

IX. HERITAGE RESOURCES

Changes between the DEIS and the FEIS

This section remained unchanged between the DEIS and the FEIS.

1. Analysis Area and Information Sources

A pre-survey files search was conducted by the forest's heritage resource staff to gather information on known, previously-identified heritage resources within proposed Moose Post-Fire Project analysis area boundaries. As part of this initial, pre-survey Phase I, the forest initiated consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in an attempt to identify any potential concerns the tribes may have regarding traditional heritage properties, traditional use plants, and/or areas of spiritual importance within the analysis area.

A second phase (Phase II) occurs prior to actual project implementation and consists of a thorough field reconnaissance (inventory) of all proposed areas of environmental effect from the Moose Post-Fire Project so as to locate, record, and evaluate the historical significance of any identified heritage resources. It is at this time that Section 106 consultation with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (MtSHPO) is completed to determine the historical significance and National Register eligibility status of any identified sites, potential project effects to such sites, and methods for avoidance or management of any adverse effects.

Subsequent to completion of the Phase I pre-survey files search the Heritage Resource staff conducted a Phase II field reconnaissance of the proposed Moose Post-Fire Project project area using a field methodology described in the forest's draft *Site Identification Strategy* (SIS) document currently on file at the MtSHPO in Helena, Montana. The field inventory strategy involves a pedestrian reconnaissance in areas designated for environmental impact through the vegetation treatments prescribed in all action alternatives. Regardless of the degree or type of vegetative treatment, heritage resource personnel inventory the affected areas based upon topography with "high probability areas" (ridge tops, peaks, stream terraces) receiving 100 percent coverage, "medium probability areas" (slopes less than 30 percent, rock outcrops, erosional surfaces) receiving 40 percent coverage, and "low probability areas" (slopes in excess of 30 percent, north-facing slopes, heavily timbered slopes with abundant deadfall and understory) receiving 10 percent coverage. Survey coverage will be achieved by utilizing linear (when feasible) pedestrian transects spaced every 15 meters (roughly 50 feet) apart.

Any heritage resource sites discovered during the inventory are recorded and their National Register eligibility status evaluated in consultation with MtSHPO.

Previously Identified Heritage Resources - Prior to the two-phase inventory, the forest's Heritage Resource staff conducted an in-house files search for information on known, previously recorded heritage resources in the proposed Moose Post-Fire Project project area. General Land Office plat maps, BLM Land Status Records, historic forest maps, and the forest's cumulative site and survey atlas' were all referenced for site information. The file search identified two previously recorded historic era sites within or near the proposed project area. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites within the proposed project area.

Results of Survey Methodology - A complete inventory to locate and identify significant heritage resources within the proposed Moose Post-Fire Project project area was completed in July, 2002. A pre-survey file search identified the location of two historic era heritage resource sites within or near proposed project boundaries (sites 24 FH 66 and 24 FH 434). A pedestrian reconnaissance of the Moose Fire analysis area for a post-fire BAER Team review indicated that one of the historic era sites (24 FH 66) was consumed by the blaze and completely destroyed. The other historic era site, the Big Creek Work Center – Glacier Institute, was determined eligible for listing on the National Register through consultation with MtSHPO in 1990. It was protected by fire personnel and saved. The work center lies within proposed Moose Post-Fire Project vegetation treatment boundaries. However, implementation of proposed Moose Post-Fire Project vegetation treatment prescriptions should have "no effect" on the historic integrity of the site nor adversely effect the elements that make the resource significant

to history. Additional inventory for the Moose Post-Fire Project did not locate other cultural resources in or near treatment units. Implementation of the proposed undertaking will have no effect on significant historic properties eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) has concluded.

2. Affected Environment

The Moose Post-Fire Project analysis area includes a portion of the North Fork of the Flathead River along its eastern boundary. The North Fork is the principle watershed in the analysis area and Big Creek, which drains the analysis area east/west through its center, is its primary tributary. These two drainages drive almost all human cultural adaptation within the analysis area both historically and during prehistoric times. Elevations range from a low of 3300 feet along the North Fork to a high of 6500 feet on the ridge above Hallowat Creek. Overall, this is an area of steep forested mountains with Hallowat, Elelehum, and Langford Creeks flowing into Big Creek from the north and Skookeleel and Lookout Creeks flowing into Big Creek from the south. Wide benches border Big Creek and the North Fork.

During prehistory, the watersheds were used by aboriginal groups as a travel route between the Tobacco Plains to the northwest and the Great Plains to the far east. Archaeological sites documenting Native American occupation and use of the North Fork are known but none are identified in the analysis area. Native American occupation of the North Fork probably dates to the end of the last glacial period approximately 10,000 years ago. Historically, the analysis area is part of the traditional homeland of the Kootenai people with additional use by the Salish and Blackfeet. The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 gives the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes reserved treaty rights to hunt, fish, and collect native plants in the analysis area.

The post-contact history of the North Fork parallels that of the Flathead Valley. The first significant activity in the North Fork is the discovery in 1887 by Frank Emerson of coal in what became Coal Creek. It was, however, the coming of the Great Northern Railroad to the valley in 1890 that prompted the first serious attempt to exploit Emerson's discovery. In 1892 Frank Talbot constructed the 75-foot sternwheeler *Oaks* to carry the coal from Coal Creek to the railroad at Columbia Falls. Unfortunately the *Oaks* was lost in the rapids at Canyon Creek and the coal was never developed. Although there was a very brief oil boom in 1901 with one drilling operation on Kintla Lake in the then Flathead Forest Reserve, it would be tourism, homesteading and agriculture, logging, the Forest Service, and Glacier National Park that would make the future of the North Fork.

The Flathead Forest Reserve was created Feb 22, 1897 and included lands in the North Fork (including all of what is now Glacier National Park) and portions of the Kootenai National Forest. Fred Herrig and Frank Liebig were the first rangers on the reserve. Herrig was based at Moran Creek and patrolled the west side of the valley while Liebig was headquartered at McDonald Lake and patrolled what is now the Park. What became the Big Creek Work Center was established in 1911 as seasonal camp/living quarters until developed into the present facility in the late 1920s and early 30s. Glacier National Park was carved out of the east half of the forest reserve in 1910. Up until that point, most homesteading was taking place east of the North Fork around Sullivan Meadows. Bill Adair built the first store at the meadow in 1904. After the creation of the park, homesteading moved west of the river. Adair moved his store to what is now Polebridge in 1912 and the west side road was built to there between 1917 and 1919. The Forest Service completed the road to the Canadian border in 1921.

The first recorded commercial logging operations were in 1890 and 1910 but were limited by the poor roads and long distances to markets in the Flathead Valley and the railroad at Columbia Falls. Timber harvesting would expand in the 1930s with the new road but really takes off in the 1960s with expanded Forest roads and improved access to the woods.

3. Environmental Consequences

Heritage resource inventories are required by the Forest Plan prior to all ground disturbing projects in order to locate and identify historic or Native American sites or artifacts. Once sites or artifacts are identified in a project area protective measures are carried out which would ensure preservation of the values associated with the site.

Heritage resources can be diminished in value by any change in their historical, architectural, archaeological, or heritage character. Adverse impacts to heritage resource sites can result in damage or complete destruction of the sites; effects of this damage may be irreversible. Adherence to the regulations for implementing the National Historic Preservation Act insures that significant heritage resources are identified prior to project implementation and that project effects are identified and either avoided through project redesign or moderated. Site significance and project effects are determined through consultation with MtSHPO and the CSKT.

Direct and Indirect Effects of the Action

Alternatives 1 (No Action):

Implementation of the no action alternative would not directly nor indirectly affect heritage resources since there would be no change to the integrity of significant heritage resources.

Alternatives 2, 3, and 4:

Affects to cultural resources are the same for Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. The only potential effects to known cultural sites are from the fuel reduction treatments proposed for lower slopes and areas adjacent to the Big Creek Work Center – Glacier Institute (site #24FH434). The proposed treatments call for a “thinning” type of prescription blending into the surrounding forest. All live trees will be left along with enough dead or dying trees to meet the desired 30 to 70 trees per acre. The density of the forest surrounding the work center is not part of its historic character and the proposed treatments will have neither direct nor indirect effects on the historic integrity of the site.

Additional field inventory of the proposed treatment units did not locate any additional cultural resources that could be effected by this undertaking.

It is recognized that even the most intensive field surveys may not locate all heritage sites. The portions of this project that would be implemented through a timber sale contract under any action alternative would include the #C6.24 clause which enables the Forest Service to modify or cancel a timber sale contract to protect heritage resources, regardless of when they are identified.

Cumulative Effects

It is unlikely that there would be cumulative effects to identified heritage resources in the post Moose Fire salvage project area from any proposed activities. However, any such effects would be identified as part of the consultation process with MtSHPO and the CSKT and appropriate avoidance or moderating measures would be developed.

4. Regulatory Framework and Regulatory Consistency

The Forest Service is mandated to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) [Public Law 89-665]. "Section 106 of the NHPA requires that Federal agencies with direct or indirect jurisdiction over Federal, federally assisted, or federally licensed undertakings afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity for comment on such undertakings that affect properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) prior to the agency's approval of any such undertaking" [36 CFR 800.1]. Historic properties are identified by a heritage resource inventory and are determined as either eligible or not eligible for the National Register. Eligibility is reviewed, and concurrence given, by the Montana State Historic

Preservation Office (MtSHPO). Sites that are determined eligible are then either protected in-place or adverse impacts must be moderated. This process takes place prior to any decisions relative to the project.

The Forest Service has obligations under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978 to "protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian" [Public Law 95-442]. Executive Order 13007 of 1996 further directs federal agencies to accommodate access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and to avoid adversely affecting such sites.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Montana have been identified as a tribal group concerned about the management of heritage resources on the Flathead National Forest. The tribes were contacted in the initial planning stages of the post Moose Fire salvage project in order to establish lines of communication between the two parties, to advise them on the scope of the undertaking including potential effects, and to make their resource concerns (if any) an official part of the project record. Consultation with recognized tribal governments is further defined and required by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 [Public Law 101-106] and the 1992 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The Flathead Forest Plan incorporates the requirements under the following statutes: the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978). Forest Plan standards applicable to this project that reflect the mandates under the above statutes include inventory procedures, evaluation procedures, protection/preservation procedures, and coordination/consultation procedures. Details of these measures and procedures are located in the Forest Plan.

All post Moose Fire salvage project alternatives are consistent with the laws and regulations listed in the Regulatory Framework discussion of the Heritage Resources, Affected Environment section and incorporated into the requirements of the Flathead Forest Plan.