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Final Environmental Impact Statement

Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project

Flathead National Forest
Tally Lake Ranger District
Flathead and Lincoln Counties, Montana



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Abstract: This final environmental impact statement summarizes the analysis performed and resulting effects of the proposed implementation of timber salvage in the Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project area. The Forest Supervisor determined the need to recover merchantable wood fiber in a timely manner to support local communities and contribute to the long term yield of forest products. A Proposed Action to meet this need was developed by an interdisciplinary team of specialists. Issues that influenced the development of alternatives to the Proposed Action were helicopter yarding, Canada lynx habitat, timber salvage in reserved areas, water quality, stream channel stability, and bark beetles. In addition to a No Action Alternative (Alternative A) and the Proposed Action (Alternative B), two action alternatives were developed that respond to the stated needs and emphasize the specific issues. Alternative C emphasizes no helicopter yarding, reduced timber salvage in lynx habitat, a reduction in the amount of temporary road construction, and the retention of “reserve areas” for ecosystem processes. Alternative D would salvage trees in Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas for bark beetle control and reduce the amount of temporary roads constructed to access units. The Forest Service has identified the agency preferred alternative as Alternative B. The environmentally preferred alternative is Alternative A.

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