



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Klamath
National
Forest

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File Code: 1950-1/2430

Date: January 16, 2003

Dear Interested Party:

The Salmon River Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest is proposing the Meteor Project. I invite you to participate in the analysis process by providing your comments and any concerns you may have about the project. This letter includes a description of the proposed action and the reasons for the proposal.

The Proposed Action

The Salmon River District proposes timber harvest and associated activities on 744 acres in 39 units, fuel treatment activities on an additional 168 acres in 9 stands, and a number of habitat improvement activities. All acreages are approximate.

The timber harvest would use a combination of commercial thinning, group selection, green tree retention, seed tree/sanitation, and salvage prescriptions. Helicopter, cable, and tractor logging systems would be utilized. Refer to attached table for details by unit. Selected Riparian Reserves would be thinned; this entry is designed to move the Riparian Reserves towards their desired condition and would only occur in low risk areas as determined by the watershed and fisheries specialists. Associated activities would include reforestation, precommercial thinning, browse protection, hand grubbing and chainsaw release of planted trees, gopher control, mastication (grinding up) of non-commercial trees, and fuel treatment. A combination of hand piling, prescribed burning, yarding and removal of unmerchantable material, and tractor piling would be used to treat fuels created by harvest activities.

Existing roads would be used for the project. There would be no new road construction. Road 39N27 would be stormproofed. Roads 39N22A and 37NO2B would be changed to Maintenance Level 1 (closed to road use, except for maintenance) after project completion. One unclassified road (existing road not on the transportation system) would be improved to standard and added to the road system. Six unclassified roads would be decommissioned as part of the project; three of these would be used in the project prior to decommissioning. Roads would receive maintenance as necessary for logging and haul.

Mastication would be used to reduce fuels on the additional 168 acres. Habitat improvement activities include underburning oak stands on 50 acres with low intensity fire, removing one old fence and repairing another, pruning apple trees, removing encroaching conifers from a meadow, repairing the outlet to a pond, and improving two water developments.

The proposed activities would likely occur within three to five years of the decision being made.

The project is located in the Salmon River Watershed near the towns of Sawyers Bar, Forks of Salmon, and Cecilville, approximately 55 miles southwest of Yreka, California. The legal description is as follows: Mount Diablo Meridian – Township 40N, Range 11W, Section 32; T40N, R12W, Sections 35 and 36; T39N, R11W, Sections 5, 6, and 36; T39N, R12W, Sections 1, 3, 10, 11, 31, and 32; T38N, R11W, Sections 1, 8, 18, 29, 32, 33, and 34; T38N, R12W, Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 36; T37N, R11W, Sections 3, 4, 10, and 11; T37N, R12W, Section 1; Humboldt Meridian –T10N, R8E, Section 33; T9N, R8E, Section 5. Refer to attached maps for specific locations.



The proposed actions are within the General Forest, Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective, Recreational Wild and Scenic River, and Riparian Reserve land allocations for the Klamath National Forest.

Purpose And Need For Action

The purposes of the proposed action are to maintain stand health by leading stands into a resilient condition where they can provide a sustained yield of wood products; to reduce the risk of these stands to catastrophic fire; to maintain unique wildlife habitats; and to provide an economical, safe, and environmentally sensitive transportation system. The need for treatment was identified when the existing condition was compared with the desired condition. These needs or opportunities are taken from the watershed analyses for this area; which are the *North Fork Watershed Analysis* (1995), the *Upper South Fork of the Salmon River Ecosystem Analysis* (1994), and the *Lower South Fork of the Salmon River Ecosystem Analysis* (1997); and from the Roads Analysis Process.

Decision to be Made

The decision to be made is whether to approve the proposed action, an alternative design that moves the area toward the desired condition, or to not implement a project at this time.

Public Involvement

If you have any questions or comments with regards to this proposal, please contact Lynda Karns at 1312 Fairlane Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or call her at (530) 841-4469. I am particularly interested in hearing about any issues; defined as points of discussion, dispute, or debate about the effects of the proposed action. Please provide any input by February 7, 2003, so it may be used in the analysis. All input received during project planning is a matter of public record; so names and addresses of participants cannot be kept confidential. Those who respond or request a copy of the environmental assessment will be mailed copies of the environmental assessment and decision notice, as they are completed.

Sincerely,

/s/ Margaret J. Boland
MARGARET J. BOLAND
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures