

CHAPTER 1

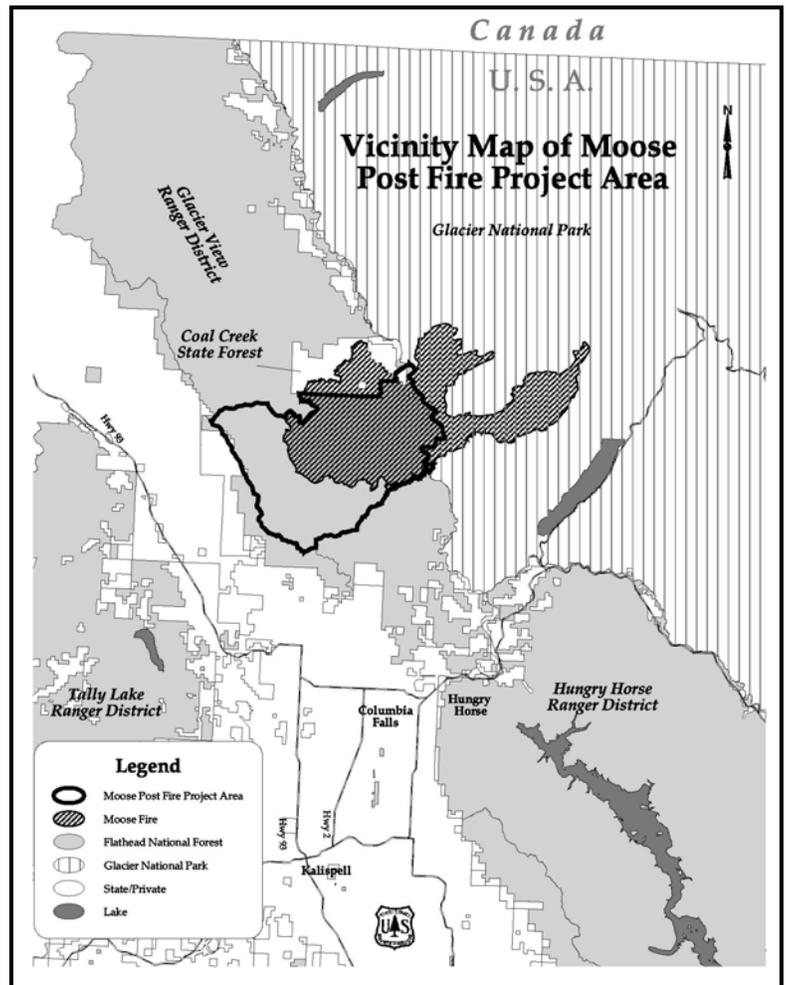
Purpose and Need

I. INTRODUCTION

Moose Fire

The Moose Fire started on August 14, 2001, the result of a lightning strike from a storm near the Whitefish Divide within the Glacier View Ranger District, Flathead National Forest. The fire made several very large runs down the Big Creek drainage due to high gusty winds and dry temperatures. By early September, the fire had grown to 43,000 acres due to winds pushing the fire east across the North Fork Road and the North Fork Flathead River into Glacier National Park. The fire continued to run east into Glacier National Park and to the south on Flathead National Forest land, forcing an evacuation of Big Creek Campground. To protect the old Glacier View Ranger Station complex, now occupied by Glacier Institute, fire fighters successfully applied a “burnout operation.”

By October 2nd, at approximately 71,000 acres, the fire was considered 88 percent contained. The fire did not gain much in acreage after this date. Acres burned were 35,750 acres within the Flathead National Forest 26,955 acres in Glacier National Park 6856 acres of State of Montana lands, and 953 acres of private lands Refer to Map 1-1 for a view of the fire and its effects on ownership.



Map 1-1: Vicinity of Project Area

Fireline rehabilitation work started at the end of September and included moving woody material back onto the firelines that was removed while building the firelines; cutting dangerous snags for safety reasons; building waterbars or ditches to redirect surface water and prevent soil erosion; and other soil erosion prevention work.

Organization of this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

Like the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), this final EIS (FEIS) considers the effects of various alternatives to manage a portion of the Flathead National Forest that includes the area burned by the 2001 Moose Fire. This document is prepared according to the format established by Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) found in 40 CFR 1500-1508.

Chapter 1 outlines the project area, the purpose of and need for the proposed project, how the *Moose Post-Fire Project* relates to the Forest Plan, and the scope of the proposed action and analysis. **Chapter 2** presents detailed descriptions of the *proposed action* (the Forest Service proposal) and public involvement, identifies significant issues, and describes alternatives to the proposal (including taking no action). The alternatives were developed to address or resolve environmental issues related to the proposal that were identified through public and agency comment on the proposed action. **Chapter 3** describes the natural and human environments potentially affected by the proposed action and alternatives, and discloses what potential effects are anticipated. The end of the document contains appendices, a list of persons who prepared the FEIS document, the FEIS distribution list, a summary of literature cited, and a glossary. This FEIS incorporates documented analyses by summarization and reference where appropriate. **Chapter 4** contains the comments received on the DEIS and Forest Service responses.

Changes to Chapter 1 between the DEIS and the FEIS

Modifications to activities related to the proposed action were made based on public comments on the DEIS and results from field verifications related to the initial analysis.

Copies of this FEIS are available from the Flathead National Forest Supervisor's Office (1935 3rd Avenue East, Kalispell, MT 59901), and at the Hungry Horse Ranger Station (8975 Hwy 2 East, P.O. Box 190340, Hungry Horse, MT 59919). Copies can also be requested by calling (406)-758-5200, or (406)-387-3800. In addition, copies are available for review at the Flathead County Library branches in Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls, MT. The project planning record located at the Three Forks Zone Office in Hungry Horse, Montana includes additional information and more detailed analyses of project area resources. These records are available for public review.

II. BACKGROUND

Pre-Fire Analyses

Before the Moose Fire, two environmental analyses in the Big Creek drainage provided pre-fire baseline information. A landscape-level assessment of the Big Creek drainage was completed in November 1999. The *Big Creek Geographic Unit Ecosystem Analysis at the Watershed Scale (Big Creek EAWS)* considered social, physical, and biological factors both on a landscape and a stand basis. The EAWS made no decisions but provided both short-term and long-term recommendations for managing the Big Creek watershed. From this assessment, the *Big Creek Resource Management Project* emerged. This site-specific project proposed various activities within the Big Creek drainage; however, the analysis for the project was not complete at the time the 2001 Moose Fire occurred.

Moose Post-Fire Analysis

During the latter stages of the Moose Fire, two analyses were initiated to: 1) determine emergency rehabilitation needs, and 2) evaluate the primary concerns related to the post-fire effects on terrestrial, aquatic, and social ecosystem components.

Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation

The first analysis, Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) (project record V-9) used a team of regional and local resource specialists representing several different government agencies to determine emergency actions needed to protect watersheds from the effects of the fire. Some of the actions identified and subsequently completed included aerial seeding; placing straw wattles on a very severely burned area; cleaning road ditches, culvert inlets, and catch basins; constructing diversion dips on roads; and upgrading several culverts. Additional watershed rehabilitation treatments and monitoring of the effectiveness of completed work will continue in 2002.

Post-Fire Assessment

Following the BAER analysis, the Flathead National Forest assembled an interdisciplinary team to assess post-fire conditions for the Moose Fire and three other non-wilderness fires that burned within the forest. The result was a document titled: *Wildfires of 2001 Post Fire Assessment of the Moose - Werner Peak - Ear - Sunset Peak Fires (2001 Post-Fire Assessment)*. See project record U-1. Besides providing a history of each fire, the assessment was designed to:

- Identify post-fire and post-BAER rehabilitation and restoration needs and opportunities within and adjacent to burned areas; Review pertinent Forest Plan guidance for the management areas affected by the fire.
- Identify potential management actions within the fire areas.
- Provide a context for potential post-fire management activities.
- Identify and recommend appropriate NEPA strategies for potential projects, including potential key issues and purpose and need statements

Fire Recovery and Restoration Activities

The *2001 Post-Fire Assessment* recommended numerous restoration and recovery actions and management opportunities, including the activities included in the proposed action described for the Moose Post-Fire Project. Many restoration and recovery activities are being addressed under separate NEPA analyses and are included as reasonably foreseeable actions in the cumulative effects analysis disclosed in Chapter 3. A list of reasonably foreseeable actions is located at the beginning of chapter 3. Some of these activities include:

- **Reforestation Activities** – Numerous activities to revegetate and reforest sites throughout the Moose Fire area. Activities began in the spring of 2002. Reforestation of proposed salvage harvest activities are included as part of proposed activities addressed in the Moose Post-Fire Project FEIS.
- **Road Maintenance Activities** – Roads throughout the Big Creek and Coal Creek watersheds require attention to drainage to make sure they meet best management practices (BMP) standards and that road drainage and culvert sizes can accommodate anticipated increased run-off resulting from the fire. Activities began in the spring of 2002. Additional road maintenance work on roads planned for timber hauling associated with proposed harvest activities is addressed in the *Moose Post-Fire Project FEIS*.
- **Trail Maintenance** – The fire damaged several trails that are now in need of maintenance activities or reconstruction. Work began in the summer of 2002 and will continue in subsequent years depending on funding.
- **Noxious Weed Monitoring and Treatment** – Monitoring and treatment of noxious weed infestations in the Moose Fire area began in 2002. The *2001 Forest-wide Noxious and Invasive Weed Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice* authorizes and guides this work.
- **Fish Habitat/Channel Stability Improvement** – In-stream activities to help maintain channel stability may occur in some specific stream segments.
- **Visitor Safety** – Signing and periodic removal of dead trees that constitute safety hazards in and adjacent to administrative sites and recreation facilities will occur; it began in 2002.
- **Inventory and Monitoring** – The *2001 Post-Fire Assessment* identified a variety of inventory and monitoring opportunities. These activities are being implemented as funding allows (See chapter 3, current and reasonably foreseeable actions).

III. PROJECT AREA

The *Moose Post-Fire Project* area includes all National Forest System lands affected by the fire, plus the upper unburned portion of the Big Creek drainage (refer to Map 1-2). It is bordered on the east by the North Fork of the Flathead River and Glacier National Park, on the north by the Coal Creek State Forest, and on the west by the Whitefish Divide. The city of Columbia Falls is located about 10 air miles to the southeast. The project area is approximately 68,000 acres in size, with elevations ranging from 3560 feet at the North Fork Flathead River, to 7531 feet at the top of Moose Peak. Cumulative effects area may differ for various resources.

Project activities would occur within the Big Creek watershed and in two small areas within Coal Creek and Deadhorse Creek. Big Creek and Coal Creek are tributaries to the North Fork Flathead River; Deadhorse Creek is a tributary to Coal Creek.

The Glacier Institute at the historic Big Creek Ranger Station and the adjacent Big Creek Campground are located in the project area at the confluence of Big Creek and the North Fork of the Flathead River. Other features found within the project area include several dispersed camping sites, trailheads, trails, portions of the Big Mountain Ski Resort, inventoried roadless areas, and the Wild and Scenic River corridor along the North Fork Flathead River. Some of these areas may be affected by the proposals.

MAP 1-2: Project Area Map

IV. PURPOSE AND NEED AND THE PROPOSED ACTION

The *Moose Post-Fire Project* is proposed at this time to respond to goals and objectives of the Flathead National Forest Land and Resource Plan (Forest Plan). The proposed action for this project would begin to change current resource conditions and trends towards meeting some of the desired future conditions for resources as described in the *Moose Post-Fire Assessment* summary document and the Forest Plan. Managing within the desired range of future conditions would achieve a balance on the landscape between resource values and human needs, and allow for healthy functioning of the ecosystem in the future. These desired conditions include:

- A healthy, diverse, and productive forest;
- Forests that provide wood products on a sustainable basis to help support local communities;
- Areas with high values (such as wildland/rural interface, old growth, and managed stands) protected by zones where risks to these values from wildfire are low.

The interdisciplinary planning team identified areas where the existing conditions and anticipated trends did not meet desired conditions or did not move the area toward desired conditions. These differences formed the basis for the purpose of and need for taking action (also called the “purpose and need”). From there, the team developed the proposal, or proposed action, for this project.

A “proposed action” is defined early in the project-level planning process. It serves as a starting point for the planning team and gives the public and other agencies specific information on which to focus comments. Using these comments and information from preliminary analysis, the planning team then identifies significant issues and develops alternatives to the proposed action in response to the significant issues. These are discussed in detail in chapter 2.

The proposed action originally provided to the public for review in January 2002 was modified in two ways. First, all salvage harvest activities originally proposed in the Big Creek riparian area were dropped. Instead, to address the concern for spruce beetle outbreak, riparian sites infested with beetles would use pheromone-baited beetle funnel traps. These changes were influenced by:

- Information gained from intensive field evaluations this past winter, which revealed fewer acres of spruce at high-risk to bark beetle than were originally estimated
- Analysis that confirmed the high cost and complexities of logging on these sensitive sites and often-isolated patches
- A high level of concern from oversight government agencies and many members of the public regarding potential effects of logging on riparian habitat values to the threatened bull trout

Second, because of the high level of concern with harvesting in inventoried roadless areas, all salvage harvest units in the roadless areas at low risk to bark beetle infestation were dropped. Only those areas at moderate or high risk to beetle infestation are now included in the proposed action, with salvage harvest proposed on approximately 483 acres within inventoried roadless lands.

The purpose and need for action and a summary of the proposed action follows.

1. There is a need to decrease potential mortality caused by bark beetles to remaining live Douglas-fir and spruce trees within and outside the Moose Fire area.

The Moose Fire created very favorable habitat for spruce and Douglas-fir bark beetles. Bark beetles breed and lay eggs in the moist inner bark (cambium) of the tree. The fire severely injured or killed large numbers of spruce and Douglas-fir trees. Weakened, vulnerable trees such as these are highly attractive to the bark beetles, which are well adapted to capitalize on such events. Beetle numbers can rapidly build when they are suddenly presented with such abundant food and breeding habitat. Beetle population monitoring in the

summer of 2002 has provided field verified information on the extent, intensity and location of Douglas-fir and spruce bark beetle infestation across the fire area.

Spruce beetle-infested trees are widespread throughout the area surveyed, with infestation noted over an estimated 381 acres. Across most of these acres, infestation levels are high, with a large proportion of the spruce on a site infested and dozens of beetle attacks per tree. A large number of the spruce are windthrown, and these are typically where the spruce beetle infestation levels are especially high. However, many standing, underburned spruce were attacked as well. Spruce trees have thin bark, and a moderate or high severity fire not only kills the tree, but usually chars the bole and inner bark to an extent that little to no bark beetle potential exists. However, areas that burned with a low intensity “underburn” may burn the bole only at ground level, effectively girdling the tree and creating a highly stressed, very desirable host tree for spruce beetle. These severely injured or killed trees, most still with full green crowns, were those that the bark beetle attacked. An average 1.5 infested trees per acre was noted across the infested areas, ranging from 0.5 to 11 trees per acre within individual units.

Douglas-fir beetle infested trees were found in every stand surveyed, extending across at least 3700 acres of the fire area. Bark beetles almost exclusively attacked fire killed trees – trees with >90% crown scorch and often with completely fire-blackened boles and foliage completely consumed by the fire. The thick bark on larger diameter Douglas-fir trees shields them against the heat of the fire. Therefore, even charred Douglas-fir trees may still have moist inner bark layers along parts of their boles and are still attractive to bark beetles. Infestation levels of Douglas-fir beetle are mostly low, both considering attacked trees per acre and number of attacks per tree. The overall infestation level is about 0.7 Douglas-fir trees per acre, ranging from a unit average of 0.09 to 5.67 infested trees per acre. About 24 percent of the area surveyed (nearly 900 acres) has an infestation rate greater than one tree per acre, the level where beetle populations are generally considered elevated above “normal”. Greater than 90 percent of the infested trees were found to have very low to low infestation levels (<12 beetle attacks per tree).

The first generation of adult Douglas-fir bark beetles will emerge from the infested trees in the spring of 2003. Spruce bark beetles have a 2-year life cycle and will emerge from infested trees in the spring of 2004. Both would search for the next nearest source of food and breeding habitat. There are an estimated 2000+ acres within the Moose Fire area that contain variable amounts of fire injured, but still living larger diameter Douglas-fir. Very few large live spruce remain within the fire area, but some pockets and individuals are scattered within the Big Creek riparian area and its tributaries. It is these remaining live trees within the fire area that are most vulnerable to infestation and mortality when adult bark beetles emerge in 2003/2004 and beyond. Because of their relative scarcity, these remaining live trees are of high value, particularly the most beetle susceptible larger diameter trees, providing wildlife habitat, forest structural diversity, seed sources, and site protection.

Although most beetles do not travel far, they are capable of flying about five miles in search of habitat; thus the concern regarding beetle mortality of mature, larger-diameter spruce and Douglas-fir trees in stands outside the fire area. Within a 5-mile radius of the fire, an estimated 12,220 acres of forest support some amount of mature, large diameter spruce (about 13% in moderate to high risk categories) and nearly 12,000 acres support mature Douglas-fir trees (about 10% in moderate to very high risk categories). Should an epidemic-level infestation develop, stands of relatively low risk could experience tree mortality. Many of these susceptible spruce and Douglas-fir trees are likely to be within forests of relatively high value, particularly as old growth habitat or along streams and wetlands. Some of these forests are on State of Montana lands and private lands, whose managers or owners have expressed concern regarding the risk of beetle infestation expanding out of the fire area onto their lands.

The desired condition is for a healthy, diverse, and productive forest in which the Big Creek drainage would retain most mature and old growth spruce stands not lost to spruce bark beetles or wildfire. Riparian areas would have stable stream banks with large spruce trees to help maintain a very important fishery.

The proposed action contains the following specific activities designed to meet the purpose and need and bring existing conditions closer to desired conditions:

- To reduce the potential bark beetle mortality to remaining live Douglas-fir and spruce trees, salvage trees on 2428 acres already infested with beetles or at risk of beetle infestation. The exception is in inventoried roadless areas or on lands unsuitable for timber management, where salvage only of the beetle-infested trees would occur.
- To reduce potential outbreaks of spruce beetle within riparian areas, use pheromone-baited beetle funnel traps across an estimated 272 acres. The intent is to draw in and capture as many of the emerging beetles as possible before they have a chance to spread and attack live spruce trees outside the fire area.
- To reduce potential beetle outbreaks to the few remaining live Douglas-fir trees at the historic Big Creek Work Center (currently leased to the Glacier Institute), in the Big Creek campground and in portions of the Wild and Scenic River corridor, use an anti-attractant pheromone (MCH) to discourage beetle attacks.
- To help manage the spread of Douglas-fir bark beetle; provide for a more effective, focused salvage effort; and protect remaining live trees, Douglas-fir trap trees or trees baited with an attractant pheromone may be used within a few of the salvage units where harvest would be delayed beyond the spring of 2003 (when the first generation of beetles will emerge), in areas of higher beetle concentration and where numerous remaining live trees exist. An estimated 20-100 live Douglas-fir would be employed as trap trees or pheromone baited trees to act as highly attractive “decoys” for emerging bark beetles. These trees would then be removed in the subsequent salvage harvest.

2. There is a need to recover merchantable wood fiber affected by the Moose Fire in a timely manner to help support local communities and contribute to the long-term yield of forest products.

One desired condition for the project area is to facilitate the potential for appropriate areas to grow forests that can contribute to a predictable and sustainable supply of trees to meet public demands for wood products. For example, the Forest Plan designates many portions of the fire area as suitable for timber management, such as Management Area 9, 13, 15 and 16 lands (See *VI. Relationship to Forest Plan* below). One goal for Management Area 15 or 16 lands emphasizes cost-efficient production of timber while protecting the productive capacity of the land and timber resource. Management Area 9 and 13 lands emphasize winter range management but do allow timber harvest as long as it does not interfere with the goals of providing suitable winter range habitat.

Seventy-four percent of Flathead County is federal lands (Upper Columbia River Basin DEIS, 1997, Vol. 1, Chapter 2, p. 184). Kalispell, Columbia Falls and Whitefish are considered “Timber Specialized Communities” (Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project Economic and Social Conditions of Communities, 1998, p. 109), and 47% of the timber processed in the county comes from federal lands (Upper Columbia River Basin DEIS, 1997, Vol. 1, Chapter 2, p. 184). Jobs and income associated with timber harvest and related activities on federal lands can help support local economies.

Due to expected rapid decay rates of fire-killed or beetle-killed trees, the timely harvest of trees is essential to ensure that the salvaged trees are still merchantable. Trees killed in the fire or subsequent beetle outbreaks would lose a portion of their economic value as sawlogs each year following the fire. Sawlog volume would decrease steadily over the next four years, with much of the small saw log volume losing its value in one or two years following the fire. Larger trees and stands that experienced less intense fire would likely remain merchantable longer, but they would also lose economic value over time as significant defects develop, resulting in a substantial loss of value.

The proposed action contains the following specific activities designed to meet the purpose and need for this project and to bring existing conditions closer to desired conditions:

- Salvage trees that would produce forest products. Most trees proposed for salvage logging as wood products are the same trees proposed for spruce or Douglas-fir beetle treatments or for fuels reduction. In addition to their other benefits, removal of these trees would contribute towards the recovery of merchantable wood products affected by the fire.
- After salvage, plant conifer seedlings in across an estimated 1182 acres of harvested areas to promote rapid reforestation and supplement natural regeneration with desired native species. Species planted would include western larch, ponderosa pine, western white pine and Douglas-fir, all of which are grow in the area.

3. There is a need to reduce the hazard and severity of future fires by reducing future fuel accumulations caused by the Moose Fire on specific sites adjacent to private property or administrative sites.

Before the fire, some areas next to private property and Forest Service administrative sites contained dense stands of sapling and pole-sized lodgepole pine or Douglas-fir trees with some larger (>9") Douglas-fir and larch. The fire killed most trees of all sizes. Fire-killed trees have already started falling and should continue to come down over the next 15-20 years. This will result in extremely heavy fuel accumulations adjacent to and upwind of private homes and property and heavily used Forest Service structures and facilities. High concentrations of downed spruce trees are located in the riparian areas of the Big Creek valley bottom upstream from the Big Creek Campground and the Glacier Institute Complex. If a fire were to burn into these fuel accumulations, fire suppression actions would likely be unsuccessful and structures would be threatened, along with the associated risk to human safety.

The desired condition is one in which these zones close to structures of value are not predisposed to uncontrollable wildfires, and in which effective, safe protection of these structures can reasonably be accomplished during any future fire. This also agrees with the National Fire Plan objectives for protecting community values at risk and brings us closer to the desired condition for these areas.

The proposed action contains the following specific activities designed to meet the purpose and need and bring existing conditions closer to desired conditions:

- Thinning of dead standing and removal of dead down trees would occur across approximately 141 acres directly adjacent to private property at the north end of the fire and around the Glacier Institute at the mouth of Big Creek. Material would either be removed as a merchantable wood product or piled and then burned.
- In the Big Creek campground, thinning of approximately 19 acres composed of dense mostly live trees would occur to open up the forest canopy, reduce future fire hazard and risk, and improve camper experience by allowing more sunlight into picnic areas and campsites. Some trees would be removed as a commercial product; others would be slashed, piled, and burned.
- As stated earlier, anti-attractant pheromone treatments would be used near the Glacier Institute and Big Creek campground to protect some large live Douglas-fir at high risk of beetle attacks.

Chapter 2 provides specific details related to the proposed action and its alternatives.

Road management actions associated with this project

The proposed action also includes road closures and road decommissioning to meet Forest Plan requirements to provide secure habitat for grizzly bears. Amendment 19 to the Forest Plan directs us to restrict or in some cases to

decommission roads to reach specific road density levels within areas called “grizzly bear subunits.” This project meets the ten-year objectives for the Werner Creek and Lower Big Creek subunits.

Proposed roadwork includes:

- Reducing the number of roads open to wheeled motorized use either yearlong or seasonally
- Reducing the number of roads restricted yearlong to wheeled motorized use with gates, berms, or natural revegetation
- Decommissioning roads

Chapter 2 describes in detail the actions proposed within the Werner Creek and Lower Big Creek grizzly bear subunits.

V. PROJECT SCOPE

Scope of the Proposed Action

Forest planning takes place at several levels: national, regional, forest, and project. The *Moose Post-Fire Project FEIS* is a project-level analysis; its scope is confined to addressing the significant issues and possible environmental consequences of the proposed action. It does not attempt to address decisions made at higher levels. It does, however, implement direction provided at those higher levels.

Scope of the Analysis

The Council of Environmental Quality regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) require that all federal agencies consider the following three types of actions to determine the scope of an EIS (40 CFR 1508.25):

Connected Actions are closely related actions that automatically trigger other actions that may require NEPA analysis; cannot or would not proceed unless other actions are taken previously or simultaneously; or are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend on the larger action for their justification.

Connected actions are part of the proposed action. The proposed action includes all activities that are needed to complete the proposed project and provide for resource protection during and after project completion. Connected actions contained in the proposed action include:

- Temporary road construction, maintenance, rehabilitation, and monitoring associated with contract administration
- Road access management associated with harvest scheduling and open road density objectives
- Tree harvest and monitoring associated with contract administration
- Site preparation and fuel reduction activities, including slashing, pile burning, creation of fuel breaks adjacent to fire lines, and monitoring
- Tree planting, natural regeneration, and monitoring of reforestation success

Similar actions are actions with similarities to other actions that provide a basis for evaluating their environmental consequences together, such as similar timing or geography. A number of similar actions have been identified and evaluated in the analysis of environmental consequences (chapter 3). These are current and reasonably foreseeable actions described in the following section.

Cumulative actions are past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions that may have cumulatively significant impacts when considered along with the proposed action. Actions considered in the cumulative effects analysis are presented in more detail in Chapter 3.

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO FOREST PLAN

Forest Plan Direction

The Forest Plan embodies the provisions of the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), its implementing regulations, and other guiding documents. The Forest Plan sets forth in detail the direction for managing the land and resources of the Flathead National Forest. This FEIS tiers to the Forest Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision, in compliance with 40 CFR 1502.2.

Forest Plan Management Areas

The Forest Plan uses “management areas” to guide management of National Forest System lands. Each management area (MA) provides a unique combination of activities, practices, and uses. Chapter 3 of the Forest Plan contains a detailed description of each management area.

Proposed treatment areas within the *Moose Post-Fire Project* affect five management areas. Effects to resources within each of the management areas within the project area and compliance with management area direction are discussed in Chapter 3 of the FEIS. Also, chapter 2 and appendix A display how each of the salvage units affects each MA. Goals and objectives of each are included or summarized below:

MA 9 – Timberlands capable of providing white-tailed deer winter habitat. The goal is to provide the size, age, diversity and distribution of habitat units (both cover and forage), suitable for white-tailed deer winter habitat.

MA 13 - Forested lands capable of providing mule deer and elk winter habitat; and MA 13A - Consists of non-forest lands capable of providing mule deer and elk winter habitat. The goal for both MAs is to provide the size, age, diversity and distribution of habitat units (both cover and forage), suitable for mule deer and elk winter habitat.

MA 13A – Non-forest lands capable of providing mule deer and elk winter habitat.

MA 15 - Timberlands where timber management with roads is economical and feasible. A major goal is to emphasize cost-efficient production of timber while protecting the productive capacity of the land and timber resource.

MA 18 - National Forest System lands designated for wild, scenic, and recreation river management under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The proposed action includes proposed vegetation treatments in the ‘recreation’ segment of the Wild and Scenic river corridor; timber harvest activities are allowed in the ‘recreation segment’ as long as they do not detract from the visual and recreational resources in the corridor.

VII. DECISIONS TO BE MADE

Based on findings in this FEIS, the responsible official would decide whether and how to salvage trees and provide wood fiber for the local communities, whether to reduce hazardous fuels, and whether to reduce road densities within the *Moose Post-Fire Project* area. This decision would include:

- The location, design, and scheduling of the proposed harvest activity and associated silvicultural practices
- The estimated timber volume, if any, to make available from the project area at this time
- Road access management activities
- Mitigation measures and monitoring requirements, if any
- Whether to defer any or all of the proposed actions at this time

