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County: Apache

Printed In: White Mountain Independent (Show Low)

Printed On: 2008/11/25

Notice of Objection Period

Hall Ranch Wildland Urban Interface Project

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests

Apache County, AZ

The Hall Ranch Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Environmental Assessment (EA) has been completed. The EA has been sent to those who have previously requested to be included on the project mailing list or have submitted specific written comments related to the project. The EA will be made available on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf/projects/>. Hard copies of the EA or additional information are available upon request to Bruce A. Buttrey, Project Team Leader, Springerville Ranger District, 165 South Mountain Ave., Springerville, AZ 85938; by telephone request at 928-333-6206 or by email at bbuttrey@fs.fed.us.

The Hall Ranch WUI project proposes to implement a combination of treatments, on approximately 2,246 acres, to live trees, snags (dead standing trees), existing and pre-existing slash and herbaceous vegetation. Treatments include thinning of trees, treatment of existing and created slash in forest and grasslands areas and prescribed burning on the Springerville Ranger District of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. The project was planned under authorities outlined in the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003. The Responsible Official who will issue a decision on this project is Forest Supervisor, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, Chris Knopp.

The Proposed Action departs from management direction of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests Land Management Plan, as amended. The decision document for the Proposed Action (if selected) would, therefore require a project-specific amendment to the FLMP to allow for the departures. The departures are necessary to meet the objectives of the Proposed Action adjacent to the at-risk communities of Hidden Meadows and Green's Peak Hideaways. Details of the proposed amendment are included in the EA.

This proposed project and proposed forest plan amendment is subject to the objection process pursuant to 36 CFR Part 218 Subpart A and is not subject to notice, comment and appeal procedures under 215 (218.5).

Eligibility to File Objections

Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted written comments specific to the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project either during scoping or other public involvement opportunities on an EA (218.6).

Individual members of organizations must have submitted their own comments to meet the requirements of eligibility as an individual, objections received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only. If an objection is submitted on behalf of a number of individuals or organizations, each individual or organization listed must meet the eligibility requirement of having previously submitted comments on the project (218.6). Names and addresses of objectors will become part of the public record.

Filing an Objection

The objection must contain at a minimum, a sufficient narrative description of those aspects of the proposed project objected to, specific issues related to the project, and suggested remedies which would resolve the objection. Incorporation of documents by reference shall not be allowed.

Individuals and organizations filing an objection must also provide the following information (218.7):

¥ Objector's name and address with a telephone number if available;

¥ Signature or other verification of identity upon request. (A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic objections.)

¥ For objections with multiple names or multiple organizations, identification of the lead Objector is required. Verification of the identity of the lead Objector shall be provided on request.

¥ The name of the proposed HFRA project, name and title of the Responsible Official, and the name (s) of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented.

Written objections, including any attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Reviewing Officer, Corbin Newman, Regional Forester, Southwestern Region, 333.S. Broadway, SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102, FAX 505-842-3173 within 30 days following the publication date of this legal notice in the newspaper of record. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are: 0800-1630 Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc) to appeals-southwestern-regional-office@fs.fed.us. It is the responsibility of Objectors to ensure their objection is received in a timely manner (218.9).

The publication date in the White Mountain Independent newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection of this project. Those wishing to object to this proposed project should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Time extensions of the objection time period are not permitted (218.9).

Timing of Project Decision and Implementation

When the objection-filing period has ended and responses have been made to all objections by the Reviewing Officer, the Responsible Official may make a final decision on the proposed project. The Reviewing Officer shall issue a written response to the Objectors within 30 days following the end of this objection-filing period (218.9). When no timely objections are filed, a decision can be made on the 5th business day following the close of the filing period (218.11). Implementation may begin immediately after the decision is made.

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Published in the White Mountain Independent November 25, 2008
(WMI 2523, T, 1x, 11/25/08)e

Public Notice ID: 8560663