



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Hungry Horse and Glacier View
Ranger Districts
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Hungry Horse, MT 59919

File Code: 1950

Date: October 30, 2008

Cathy Barbouletos, Flathead National Forest Supervisor, signed the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Belton Fuels Reduction Project today. This project will treat approximately 1,824 acres of National Forest System lands within a larger project area generally extending between the towns of Hungry Horse and West Glacier, and from the Middle Fork Flathead River east to the Belton Point/Desert Mountain ridgeline.

This Decision allows for management activities designed to reduce the intensity and severity of future wildland fires, increase the diversity of tree species to include more fire-tolerant species, and to create a mosaic of vegetation conditions across the landscape to benefit wildlife. Portions of this project may begin as early as summer 2009, but more likely may begin in 2010 or 2011. Complete descriptions of current stand conditions, proposed vegetation treatments, and proposed prescribed burning treatments can be found in the Belton Fuels Reduction Environmental Assessment (EA). The following activities are allowed in this Decision:

- Mechanical fuels reduction (thinning and regeneration treatments) on approximately 908 acres to reduce the intensity and severity of future wildfires.
- Prescribed burning on approximately 916 acres to reduce fuels and improve wildlife habitat diversity and forage abundance.
- Planting about 197 acres with conifers to help initiate a new stand of fire-resistant trees.
- Removal of approximately 3.0 million board feet (mmbf) of merchantable material.

This decision is based on information contained in the Belton Fuels Reduction Project EA, the supporting information in the Project File, and on comments received from members of the public and other agencies during the public involvement phase of the project and the 30-day comment period that followed publication of the EA. The response to public comments is contained in Appendix B of the Belton Fuels Reduction Project Decision Notice.

This decision is subject to administrative appeal. A written appeal must be submitted within 45 days following the publication of the legal notice of the decision in the Daily Inter Lake newspaper. Details of how to appeal this decision are described at the end of the Decision Notice. Additional copies of the Belton Fuels Reduction Project Decision Notice can be obtained at the Hungry Horse Ranger District office.

Those of you who have commented will receive copies of the Decision Notice with this letter. If you did not receive a Decision Notice with this letter, you may request a copy by calling the Hungry Horse Ranger Station (406-387-3800), you may pick one up at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station, or you may download one from the Flathead National Forest website www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead/nepa/nepa.



If you have any questions or concerns, please contact District Ranger Jimmy DeHerrera (406-387-3800) or Planning Team Leader Michele Draggoo (406-387-3827), you may also write to the above address. Thank you for your interest and involvement with the Belton Fuels Reduction Project.

Sincerely,

JIMMY DEHERRERA
District Ranger

Enclosure