



**File Code:** 2410  
**Date:** August 6, 2008

Dear Interested Citizen,

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Bridger-Teton National Forest project planning process. Attached herein is a description of the proposed action for Spring Clean-Up Sanitation Project on the Greys River Ranger District. This letter serves two purposes. The first is to request your input regarding the scope of the analysis that we will conduct in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act. The second purpose is to provide you with a description of the proposed action so you may submit formal comments. This scoping and comment period provides those interested in or affected by this proposal an opportunity to make their concerns known prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official. Those who provide timely comments will be eligible to appeal the decision pursuant to 36 CFR part 215 regulations.

**Purpose and Need:**

The Spring Clean-Up Sanitation Project is proposed to remove trees that are dead, dying, or susceptible to attack from mountain pine beetle.

The objectives of this project are to:

- Remove merchantable value of dead and dying timber and contribute to the supply of timber to local mills,
- Increase the residual stand's overall health, vigor, longevity, and resilience to future insect infestation,
- Reduce fuel loading to an acceptable level.

**Proposed Action:**

The Greys River Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest proposes to treat 250 acres in the Spring Creek drainage approximately 14 miles southeast of Afton. The project area is located in T31N, R116W Sections 28, 29, 32, and 33.

In order to meet the project objectives, we are proposing the following:

1. Remove dead trees, trees infected with mountain pine beetle, and those at high risk for infestation.
2. Commercially thin the project area to less than 80 ft<sup>2</sup> of basal area per acre.
3. Space residual trees so that crowns do not touch.
4. Remove trees via ground-based logging system.
5. Treat slash and logging debris to reduce fuel concentrations and reduce impacts from other forest insects (*Ips* spp.)
6. Construct less than ½ mile of temporary road to facilitate logging.

Additionally, we propose to designate an area along Greys River Road (FS Road #10138), within the project area, that would be available for free personal-use firewood. This would expedite removal of trees killed by mountain pine beetle by firewood cutters in an Inventoried Roadless Area where commercial removal of timber is not permitted.



Anticipated volume for this project is approximately 2000 CCF. This project could be implemented as early as summer of 2010.



**Figure 1. Project Area (taken from Greys River Road looking southwest).**



**Figure 2. Mountain pine beetle kill in stand in project area.**

**Initial Issues:**

We will evaluate whether or not there are extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary circumstances are those instances that the proposed action could result in significant environmental effect to one or more of the following resource conditions:

1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, or species proposed for federal listing or proposed critical habitat or Forest Service sensitive species,
2. Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watershed,
3. Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or National Recreation Areas,
4. Inventoried Roadless Areas,
5. Research Natural Areas,
6. American Indians and Alaska Native Religious or Cultural Sites,
7. Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas.

**Decision to be Made:**

As the Greys River District Ranger and Responsible Official, I will decide whether or not to implement the proposed action. I have made a preliminary assessment that this action falls within a category of action listed in the Forest Service NEPA Handbook (FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30) that is excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement and that no extraordinary circumstances exist that would preclude use of the category. The specific category is 14: Commercial and non-commercial sanitation harvest of trees to control insects or disease not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than ½ mile of temporary road construction, including removal of infested/infected trees and adjacent live uninfested/uninfected trees as determined necessary to control the spread of insects or disease. The proposed action may include incidental removal of live or dead trees for landings, skid trails, and road clearing.

**How to Comment and Timeframe:**

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of the legal notice in the Casper Star-Tribune. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. You should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Written comments must be submitted to: Jay Dunbar, Greys River Ranger District, 671 N. Washington St., P.O. Box 339, Afton, WY 83110. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone (307-886-5300) or in person; or at an official agency function (i.e. public meeting) that is designed to elicit public comments. Electronic comments must be submitted in rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to [comments-intermtn-bridger-teton-greys-river@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-intermtn-bridger-teton-greys-river@fs.fed.us) (subject line should specify Spring Clean-Up). Comments must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 215.6. Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be eligible to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 215.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within 15 days.

If you would like to be included on the Spring Clean-Up Sanitation Project mailing list, please let us know. Persons not responding to this mailing will not receive further information regarding this particular project. If you wish to participate in this environmental analysis or to be kept informed of the process but are unable to respond to this scoping document, please contact us at the address above. If you have an email address where you can be reached, we prefer to use that format whenever possible. For any other questions, contact Heidi Whitlach at 307-886-5300.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Jay L. Dunbar*  
JAY L. DUNBAR  
District Ranger

Enclosures (1)

# Spring CleanUp Sanitation Project Vicinity Map



