

# DECISION MEMO

## Baker Blowdown Salvage Project

USDA - Forest Service, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest  
Mount Baker Ranger District, Whatcom County, Washington

### INTRODUCTION

As District Ranger for the Mount Baker Ranger District, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, I have carefully reviewed the proposed project design for Baker Blowdown Salvage. In reaching a decision on this project, I considered the comments of the public, other agencies, county and state governments, and local Indian Tribes. I consulted with members of my staff, reviewed potential effects, and considered the relationship of the project to the Forest Plan, as amended, and Federal law and regulation.

This Decision Memo documents my decision on what activities to implement within the Baker Blowdown Salvage project area to meet the identified purpose and need. It is my determination that no additional environmental analysis is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) based on agency direction, analysis of public comments, and the absence of extraordinary circumstances that may result in significant effects to the environment.

### LOCATION

The Baker Blowdown Salvage project area is located on the Mount Baker Ranger District, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Whatcom County, Washington. The project area occurs in the Baker River watershed. The project is located within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the boundary of the National Forest in the Baker River watershed (Township 37 north, Range 8 east, Section 35) approximately seven miles north of the town of Concrete (Figure 1).

### THE DECISION

It is my decision to implement the proposed Baker Blowdown Salvage Project as described below and as shown in Figure 2. My decision is based on several factors summarized in this Decision Memo, including site-specific resource information and supporting documentation, biological assessments of project effects to listed species, and project compliance with the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP 1990), as amended.

The Baker Blowdown Salvage Project will remove commercially valuable trees that were blown down by a wind storm in December 2006 and plant conifer tree seedlings. Specifically the project will:

- On approximately 33 acres, harvest with ground-based logging systems all commercially valuable trees blown down in the December 2006 wind event.
- On approximately 21 acres, harvest with skyline logging systems all commercially valuable trees blown down in the December 2006 wind event.

- Reforest approximately 28 acres using native conifer tree seedlings planted at variable densities.
- Include implementation of the monitoring plans in Appendix 2 of this Decision Memo.

## **PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES**

The following project design features are integral components of this decision. A more detailed listing of these measures is in the Project Record.

- Ground-based harvesting will be done by equipment having ground pressure of 10 pounds per square inch or less.
- Harvest machinery will not operate in wetlands.
- Trees lying in wetlands smaller than one acre (Units 8 and 9) will not be harvested.
- Trees extending into areas of unstable soils beyond the northern or eastern borders of Unit 5 will be cut at the unit boundary. The portions of these trees outside the unit boundary will be left in place.
- No harvest will occur in riparian reserves. Trees whose root wads are outside of riparian reserves can be removed only if their removal would not require trees within riparian reserves to be cut.
- Construct 5 temporary roads totaling approximately 1,600 feet (0.3 mile) in length.
- Clear brush, add additional road surfacing where needed, blade road surface, and install or replace culverts where needed along approximately 0.65 mile of Forest Roads 1200.100 and 1200.102.
- Clear brush, blade road surface, and install or replace culverts where needed along approximately 0.5 mile of Forest Roads 1102 and 1102.025.
- Clear brush, add additional road surfacing where needed, blade road surface, and install or replace culverts where needed along approximately 0.2 mile of Forest Road 1104. Following logging operations, remove culverts on this road and replace with water bars.
- Surface the temporary road into Unit 9 with 18-inches of 6-inch jaw rock or 24-inches of shot rock.
- Gates on Forest Roads 1102 and 1200.100 will be open only during active logging operations. Gates will be locked at the end of each workday.
- Obtain rocks for road surfacing from the rock pit on Road 1200.120 (Figure 3).
- Machine or hand pile and burn slash on approximately 2.2 acres (within 150' of Forest Road 11 in Units 1 and 3, and within 50 feet of Forest Road 11 in Units 4, 5, 7, and 10).
- Create a fuel break by removing slash from within 15' of the east boundary of Unit 1 and the north, east, and south boundaries of Unit 5.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

This section lists management requirements that are integral components of this decision. The objective, effectiveness, and responsible party for implementation of these requirements are listed in the specialist reports for Recreation and Visuals, Botany, Soils, and Historic Properties. The reports for each of these resource is incorporated by reference into this decision memo.

### *Recreation and Visual Resources*

- No log haul or traffic delays will occur Friday through Sunday, or on holidays, from the last weekend in April through the end of September.
- Traffic delays on Road 11 will be no longer than 30 minutes on Mondays through Thursdays from the last weekend in April through the end of September, and on any day from October until the last weekend in April. Flaggers will be required for any road delays.
- Temporary roads and landings will be ripped and vegetated naturally or with conifer plantings.
- Temporary roads in units 3 and 5 will intersect Road 11 at approximately a 90 degree angle, and turn parallel to the highway within 150 feet of the junction.
- To minimize the chance of vehicular collisions, use flaggers to stop westbound traffic on Forest Road 11 when log trucks are entering Forest Road 11 from Unit 1.
- To prevent post-project use of temporary roads in Units 1, 3, and 5, remove fill, recontour system road edges, and construct a berm no higher than the system road surface on the opposite side of the road ditch from the system road.
- To minimize the visual impact of temporary roads, skid trails, and landings in Units 1, 3, 4, and 5, retain live trees and shrubs to the extent possible within 100 feet of Forest Road 11, and scarify the surface of these features to facilitate natural plant establishment.
- To minimize the visual impact of landings in Units 1, 3, 4, and 5, locate landings when possible behind visual screens, in low areas, or below the elevation of the highway.
- To minimize the visual impact of stumps resulting from the live tree felling and on righted root wads in Units 1 and 3-6, cut off stumps within 100' of Forest Road 11 within 12 inches of the forest floor.
- To ensure that VQOs are met, evaluate Units 1, 3, 4, and 5 eight months after harvest to identify any additional actions to reduce visual impacts.

### *Invasive Weeds*

- Equipment, tools, and gear will be free of all dirt, mud, and plant parts before entering the Forest.
- Only weed free straw or mulch will be used.

### *Soils*

Mitigation for Units 9 and 6: to minimize soil disturbance and compaction, harvest the units over snow if there is greater than two feet of compact snow with water content of less than 35%.

Otherwise, the water table needs to be below 3' feet of the ground surface (normally from May 1 to October 15, but may be as late as November 1). Ground water depth can be established by a moisture meter.

### *Historic Properties*

- If a previously unidentified archaeological or historic resource is discovered during project implementation, or if an identified resource is affected in an unanticipated way, work in the immediate vicinity will stop, the area will be secured, and the Heritage Specialist shall be notified. The Heritage Specialist will fulfill the Forest's responsibilities in accordance with the Programmatic Agreement Regarding Cultural Resources Management on National Forests in the State of Washington.
- Cultural Resource surveys must be conducted after logging in Units with a high probability of cultural resource occurrence.

Although not a part of this decision, the logging contractor will construct an earthen berm on Forest Road 1104 within 100' of its junction with Forest Road 11 after removing culverts from the road. This action is continued implementation of the Baker Lake and South Fork Nooksack River Access and Travel Management decision signed by the District Ranger on February 2, 2006.

### **Rationale to Salvage Harvest Blowdown Trees**

All of the affected area is within the Baker (RW 112) Late Successional Reserve (LSR). The land management objective for the LSR is to provide habitat for the recovery of the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet, and to maintain populations of plant and animal species closely associated with late-successional and old-growth forests (USDA 2001). In order to meet this objective, 80% of the LSR should be old-growth or late-successional forest (USDA 2001). Currently the Baker LSR falls short of its desired condition because only 68% of forested areas are estimated to be in these habitat classes (USDA 2001).

In some areas of intense blow down, logs cover most of the ground surface at a depth of 3 – 10' deep. Here, forest regeneration is not expected to occur until the blown down trees substantially decompose; this is expected to take several decades (Wildlife Specialist Report, p. 13). With the current depth and cover of down trees, available planting spots are few, and shading caused by the piles of logs will result in slow tree seedling growth. Therefore, planting trees in these areas is needed to begin development of a new forest that will develop into late successional forest in approximately 80 years.

In other portions of these stands, canopy closure is very low. Because the shrub and ground vegetation was largely unaffected by the wind storm, these plants are expected to grow vigorously for several years in response to the increased sunlight. Vigorously growing shrub and ground vegetation is expected to limit tree regeneration. Planting areas of moderate blow down where very little forest cover remains will meet long-term objectives of high forest canopy closure and multiple tree canopy layers.

Salvage logging of some areas of blown down trees will meet several objectives of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan, USDA Forest Service 1990). These include conducting mortality salvage on all accessible, available, capable, and suitable lands in a timely manner compatible with other resources and uses (Forest Plan, p. 4-5); and promptly reforesting all capable, available, and suitable lands following harvest, fire, insects, etc. (pp. 4-5). Salvage logging a portion of the affected area would occur consistent with guidelines on pages C-13 through C-16 of *Attachment A to the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range*

of the Northern Spotted Owl (Appendix C) (USDA Forest Service 2004). These guidelines are intended to prevent negative effects on late-successional habitat, while permitting some commercial wood volume removal (p. C-13). The removal of some commercial wood volume will also facilitate reforestation. The removal of deep piles of fallen trees will physically allow planting access to portions of the ground and will also permit light to reach tree seedlings promoting their growth. The removal of wind thrown trees in some areas will allow conifer seedlings to become established and promote seedling growth, which will improve the long-term habitat conditions in the Baker LSR.

## **RATIONALE FOR MY DECISION**

### **My Decision Responds to the Purpose and Need for the Action**

The purpose of the project is to recover merchantable timber from trees blown down by the wind storm and to meet Late Successional Reserve (LSR) habitat objectives. The project is expected to generate approximately 1.6 million board feet of timber and improve future LSR habitat by planting 28 acres with conifer seedlings. The need for the project is based on meeting desired habitat conditions described in the Forest-Wide Late Successional Reserve Assessment (LSRA 2001) and for merchantable timber recovery to provide levels of timber projected by the Forest Plan (1990), as amended. This project responds to direction in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Plan (1990), as amended.

Desired habitat conditions in LSRs include at least 80% late successional and old-growth forest habitat, high canopy closure, and multiple tree canopy layers (LSRA 2001, p. 1). Currently the Baker LSR falls short of its desired condition because only 68% of forested areas are estimated to be in these habitat classes. Some portions of moderate blowdown area have retained canopy closure in excess of 30%. In these areas, tree crowns will grow to increase canopy closure and the shrub and ground layer vegetation is not expected to prevent the establishment of new tree seedlings. In other portions of these stands, canopy closure is less than 30%. Because the shrub and ground vegetation was largely unaffected by the wind storm, these plants are expected to grow vigorously for several years in response to the increased sunlight. Vigorously growing shrub and ground vegetation, as well as 3 to 10 foot deep piles of down logs, are expected to limit tree regeneration. Planting areas where very little forest cover remains will best meet the long-term objectives of late successional and old-growth forest habitat amount, high forest canopy closure, and multiple tree canopy layers (Wildlife Specialist Report p. 6).

### **My Decision Complies with the Forest Plan**

This project is consistent with the Forest Plan, as amended (Project Record). The project occurs in a Late Successional Reserve (RW-112) and is in a Scenic Viewshed that requires meeting the visual quality objective of Foreground Retention. These land allocations allow harvest of blown down trees when it prevents negative effects to late successional forest habitat and if Visual Quality Objectives can be met within one year of the completion of the project. This project meets the intent of both land allocations because it will result in providing late successional forest habitat in less time than if left untreated, avoids negative effects to late successional forest habitat, and has been designed to meet Visual Quality Objectives. The Late Successional Reserve guidelines for salvage harvest are enumerated on pages C-13 through C-16 of Attachment A to the *Record of Decision (ROD) for the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Appendix C). The Baker Blowdown Salvage project is

consistent with all of these guidelines and with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (Aquatic Specialist Report).

On July 24, 2007, the Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture signed a new Survey and Manage Record of Decision that removed the survey and manage requirements from all National Forests' land and resource management plans within the range of the northern spotted owl. However, since the court in *Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Mark Rey et al.*, Civ. No. 04-844, Western District of Washington has not yet granted the government's motion to lift the modified October 11, 2006 injunction, I have designed this project to be consistent with the 2001 Survey and Manage ROD as modified by subsequent annual species reviews as allowed by the modified October 11, 2006 injunction.

## **REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE ACTION FROM ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

Specific actions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). Agency policy at Forest Service NEPA Handbook (FSH) 1909.15, Chapter 30, section 30.3, states that a proposed action may be categorically excluded from documentation only if the action is within a category listed in FSH 1909.15, sections 31.1b or 31.2; and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in significant individual or cumulative environmental effects.

The proposed action qualifies for this exclusion under Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, section 31.2, Category 13: *Salvage of dead and/or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 1/2 mile of temporary road construction.*

The Baker Blowdown Salvage project meets requirements for exclusion from documentation in an EIS or EA, but does require a project file (Project Record) and decision memo (FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30).

## **FINDING OF NO EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect (as defined in FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30). My determination is based on interdisciplinary team review and analysis and documents in the project record, as summarized below for each extraordinary circumstance in the FSH Chapter 30.

- a. The project has been analyzed to determine effects on threatened or endangered species, and their critical habitat. Biological assessments were completed for this action to determine effects to species listed as threatened or endangered and species proposed for listing. The proposed project will have *no effect* to Puget Sound Chinook salmon, Puget Sound Steelhead, Canada lynx, northern spotted owl, gray wolf. It would have *no effect* on critical habitat for northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. No threatened, endangered, or candidate plant species occur within or adjacent to the project area. The project *may affect, but will not jeopardize the continued existence* of the marbled murrelet. The action *may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect* grizzly bear and Puget Sound bull trout. Biological evaluations of effects to sensitive species determined the proposed action will have *no impact* on coho salmon, sockeye salmon, Salish sucker, sea-run cutthroat trout, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, great gray owl, common loon, Townsend's big-eared bat, wolverine, and Larch Mountain and van Dyke's salamanders; and that the project *may impact individuals or habitat for, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability of the population or species.* The project will have *no impact* to any sensitive plant species. Further details are contained in the biological evaluations and biological assessments in the Project Record.

- b. There are no **municipal watersheds** in the project area. The project design will avoid adverse impacts to floodplains or wetlands as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990. Blown down trees will not be removed from Riparian Reserves to avoid impacts to floodplains and wetlands. Some accelerated erosion and sediment delivery are expected to occur as a result of the project, but the maximum amount delivered would be less than 0.2% of existing sediment regime. This very slight increase in sediment load will not affect water quality or fish habitat conditions (Aquatic Specialist Report).
- c. The project does not occur in any **Congressionally designated area such as wilderness, wilderness study area, or National Recreation Area**.
- d. The project does not occur in an **Inventoried Roadless Area**.
- e. The project is not situated in or near a **Research Natural Area (RNA)**.
- f. The project will not adversely affect any known **American Indian religious or cultural sacred sites**. The Federal government has trust responsibilities to Tribes under a government-to-government relationship to ensure that the Tribes reserved rights are protected. Consultation with Tribes helps ensure that these trust responsibilities are met. The Forest consulted with potentially affected Tribes (Project Record), and no significant effects were determined (Heritage Specialist Report).
- g. The proposed action will not affect any **archeological sites, or historic properties or areas**. A cultural resource survey has been completed, and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has occurred (Heritage Specialist Report). SHPO agreed with the determination of “no adverse effect” on October 4, 2007.

In addition to the above, I have incorporated consideration of other elements in my determination that there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in significant individual or cumulative environmental effects, nor other adverse effects associated with this project.

Visual quality along the heavily traveled Baker Lake Road (Forest Road 11) will be temporarily reduced due to the construction of temporary roads and landings. Although visual impacts will be noticeable during and after logging operations, I am convinced that the measures taken to avoid or lessen visual impacts will ensure visual changes are subordinate to the landscape foreground within one year following logging operations (Recreation and Visual Quality Specialist Report).

Some **recreational opportunities** may be temporarily interrupted during log hauling operations and construction of temporary roads that intersect with Forest Road 11. Restricting log haul to days with less recreational use minimizes this impact (Recreation and Visual Quality Specialist Report).

I have considered the potential for **cumulative effects** and arrived at the conclusion that without notable individual effects from the action, and the absence of current or proposed similar projects in this specific area, there would be no significant cumulative effects. My conclusion is based on: (1) the small scale and short duration of the project, (2) the analysis conducted in the biological assessments and evaluations of project effects to listed and sensitive fish, wildlife, and plant species, (3) information gathered during public scoping, and (4) the small magnitude of environmental impact, as described in the Project Record and in this document.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, SCOPING, AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Mount Baker Ranger District initiated scoping (40 CFR 1501.7) on the proposed action by sending a scoping letter to interested parties signed on June 26, 2007. The 30-day scoping and 30-day pre-decisional comment periods were combined into one public involvement effort for the project. This combined public involvement effort was initiated through a June 30, 2007 legal notice in the *Skagit Valley Herald* and a scoping letter sent to 86 individuals, agencies, and organizations interested in or

affected by this type of project. In addition, a public field trip occurred to the project area on June 28, 2007. This project has also been listed in the April, July, and October issues of the *Quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions* for the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, which appears continually on the Forest web site.

The Mount Baker Ranger District received five comment letters and one phone call regarding the project during the 30-day scoping and pre-decisional period ending on July 30, 2007. An additional letter was received after the comment period. The Forest Service prepared a summary of responses to the comments received. This summary is found in Appendix 1 of this document. Original letters of comments are included in the Project Record.

## **FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

My decision will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. I have summarized some pertinent ones below.

**National Historic Preservation Act, American Indian Religious Freedom Act, and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act:** This decision complies with the cited acts as described on page 5 of this document.

**Endangered Species Act:** The Forest Botanist, District Wildlife Biologist, and District Fisheries Biologist analyzed the proposed action in regards to the Endangered Species Act as described on pages 4 and 5 of this document.

**National Forest Management Act:** I find this decision to be consistent with the requirements of the National Forest Management Act (USC 1604(g)(3)(E)) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 219). Specifically:

This act establishes guidelines for National Forest management. This project is consistent with these guidelines for management prescriptions that involve manipulation of tree cover (36 CFR 219.27 (b)) as follows:

1) *The prescription should be best suited to the multiple-use goals established for the area with potential environmental, biological, cultural resource, aesthetic, engineering, and economic impacts, as stated in the regional guides and Forest Plans (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (1)).*

The proposed project is consistent with the Forest Plan, as amended (see page 5).

2) *Lands can be adequately restocked within 5 years (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (2)) and (36 CFR 219.27 (c) (3))*

Adequate tree stocking will be accomplished through planting 28 acres with native conifer tree seedlings (Vegetation Specialist Report). The remaining area already has adequate stocking.

3) *The harvesting system used was not selected primarily because it will yield the greatest dollar return or greatest timber output. (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (3))*

My decision to not salvage harvest in riparian reserves (page 2) results in less timber output. Within harvest units, my decision to harvest all trees resulting from the recent windstorm was based on the current and future availability of down wood (Wildlife Specialist Report).

4) *Consider potential effects on residual trees and adjacent stands (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (4))*

Harvest is expected to damage some residual trees, and temporary road construction will impact the stand adjacent to Unit 9. The effects of these consequences have been considered and found to be compatible with Late Successional Reserve management (Wildlife Specialist Report and Vegetation Specialist Report).

5) *Avoid permanent impairment of site productivity and ensure conservation of soil and water resources (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (5)).*

Site productivity will be retained despite some impact to organic matter (Vegetation Specialist Report). Soil compaction will be below the threshold standard for soil disturbance identified in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Plan (Soils Specialist Report), and soil compaction effects are not expected to preclude the development of Late Successional forest (Appendix 1).

6) *Provide the desired effects on water quantity and quality, wildlife and fish habitat, regeneration of desired tree species, forage production, recreation uses, aesthetics values, and other resource yields (36 CFR 219.27 (b) (6)).*

My decision is consistent with standards and guidelines in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Plan, as amended, and therefore will result in the desired effects on resources describe above (Aquatics Specialist Report, Wildlife Specialist Report, Vegetation Report, Recreation and Visuals Specialist Report, Botany Specialist Report, Fire Specialist Report, and Heritage Specialist Report).

7) *Be practical in terms of transportation and harvesting requirements, and total costs of preparation, logging, and administration.*

My decision uses existing road systems where possible and minimizes the amount of temporary road (Appendix 1). Skyline harvesting is only required where slopes are in excess of 30% and soil resource damage would occur with ground-based logging systems (Soils Specialist Report).

8) *No timber harvest, other than salvage sales and sales to protect other multiple use values shall occur on lands not suited for timber harvest. (36 CFR 219.27 (c) (1))*

Harvest units are on lands suitable for timber harvest (Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Plan).

**Clean Water Act:** This project complies with the Clean Water Act and Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 (see pages 5 and 6 of this document) and related State water quality requirements.

**Environmental Justice:** The proposed action was assessed to determine whether it would disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations, in accordance with Executive Order 12898. No impacts to minority or low-income populations were identified during project scoping or effects analysis.

**National Environmental Policy Act:** This Act requires public involvement and consideration of potential environmental effects. The Project Record supports compliance with this Act as does this Decision Memo.

**Magnuson-Stevens Act:** The Baker Blowdown Salvage project will not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat for coho, Chinook, and Puget Sound pink salmon (Aquatic Specialist Report).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

This decision falls under a categorical exclusion that is subject to review under the provisions of 36 CFR 215. The decision is appealable only by those individuals and organizations who provided comments or otherwise expressed interest during the 30-day comment period on the proposed action. The appeal must meet the requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

The appeal must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer, Attn: 1570 Appeals, 2930 Wetmore Avenue, Suite 3A, Everett WA 98201, faxed to (425) 783-0214, sent electronically to [appeals-pacificnorthwest-mtbaker-snoqualmie@fs.fed.us](mailto:appeals-pacificnorthwest-mtbaker-snoqualmie@fs.fed.us), or hand delivered to the above address between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday except legal holidays. The appeal including attachments must be postmarked or delivered within 45 days of the publication date of the legal notice for this decision in the *Skagit Valley Herald*. The publication date of the legal notice in

the *Skagit Valley Herald* is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal should not rely on dates or timeframes provided by any other source.

Electronic appeals must be submitted as an attachment in Microsoft Word (.doc), .rtf, or .pdf format, or as an e-mail message. E-mailed appeals must include the project name in the subject line. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

It is the responsibility of each individual and organization to ensure their appeal is received in a timely manner. For electronically mailed appeals, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive such an automated acknowledgement, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

## **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation of project activities is expected to begin in 2007. If an appeal is filed, the decision may not be implemented until 15 days following the date of appeal disposition, depending on the nature of that disposition. If no appeal is filed, decision may begin on, but not before, the 5th business days after the close of the appeal period.

## **CONTACT PERSON**

Further information about this decision can be obtained from Don Gay. Don can be contacted at (360) 856-5700 x236, at [dgay@fs.fed.us](mailto:dgay@fs.fed.us), or at the Mount Baker Ranger District, 810 SR 20, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284.

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Jon Vanderheyden  
District Ranger  
Mount Baker Ranger District

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Date

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