage on the northeast side of the St. Joe River up to the Idaho/Montana state line and extends from the Heller Creek Drainage to the Wisdom Creek Drainage.

The preliminary analysis of this proposal indicates it fits a category of actions that may be excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. This proposed action falls under FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31.2, Category 6, "Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction (Service level D, FSH 7709.56)."

This project includes prescribed burning which is subject to public comment, notice, and appeal under the 36 CFR 215 rules. A 30-day comment period provides those interested in or affected by this proposal an opportunity to make their concerns known before a decision is made. Only those individuals and organizations providing comments during this 30-day comment period will be eligible to appeal the decision pursuant to 36 CFR part 215 regulations. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. Comments received from an authorized representative(s) of an organization are considered those of the organization only; individual members of that organization do not meet appeal eligibility solely on the basis of membership in an organization; the member(s) must submit comments as an individual in order to meet appeal eligibility.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of this notice in the *Coeur d'Alene Press*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. You should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. The expected date of publication is April 1, 2008.

Written comments must be submitted to: Charles Mark, District Ranger, St. Joe Ranger District, 222 S. 7th St, Suite 1, St. Maries, ID 82861. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the St. Joe Ranger District office in St. Maries,

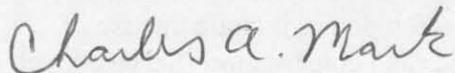


Idaho during normal business hours via telephone (208)245-2531 or in person; or at an official agency function (i.e. public meeting) that is designed to elicit public comments. Electronic comments must be submitted in Word (.doc) or Word Perfect format to comments-northern-idpanhandle-stjoe@fs.fed.us. The subject line must contain the name of this project. For electronically mailed comments, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of the receipt of comments, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means. For appeal eligibility each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request.

The decision memo will be mailed to those individuals and organizations who submit comments during the project planning process or who specifically requested documents pertaining to this project. I will use your comments to complete the decision memo for the project. If we do not hear from you, your name will be removed from the mailing list for this project.

If you have any questions please contact Cornie Hudson at (208)245-2531. I look forward to working with you on this important and worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles A. Mark".

CHARLES A. MARK
District Ranger