



File Code: 1950

Date: February 20, 2009

Dear Planning Partner,

Enclosed is the East Otter Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact.

The East Otter Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project is an authorized fuel reduction project as defined by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, section 101(2). This project is subject to the Predecisional Administrative Review Process (referred to as the 'objection process') pursuant to 36 CFR 218, subpart A. This process is not subject to notice, comment, and appeal provisions pursuant to 36 CFR 215 (see 36 CFR 218.3).

I am the Responsible Official for this project. Copies of the EA may be obtained by writing or calling the Ashland Ranger District office, (PO Box 168 2378 Highway 212 Ashland, Montana, or by phone at (406)784-2344), or may be viewed on the Internet at www.fs.fed.us/r1/custer/. Additional information about the proposed project may also be obtained from the project leader, Nathan Gassmann, at the Ashland Ranger District, or viewed online at www.fs.fed.us/r1/custer/.

Objections must be filed with the Reviewing Officer in writing. The Reviewing Officer is the next higher level supervisor of the Responsible Official. Objections must be submitted 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 "East Otter Hazardous Fuels Reduction Objection" in the Email subject line. Hand-delivered objections will be accepted at the Regional Forester's Office, 200 E. Broadway, Missoula, MT, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All objections shall be open to public inspection during the objection process (36 CFR 218.7(a)). Objections will be accepted only from those who submitted written comments specific to the proposed project during the 30 day comment period for an environmental assessment (36 CFR 218.6).

The publication date of this legal notice in the Billings Gazette 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. An objection, including any attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, Email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) as stated above within 30 days of the date of publication of this legal notice for the objection process (36 CFR 218.9(a)). Incorporation of documents by reference shall not be allowed in the objection (36 CFR 218.7(c)).

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 an objection, identification of the lead objector (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall 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 (36 CFR 218.7(b)) by identifying specific issues and suggested remedies which would resolve the objection.

If an objection is received on this project, the Reviewing Officer and objector may meet and/or converse by telephone to discuss issues raised in the objection and potential resolution. The Reviewing Officer has the discretion to determine whether or not adequate time remains in the review period to make a meeting with the objector practical. These meetings would take place soon after the closing date for filing an objection. All meetings are open to the public. If you are interested in attending any resolution discussions, please contact the Responsible Official or monitor the following website for postings about current objections in the Northern Region of the Forest Service: http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/projects/appeal_index.shtml.

Sincerely,



ELIZABETH A. MCFARLAND
District Ranger