



File Code: 1950-1/3440

Date: May 30, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed for your review are copies of the *Forest-wide Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction Environmental Assessment (EA)* and the *Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)*. The EA describes the potential effects of a proposal to fell and/or remove hazardous trees within 150 feet of the centerline of National Forest System Roads open to public travel on the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests. The proposal also includes felling and/or removing hazardous trees along state and county roads that cross the National Forests and felling and/or removing hazardous trees in and adjacent to developed recreation sites and administrative sites. Finally, the proposal includes felling, but not removing, hazardous trees along motorized and non-motorized trails. The project area includes National Forest System (NFS) lands in Albany and Carbon Counties in southern Wyoming and Routt, Jackson, Grand, Rio Blanco, Moffat, and Garfield Counties in northern Colorado. The responsible official for this project is Mary H. Peterson, Forest Supervisor.

Also enclosed for review is a copy of Appendix A: Response to Comments. Appendix A provides a paraphrased summary of, and Forest Service responses to, public comments received during the 30-day formal comment for the project proposal (October 19, 2007).

The Forest-wide Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction Project is an authorized project under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003, Title I, Section 102(a)(4). HFRA projects are subject to 36 CFR, Part 218, Subpart A which establishes a pre-decisional administrative review ("objection") process for proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects (Federal Register; Vol. 69, No. 6; Friday, January 9, 2004). The objection process is the sole means by which administrative review of a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project on NFS lands may be sought. Authorized projects processed under the provisions of the HFRA are not subject to 36 CFR 215, "Notice, Comment, and Appeal Procedures for National Forest System Projects and Activities" (Sec. 218.3).

An objection, including attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, e-mail, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the appropriate Reviewing Officer within 30 days of the date of publication of the legal notice for the objection process. The date of the legal notice in the *Laramie Boomerang* is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (Sec. 218.9(a)). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source (Sec. 218.4(b)(2)(iii)). Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted written comments specific to the proposed authorized



hazardous fuel reduction project during scoping or other opportunity for public comment (Sec. 218.6(a)).

Objections must be sent to:

Objection Reviewing Officer
Region 2, Rocky Mountain Region
USDA Forest Service
PO Box 25127
Lakewood CO 80225-25127

Delivery:
Objection Reviewing Officer
USDA Forest Service
740 Simms Street
Golden CO 80401-4720

Fax: 303/275-5134

Hours: Mon-Fri 7:30 am to 4:30 pm

Objections must be filed with the Reviewing Officer in writing. All objections shall be open to public inspection during the objection process. It is the objector's responsibility to provide sufficient narrative description of those aspects of the proposed project being addressed, specific issues related to the project, and suggested remedies that would resolve the objection. Incorporation of documents by reference shall not be allowed. At a minimum, an objection must include the following (Sec. 218.7(d)):

- 1) Objector's name and address (Sec. 218.2), with a telephone number, if available;
- 2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);
- 3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector (Sec. 218.2). Verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request; and
- 4) The name of the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the name of the National Forest and/or Ranger District on which the proposed project will be implemented.

A decision concerning this authorized project may not be issued until the Reviewing Officer has responded, in writing (Sec. 218.10(b)), to all pending objections. If no objection is filed within the 30-day time period, the Reviewing Officer shall notify the Responsible Official, and approval of the authorized project may occur on, but not before, the fifth business day following the end of the objection-filing period (Sec. 218.11).

Copies of the EA and the FONSI are available upon request from the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest Supervisor's Office, 2468 Jackson Street, Laramie WY 82070, (307) 745-2300, or may be found on the Forest website at www.fs.fed.us/r2/mbr/projects/foresthealth/index/shtml.

For additional information about this project, please contact Melissa Martin, Project Coordinator, at the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest Supervisor's Office, (307) 745-2371, or e-mail mmmartin@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your interest in the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests.

Sincerely,

/s/Mary H. Peterson

MARY H. PETERSON

Forest Supervisor

Encl (3)