

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest

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Draft Reforestation Plan for Fred's Fire Available for Public Review

Placerville, CA..... A draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the reforestation of approximately 4,320 acres of Eldorado National Forest lands burned in 2004 in the Fred's Fire near Kyburz is available for public review and comment. The Environmental Protection Agency published a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the DEIS in the Federal Register on September 11, 2009. The Forest Service will accept comments on the DEIS for 45 days from that date. The DEIS and related information is available on the Eldorado National Forest website located at www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado. A CD of the Freds Fire Reforestation DEIS can be requested from the Forest Supervisor's Office in Placerville.

The Fred's fire resulted in adverse effects to forest resources such as; high rates of soil erosion, increased sedimentation to streams, destruction of wildlife habitat, and caused extensive tree mortality. Previous projects addressed the need for removal of the dead trees, repairing damaged roads, providing for public safety, and replanting plantations. The Freds Reforestation Project DEIS proposes to further the restoration of the area so seriously impacted by the Freds Fire.

"Without additional treatment to restore the fire area, additional impacts are likely over the short and long term," said Robert Carroll, Eldorado National Forest Silviculturist. "Although about

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1,800 acres have been replanted with tree seedlings, only about 40% of the seedlings have survived through three years, due to intense competition with shrubs, grasses and forbs for scarce soil moisture in California's long, dry summers.”

In the DEIS the Eldorado National Forest proposes a management plan to plant trees, to control shrubs and other competing vegetation to ensure conifer survival and growth, to control or eliminate invasive plants, and to reduce short term fuels loading in the area burned in the Freds Fire near the town of Kyburz, California.

The DEIS analyzed the environmental effects of three alternatives including the Forest Service's proposed action and the effects of taking no action. Under Alternative 1, the Proposed Action, about 3,300 acres would be reforested, including initial planting of conifers in the project area and replanting plantations affected by the high seedling mortality. Herbicides would be used to control vegetation on about 3,300 acres and to control or eliminate invasive plants. Mechanical fuel treatments would be conducted near the town of Kyburz to reduce the amount of vegetation which is a concern for protecting the town from future wildfires. Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 1 except that 800 fewer acres would be reforested, and non-chemical methods would be used for invasive plant treatments and conifer release. Comments on the DEIS will help the Forest Service create the Final EIS.

The DEIS and related documents are available on the Eldorado National Forest website: www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado. For information regarding the project contact Robert Carroll at 530-647-5386 or rlcarroll@fs.fed.us .

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