

## **DECISION MEMO**

### **GREENWATER ELK FORAGE MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

#### **USDA Forest Service**

#### **Snoqualmie Ranger District, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest**

#### **King and Pierce Counties, Washington**

#### **Sections 13, 14, and 24, T19N, R9E and Sections 16-23 and 31; T19N, R10E**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As District Ranger for the Snoqualmie Ranger District Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, I have carefully reviewed the activities proposed for the Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project. In reaching a decision, I considered public, agency, and Tribal comments. I also consulted with members of my staff, reviewed potential effects, and considered the relationship of the project to Forest Plan direction and Federal law and regulations.

This Decision Memo documents my decision on what activities to implement within the Greenwater Elk Forage Management project to meet the identified project purpose and need.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project occurs in deer and elk (ungulate) winter range. It is located on the Snoqualmie Ranger District of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest within the Greenwater and White River basins in portions of Sections 13, 14, and 24 in T19N, R9E and Sections 16-23 and 31 in T19N, R10E (see attached Figures 1-5). These lands are among the acres acquired from Weyerhaeuser Company, as part of the Huckleberry Land Exchange. The land exchange Record of Decision (ROD) (April 2001) amended the Forest Plan and designated Greenwater Special Area as Management Area 8E for creating and maintaining forest openings as permanent elk forage habitat (Forest Plan Amendment #16). Refer to Appendix D.

The project's purpose is to implement part of the decision made in the Huckleberry Land Exchange ROD and to help meet the goal of Management Area 8E. The goal is no net loss of forage habitat, consistent with other laws and regulations. The need for this project, in accordance with the standards and guidelines for MA 8E, is to:

- Create up to 400-500 acres of permanent openings in deer and elk winter range to increase forage production for elk and deer. The current herd population of 600-700 elk is below objective herd size of 900-1000 animals and current data suggests the herd is declining. Increasing the abundance and distribution of quality forage would help to ensure reproductive cow elk maintain adequate energy reserves to successfully develop healthy calves. Fetal weight gain and timely births are essential for increasing chances of calf survival. Adequate forage would help increase the project area's carrying capacity goal of 900-1,000 elk (10/2007 Elk Forage Wildlife Evaluation, and June 22, 2007 Project Initiation letter).

## DECISION

I have decided to implement the Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project. The project will create 21 permanent forage openings, totaling approximately 171 acres, within inventoried elk winter range, as per the standards and guidelines established for Forest Plan Management Area 8E. The majority of the forage openings will be no larger than 15 acres and will take advantage of existing openings and meadows wherever possible (see Table 1). Forage openings will be converted from forested stands to shrub/grass/forb types and maintained in these types by using a variety of methods including mechanical, hand tools, and fire. Follow-up removal of any latent seedling in-growth will be planned for 5 years following initial treatment and every other year following until the openings reach 10 years. Removal method of seedlings will be hand oriented and should be relatively easy given the seedlings will be small in size.

My decision also allows the utilization of miscellaneous special forest product permits for follow-up removal of understory plants that are less desirable forage species, such as salal and Oregon grape. These plants, if allowed, could dominate cleared areas, reducing forage potential. Openings will be maintained as funding is available.

Approximately 14.3 miles of road maintenance, 4.26 miles of road reconstruction, and 1.0 mile of temporary road construction will be required. Location and description of system roadwork is described in Table 2, below. Approximately 2.78 miles of system roads will be closed and put into storage (ML 1) upon completion of this project. These roads are identified in Table 2.

**Table 1. Acres, yarding method, fuel treatment, and estimated commercial timber volume**

Unit	Acres	Yarding System			Fuel Treatment		Total CCF*
		Skyline	Ground Based	Non-commercial	Broadcast Burn	Grapple Pile/Pile Burning	
2	7.3	3.7	3.6	-	3.7	3.6	410
13-1	4.9	3.9	1.0	-	3.9	1.0	276
13-2	1.3	-	1.3	-	-	1.3	75
14	15.6	-	15.6	-	-	15.6	1038
15	4.3	4	-	-	-	4.3	242
16	10.5	3.2	7.4	-	3.2	7.4	591
17	7.7	-	7.7	-	-	7.7	432
18	8.8	8.8	-	-	8.8	-	494
19	11.5	-	11.5	-	-	11.5	649
20	14.6	-	-	14.6	-	14.6	-
25	13.8	-	13.8	-	13.8	-	777
26	15.1	9.1	6.0	-	9.1	6.0	850
28	5.3	3.2	2.1	-	3.2	2.1	130
29	7.5	3.7	3.8	-	3.7	3.8	423
31	10.1	4.0	6.1	-	4.0	6.1	388
32	8.2	2.0	-	6.2	8.2	-	30
33	2.1	2.1	-	-	2.1	-	31
34	8.0	8.0	-	-	8.0	-	125
35	3.1	3.1	-	-	3.1	-	45
36	4.0	4.0	-	-	4.0	-	58
37	7.7	-	7.7	-	7.7	-	111
<b>Totals</b>	<b>171.5</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>7,175</b>

\*All acreages and volumes in Table 1 are approximate values based on map and field observations.  
CCF = hundred cubic feet.

**Table 2. Planned Road Reconstruction and Maintenance Activities**

<b>Road #</b>	<b>Planned work activity</b>
70 – 7.21 miles	Asphalt patching – Road striping - Ditch cleaning – Culvert basin maintenance – Guardrail maintenance MP 5.05.
7000115 – 0.53 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert replacement MP 0.27 – 0.34. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7000118 – 0.07 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – 1 Culvert installation MP 0.04. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7000119 – 0.09 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – 1 Culvert installation MP 0.01. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7200223 – 0.25 mile	Minimal brushing for equipment access only. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7200224 – 0.23 mile	Minimal brushing for equipment access only. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7010 – 2.49 mile	Brushing – Blading – Sign maintenance – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing - Culvert basin maint. – Culvert installation MP 0.28 – 1.67 – 1.73 – 1.87 – 1.91 – 1.95 – 2.0
7012 – 0.88 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert installation MP 0.56
7012240 – 0.88 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert replacement 0.01 – 0.06 – 0.41
7013 – 1.08 miles	Brushing – Blading – Reconditioning roadbed – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert Installation MP 0.05 – 0.49 – 0.64 – 0.76 – 0.89.
7020 – 0.90 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Asphalt placement MP 0.2 to 0.5 – Temporary bridge installation at Slide Cr MP 0.9 - Culvert Installation MP 0.26 – 0.34 – 0.40 – 0.85
7020110 – 0.25 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert installation MP 0.00 – 0.06 – 0.23
7020050 – 0.22 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert installation MP 0.18
7140 – 1.12 miles	Brushing – Road reconditioning – Aggregate surfacing – Drainage Structures, such as rolling dips (MP start at junction of 7013 with 7040) MP 0.04 – 0.06 – 0.19 – 0.24 – 0.33 – 0.47 – 0.54 – 0.66 – 0.71
72 – 0.62 mile	Brushing – Blading – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance - Gate maintenance
7200420 – 0.46 mile	Brushing – Blading – Reconditioning roadbed – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Culvert replacement MP 0.00 – 0.07 – 0.31 – 0.35 – 0.40 – 0.42. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>
7270 – 1.15 miles	Brushing – Blading – Reconditioning roadbed – Ditch cleaning – Aggregate surfacing treatment – Culvert basin maintenance – Slide Removal – Culvert replacement MP 0.00 – 0.07 – 0.11 – 0.22 – 0.31 – 0.40 – 0.50 – 0.63 – 0.79 – 0.82 – 0.98 – 1.02. <i>Road will be placed in ML 1 upon completion of the project.</i>

Temporary roads that will be constructed to provide access to units 14, 16, 17, 18, and 31 (See Figures 3-5) will be decommissioned following forest management activities.

For about the first 0.1 miles of existing Road 7000-115 the Forest Service will need to acquire temporary access rights across Hancock Forest Management land in Section 24, T19N, R9E.

The existing rock quarry near the junction of Roads 70 and 72 contains pit run and riprap sized rock. Up to 4,000 cubic yards of pit run material from this quarry will be utilized, as needed, for road reconstruction activities.

### **Management Requirements**

Management requirements are used to minimize potential environmental impacts of the project and to improve existing conditions. All measures listed below are integral parts of this decision to be adhered to and incorporated into the implementation of this project. These management requirements were identified as necessary within the resource specialist's reports for this project. The reports are incorporated by reference into this decision memo.

#### ***Cultural***

- If any previously unidentified resources are discovered during project implementation, or if an identified resource is affected in an unanticipated way, the Forest Heritage specialist shall be notified and the Forest will fulfill its responsibilities in accordance with the 1997 Programmatic Agreement between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Washington State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and United States Department of Agriculture – Region 6 Forest Service.
- Road activities, such as culvert installation/replacements will be surveyed prior to initiating work.
- Prior to cultural surveys for road activities, the Forest Service will contact the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Preservation Division and invite the Tribe to participate in the completion of surveys.

#### ***Fire, Fuels and Air Quality***

- Prescribed burning of project fuels will comply with Washington Smoke Management Plan regulations. All prescribed burning must be approved in advance by Washington Department of Natural Resources, to ensure compliance with the Washington State Smoke Management Plan
- A Prescribed Fire Burn Plan is required for any burning activity. The plan will be prepared for each unit or groups of like units in close proximity and will be approved by the responsible administrative officer as required in Forest Service Manual 5140.
- All industrial operations occurring in the forest environment are subject to the Industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) determined that day. All harvest or fuel treatment activities will be in compliance with IFPL requirements.
- Piles will be constructed to provide for efficient burning to reduce effluent production.
- Pile burning and broadcast burning operations will occur in the spring or fall during weather patterns that provide good mixing and dispersion of smoke emissions.

#### ***Vegetation and Plants***

- If any previously undiscovered Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive or other rare vascular plants, bryophytes, lichens, or fungi are discovered at any time prior to or during project implementation, work at that site will be halted until a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) botanist is consulted and necessary mitigation measures are enacted.

- Treat known infestations of invasive weeds before ground disturbance begins.
  - Eliminate the (50' x 50') patch of herb Robert that occurs in the road through the middle of Unit 18 before any equipment or vehicles enter this area. Control will require annual re-treatment for up to 5 years because of seed bank in the soil.
  - Control tansy ragwort from roads accessing units 31-36, and unit 18. Control of this species is most effective during the early bud stage. If the plants have already started to flower, remove reproductive parts from the project area and dispose of in land fill.
  - Control Scot's broom that has infested roads that access forage units. Infestations are particularly severe along the westernmost spur road of Road 72, which is used to access unit 31.
- For actions conducted or authorized by written permit by the forest Service that will operate outside the limits of the road prism, require the cleaning of all heavy equipment prior to entering National Forest System lands.
- Suppliers must provide annual documentation to the project Sale Administrator indicating that the following products have been examined by a qualified inspector and deemed free of State listed noxious weeds
  - Straw or other mulch
  - Gravel, rock, other fill
  - Seeds (according to AOSA standards)
- If weeds are present in the project area, all equipment and gear must be cleaned before leaving the project area to avoid spreading the infestation further.
- If weeds are present in the project area, work from relatively weed-free areas into the infested area rather than visa-versa.
- Revegetate all areas of bare soil exposed by project activities if there is a risk of noxious weed invasion. Native plant materials are the first choice in revegetation where timely natural regeneration of the native plant community is not likely to occur. Follow revegetation criteria and specifications for this project (See Appendix A).
- If forage for elk is augmented through seeding or planting, local native plant materials will be used. Follow recommendations prepared by Institute for Applied Ecology (2008).

***Recreation, Public Safety***

- Because of heavy recreation traffic using the 70 and 72 road systems, approved safety and activity warning signs will be established to warn forest users of traffic conditions and hazards they might encounter.
- Work with contractors to ensure the Road 70 Sno-Park operations are not impacted by project activities.
- Limit operations to Monday through Friday during the summer field season with a stop time of 5 p.m. on Fridays.

***Soil and Water***

**Soil Protection**

- To minimize soil displacement and/or compaction:
  - Suspend at least one end of logs during skidding.
  - Skid over slash with ground-based equipment.

- Directionally fall trees in ground-based units to concentrate slash for skidding on and to minimize where grapple needs to travel for slash piling.
- Minimize turning of tracked equipment in a manner that displaces soil.
- To avoid rutting and compaction damage to susceptible wet soils curtail harvest operations when soils are excessively wet (when the administering officer determines rutting and other damage is occurring) unless a thick mat of slash can be maintained to prevent damage.
- Use existing skid trails and landings to the extent practicable to minimize soil disturbance and compaction from skid trails in the project area.
- To prevent consumption of organic matter in surface soil and minimize consumption of duff, broadcast burn slash when soils are damp (near field capacity).
- To minimize sterilization of soils through excessive heating and consumption of organic matter, minimize the aerial extent of high intensity fire from slash piles by using smaller piles (25 feet in diameter or less).

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

- When decommissioning temporary roads where runoff has potential to enter surface waters, apply treatments including water-barring, pulling culverts, scarifying to depth of 12 inches, mulch with weed-free mulch, and/or seeding with approved seed mix. Erosion control measures must be in place prior to normal heavy rainfall period.
- To protect stream bank integrity and aquatic resources, pull back approach fill to an angle of natural repose when removing culverts.
- To reduce effects on peak flows and water quality by disconnecting road drainage from stream channels, haul along all roads will be restricted during rainy periods, as necessary, to minimize the potential for downstream sedimentation.
- To prevent erosion and/or mass wasting and road damage on temporary roads identified to remain in place over the winter, use drainage features (culverts and/or water bars) that would accommodate a 100-year flood.
- To limit sediment delivery to streams from the road surface, conduct construction activities in or adjacent to perennial streams during summer low-flow season.
- To limit water accumulation and/or concentration, erosion, sediment delivery to streams and protect water quality when constructing or decommissioning roads or landings:
  - Out slope the roadway surface unless out sloping would increase sediment delivery to streams or where out sloping is infeasible.
  - Route road drainage away from channels and potentially unstable hill slopes.
  - Crown landings and staging areas to prevent concentrated runoff.
  - Where necessary, install water bars to route water away from streams to allow removal of fine sediment and other contaminants before discharge to the stream.
- To prevent and minimize effects to water quality, when heavy equipment is present:
  - Make a hazardous spill-plan and clean-up materials available on-site
  - Conduct any machinery maintenance involving potential contaminants (fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, etc) at an approved site or outside the Riparian Reserve.
  - Prior to starting work each day, check all machinery for leaks and make all necessary repairs.
- To control water and sediment discharge from temporary roads and skid trails, and disperse water on the hill slope:

- Install waterbars or other structures (including scattered woody material) on temporary roads and skid trails at a spacing and number determined by the Forest Service.
- Require all drainage treatment and controls to be in place by the end of the normal operating season.

**Wildlife**

- Within the project area, Road 7010, Road 7200, and associated spur road will be closed seasonally to motorized vehicle use from December 15 through May 15 (dates inclusive) to protect big-game winter range habitat (36 CFR 261.54 (a)).
- Leave pre-treatment large woody debris wherever possible.

**Fish**

- Work in or near streams that may generate sediment to those streams should be performed during the WDFW in-water window.
- The culverts of all roads utilized in the analysis or for any actions associated with this project shall be adequately sized and positioned so that both downstream and upstream passage is possible by all fish species for all life stages that are likely to be encountered at the site. In all cases culverts will be adequately sized to be able to pass at least 100-year flood events, including associated bedload and debris to minimize the probability of flood damage to stream habitat downstream of the crossings.
- When replacing culverts associated with wetlands, the new structure shall be placed at an elevation to not drain the wetland habitat upstream, even if fish passage is not improved.
- If wet weather conditions during project operations generate and transport sediment to a stream channel or other water body, particularly if fish-bearing, operations shall cease until the weather conditions improve. Additional actions may be taken that would eliminate the sedimentation (such as adding more rock to the haul route and adding straw bales to the ditches).
- Erosion control methods shall be used to prevent silt-laden water from entering the stream. The management practices that are outlined in the USFS National Best Management Practices – Non-Point Source Management (USFS 2005, and Forest Service Handbook 2509.25) will be followed. These may include where needed, but are not limited to, straw bales, silt fencing, filter fabric, and/or immediate mulching of exposed areas. All erosion control steps must be ready prior to initiation of construction, and the erosion control plan must be approved by the Forest Contracting Officer or Sale Administrator upon consultation with a USFS fisheries biologist, hydrologist, or their representative.
- Any de-vegetated, disturbed ground in or adjacent to the forage units shall be reclaimed if possible, including seeding and retention measures to prevent sediment from reaching streams until soil is secured by established vegetation.
- Any maintenance or refueling of motorized machinery will occur outside of Riparian Reserves (or potentially at a site within a Riparian Reserve that has been approved by a USFS fisheries biologist, hydrologist, or their representative).
- Prior to starting work each day, check any motorized machinery for leaks (fuel, oil, hydraulic fluid, etc.) and make all necessary repairs outside of Riparian Reserves.
- There shall be a written spill mitigation plan prepared, that must be approved by the Forest Contracting Officer or Sale Administrator upon consultation with a USFS fisheries biologist, hydrologist, or their representative prior to initiation of operations when motorized equipment is present.

- Except for the placement of culverts within three unnamed streams, and the placement of a portable temporary bridge over Slide Creek, there will be no work within any other active channels unless a proposal for such work is submitted to and approved by the Forest Contracting Officer or Sale Administrator upon consultation with a USFS fisheries biologist or hydrologist.
- Any proposed, endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant or animal found during operations will be protected according to contract specification CT6.25#, Protection of Habitat of Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Species.
- Prior to project completion, the sale area will be checked by a USFS fisheries biologist, hydrologist, their representative for any Sale Area Improvement needs such as additional re-vegetation and soil stabilization treatment, including placement of sediment-control structures to stabilize road cuts and fills and control water. Any remaining needed work will be documented and a plan of remedial action promptly written and addressed.
- The overall soil productivity objective is to maintain soil disturbance below the 20 percent mandated by the Forest Plan (p. 4-117) and to prevent and mitigate potential adverse erosion. The sale will be monitored to see if these objectives are achieved and made available in the contract record.

### **Visuals**

- In order to limit the duration of visual impacts caused by the addition of openings in section 31, reseeding or replanting of the bare ground with native grass and /or small shrub species should be accomplished as soon as possible.
- Scallop the bottom edge of unit 34 to help blend its shape into the natural characteristic landscape of the area.

### **Monitoring**

Appendix B contains the Greenwater Elk Forage Monitoring Plan I have approved for implementation to monitor project objectives set forth with the creation and maintenance of the elk forage openings.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the soil and water management requirement and mitigation measures for soil protection, I have also decided to monitor ground disturbance from implementation of the project. This will be accomplished, contingent upon funding, by using transects in at least one cable and broadcast burn unit, and one ground based and grapple piled unit. The monitoring will best be done in three stages one transect measurement prior to harvest, one between harvest and slash treatment, and one after slash treatment (10/31/07 Soil and Water Report).

### **RATIONALE FOR MY DECISION**

The purpose of the project is to meet the goal of Management Area 8E by producing roughly 400-500 acres of forage openings. This project, which will create approximately 171 acres of openings, is the first phase in preparation for creating and maintaining ungulate forage habitat within MA 8E. The project will enhance forage availability by creating openings, allowing early succession vegetation to establish in the openings for grazing and browsing by big-game ungulates.

This project will also provide commercial wood fiber and special forest products as a by-product from creating the forage clearings, consistent with the 1990 Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest Plan, as amended by the 1994 Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of

Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl; and by the 2001 Huckleberry Land Exchange ROD.

## **EXCLUSION FROM DOCUMENTATION IN AN EA OR EIS**

It is my determination that this action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment because it falls within Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 Section 31.2, Category 6. *Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction.*

### **Extraordinary Circumstances**

Mere presence of one or more of these extraordinary circumstances resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. The degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist (Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30.3, Policy, Item 2). The categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects which may significantly affect the environment.

In accordance with Chapter 30.3 of Handbook 1909.15, I considered the following resource conditions in determining that this project does not have such extraordinary circumstances and therefore can be categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS.

**a. Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical or essential habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species** – In 2001, the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest submitted Biological Assessments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). This consultation addressed potential effects to species and critical habitat administered under the Endangered Species Act for the Huckleberry Land Exchange between Weyerhaeuser Timber Company and the Forest Service (USDA 2001). Potential effects included the designation of Management Area 8E and the effects of the openings that will be created with the Greenwater Elk Forage Management project. At the Forest Service's request, the two Services reaffirmed the effects determination in the 2001 BAs (09/17/07 letter to Jim Franzel, District Ranger, from USFWS Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office Manager Ken Berg, and 10/10/07 letter to Forest Supervisor Y. Robert Iwamoto from NMFS Regional Administrator D. Robert Lohn).

The reaffirmed effect determinations from implementing the Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project are: “may effect, not likely to adversely affect” the northern spotted owl, designated critical habitat for northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, designated critical habitat for marbled murrelet, bald eagle, grizzly bear, Canada lynx, gray wolf, the Coastal-Puget Sound Bull trout, Puget Sound chinook salmon, and essential fish habitat for chinook, coho, and pink salmon.

The Puget Sound steelhead was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act on May 11, 2007. Critical habitat for Puget Sound chinook salmon was designated on September 2, 2005. In their 10/10/07 letter, NMFS also affirmed the Forest Service finding that this project “may effect, not likely to adversely affect” Puget Sound steelhead and critical habitat for Puget Sound chinook salmon.

For sensitive species, the project will have “no impact” to Townsend's big-eared Bat, California wolverine, common loon, peregrine falcon, great gray owl, Oregon spotted frog, and Salish sucker. For Puget Sound/Strait of Georgia coho salmon, Puget Sound coastal

cutthroat trout, and Baker River sockeye salmon the effects determination is “not likely to tread towards federal listing” (10/07 Wildlife and Fisheries Specialists Reports).

The project will have “no impact” to the following rare or uncommon wildlife species: larch Mountain salamander, Van dyke’s salamander, Puget Oregonian, and warty jumping slug (10/07 Wildlife Report).

For Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Management Indicator species, the project will have “no impact” to mountain goat, pine marten, and pileated woodpecker. The increase in abundance and distribution of quality forage will help to ensure reproductive cow elk maintain adequate energy reserves to successfully develop healthy calves. Fetal weight gain and timely births are essential for increasing chances of calf survival. Adequate forage will help increase the project area’s carrying capacity goal of 900 elk (10/07 Wildlife Report).

For plants, no sensitive vascular plants, bryophytes, lichens, or fungi are known to occur within the project units. Implementation of this project will have no impact on threatened, endangered, sensitive, or other rare/uncommon species. The project is “not likely to contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability” to sensitive fungi species (10/26/07 Botany Report).

**b. Floodplains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds** – No elk forage units are located within floodplains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds. There will be no effect on peak flows at the subwatershed scale; therefore watershed hydrology is expected to continue to recover from past management (October 29, 2007 Soil and Water Report).

**c. Congressionally-designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or National Recreation Areas** – The project area is not located within wilderness, a wilderness study area, or National Recreation Area. The nearest wilderness, Norse Peak, is located approximately 3-5 miles south and east. The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest Plan, as amended, has allocated the land within the Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project to Administratively Withdrawn Greenwater Special Management Area 8E.

**d. Inventoried roadless areas** – There are no inventoried roadless areas in or near the project area.

**e. Research natural areas** – The project area is not located within any Research Natural Areas (RNA) or potential RNA’s

**f. American Indian and Alaska native religious or cultural sites, archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas** - A project review has been completed. The project will have no effect on known historic properties associated with American Indian heritage or Euro-American history. In the event that this project should uncover or expose a previously unidentified resource, work will be suspended until the requirements of the 1997 Programmatic Agreement between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Washington State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and United States Department of Agriculture – Region 6 Forest Service. The Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Yakama, and Colville Indian Tribes were contacted by letter July 5, 2005. No comments were received (10/07 Cultural Report).

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

This project has been listed in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) since mid 2005. The Snoqualmie Ranger District has also conducted public scoping to identify any issues, opportunities or concerns with the Greenwater Elk Forage Management project. Scoping and government to government letters (see project file for mailing

lists) were sent to federal, State, and local agencies; interested individuals; groups; and four Indian Tribes (Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Yakama, and Colville) on July 5, 2005. Two comment letters were received: one from Wayne Shaw supporting the project, and the other from Charlie Raines, Sierra Club Cascade Chapter. Mr. Raines had several questions and concerns, which are addressed point by point in Appendix C.

The draft Decision Memo was made available for public review and comment for a 30-day period from November 21, 2007 through December 21, 2007. A total of three comment letters were received; one from the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Preservation Program, one from the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Fisheries Division, and the third from the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Wildlife Program. To resolve concerns raised by the Tribe meetings were held with the Tribe on January 25 and February 25, 2008. As a result of these letters and related meetings, the Forest Service prepared a summary of responses to the comments received. This summary is found in Appendix E of this Decision Memo. Comments letters are included in the project record.

## **FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS**

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):** The process for this analysis followed the regulations and direction outlined in 40 CFR parts 1500-1508, Forest Service Manual 1950, and Forest Service Handbook 1909.15. There has been opportunity for public involvement during the course of the analysis. Because of these factors, I find this decision fully complies with NEPA.

**Endangered Species Act:** The District Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist and the Forest Botanist analyzed the project in regards to the Endangered Species Act. Effects determinations and USFWS and NMFS concurrences are described in the “Extraordinary Circumstances” section of this document (pp. 9 and 10).

**National Historic Preservation Act:** The Project Record contains documentation of consultation with appropriate Tribes and interested persons. No concerns were raised regarding the identification and evaluation of, or effects to, historic properties. The area of potential effect (APE) for the project was identified as the forage units, and the landings and roads needed to clear the units. Surveys conducted (May and June 2005, and May and August 2007) in accordance with the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Cultural Resource Inventory Strategy (Hearne and Hollenbeck, 1996) identified no heritage resources that may be affected by the project (10/07 Cultural Technical Report).

**Clean Water Act:** No activities approved in the project will be inconsistent with the provisions of the TMDL for the Upper White River, and therefore will meet Clean Water Act requirements. Placing roads (7000-115, 7000-118, 7000-119, 7200-223, 7200-224, 7200-420 and 7270) in storage is consistent with the identified need in the TMDL and MOA with the Department of Ecology for stabilizing roads and reducing road-related sediment (10/31/07 Soil and Water Report).

**Clean Air Act:** Prescribed fire of activity fuels in the project area will comply with Washington Smoke Management Plan regulations. Piles will be constructed to provide efficient burning to reduce effluent production. Pile burning and broadcast burning operations will occur in the spring or fall during weather patterns that provide good mixing and dispersion of smoke emissions (09/28/07 Fire Management Report).

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act:** The project will have no impact on migratory birds and/or land bird conservation. It may contribute to enhancing habitat diversity for Neotropical bird species. By establishing the openings, early successional vegetation including shrubs, forbs, herbs, and tree seedlings/saplings may enhance and increase foraging and nesting opportunities (10/07 Wildlife Report).

**National Forest Management Act (NFMA):** NFMA and its regulations (36 CFR 219 (1982)) established 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:

The NFMA Regulations at 36 CFR 219.27, Management Requirements, include provisions for preservation and enhancement of plant and animal communities, and more specifically include a provision for type conversions:

“(g) Diversity. Planned type conversions shall be justified by an analysis showing biological, economic, social, economic, and environmental design consequences, and the relation of such conversions to the process of natural change” (36 CFR 219.27 g).

The proposed project will convert approximately 171 acres from conifer forest to forage openings. The amendment to the Forest Plan from the Huckleberry Land Exchange ROD established the basis for the justification for this type conversion.

Specifically, the amendment provided that:

- The lands in MA 8E, Greenwater Special Area will be managed to provide elk (and deer) forage habitat in portions of the inventoried winter range—plus one section of summer range—in conjunction with long-term protection for old-growth forest, fish, wildlife, and water quality. The goal will be no net loss of forage habitat, consistent with all other laws and regulations, such as the ESA.
- Within the acres of inventoried elk winter range, and the Section 33 summer range, the Forest Service will have the ability to maintain or create small openings for elk (and deer) forage.
- Roughly 400-500 acres in winter range and 100 to 130 acres in Section 33 summer range will be maintained as forage openings.
- Type conversion—or permanently converting the existing vegetation (mostly early seral stage) to a grass-forb habitat—will be done using a variety of methods (mechanical, fire, hand, etc.) to be determined during site-specific environmental analysis. (Huckleberry Land Exchange ROD, 2001, p. R-6).

The planned type conversions are analyzed site-specifically in this Decision Memo and the Specialist Reports on which it is based. This analysis in conjunction with the analysis in the Huckleberry Land Exchange FEIS, and ROD, including the Forest Plan amendment, provides justification for the creation of the forage openings in this area.

As for the relationship of creating forage openings to natural change, the 21 openings will be similar in structure, vegetation composition, and successional pathway to natural openings cause by fire or intensive blowdown or insect damage. The main difference is that they will be artificially maintained in an early successional condition (grass, forbs, brush) by periodic management treatments by fire, thinning, or mechanical treatment. Otherwise, the openings will not be unlike other natural openings in the area.

The NFMA regulations (1982) require that:

*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)).*

As indicated in the “Consistency With Regulatory Framework” section below, this project is consistent with the goals, objectives, standards and guidelines of the Land and

Resource Management Plan for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (Forest Plan), as amended.

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

The 171 acres are productive forest lands that can be adequately restocked with conifers within 5 years of harvest. However, as outlined in this decision memo [Decision Section, above], the lands will be kept in early successional forage condition to benefit big game, consistent with the Forest Plan, as amended.

*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))*

The clearcut harvest system was selected not for economic reasons, but to provide the amount of forage desired to improve big game habitat (Decision Section, 09/30/07 Logging Systems and Economic Viability Report, and 10/07 Wildlife Report).

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

The Huckleberry Land Exchange ROD (2001) specified sideboards for the creation of the units in terms of size, location, resource protection, a range of total acres for forage creation, and distribution of the openings within the MA 8E boundaries.

Maintaining these openings may increase the risk of blowdown along the edges of adjacent stands. It is expected that this may feather the edges of the openings and may contribute to “natural-appearing openings” rather than creating a hard line between opening and timber along the perimeters of openings. It is not expected to be a dramatic effect in terms of blowdown potential. Incidental blowdown is common in older stands. Creation of openings is expected to damage some residual trees, and temporary road construction will affect trees between these openings and the permanent roads. However, the effects of these consequences have been considered and found to

be compatible with standards and guidelines in the Forest Plan, as amended (10/26/07 Silviculture Report and Decision Memo Appendix C).

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

The magnitude of the expected effects of this project is small (not measurable) and would be limited to the site (10/31/07 Soil and Water Report).

*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 (Decision Memo Extraordinary Circumstances and Findings Required by Other Laws sections, and Fish, Wildlife, Silviculture, Botany, Recreation, Visual, Fire, Cultural and Soil and Water reports).

*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 (Decision Section, above). Skyline harvesting is practical, and only required where slopes are in excess of 30% and soil resource damage would occur with ground-based logging systems (09/30/07 Logging Systems and Economic Viability Report, 10/31/07 Soil and Water 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, as amended).

9) *Timber harvest shall be used to prevent potentially damaging population increases of forest pest organisms. Silvicultural treatments should not be applied where treatments would make stands susceptible to pest-caused damage levels inconsistent with management objectives (36 CFR 219.27 (c) (7))*

The harvest would remove young conifer trees that now support low levels of forest pests. Timber harvest is not for the purpose of prevention of pest organisms, but as the mechanism to create openings to provide the amount of forage desired to improve big game habitat (Decision Section, 09/30/07 Logging Systems and Economic Viability Report, Silvicultural Prescription, 10/26/07 Silviculture Report, and 10/07 Wildlife Report). However, Maintenance of the openings would make those acres less susceptible to pest-caused damage.

**Invasive Species Management:** Creation and maintenance of forage openings will create disturbance that could allow the establishment and spread of noxious weeds within the project area. This is especially likely for tansy ragwort and Scot's broom in and around units 15 and 31-36, and tansy ragwort, Canada thistle, and Herb Robert in unit 18, because the species are already present. Control of these species prior to disturbance and implementation of Forest and Regional direction, policy, and standards and guidelines for noxious weeds will decrease the likelihood of further spread and infestation (10/26/07 Botany Technical Report).

**Magnuson-Stevens Act:** The project “may effect, but not likely to adversely affect essential fish habitat for chinook, coho, and pink salmon (10/29/07 Fisheries Report).

## **CONSISTENCY WITH REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

I have determined that this project is consistent with the goals, objectives, standards and guidelines of the Forest Plan, as amended. Under the Forest Plan, as amended, all forage units in Greenwater Elk Forage Management project are located within lands allocated to Administratively Withdrawn – Greenwater Special Management Area (MA) 8E. Forage units 31-37, located within Section 31, T19N, R10E, are also allocated to Administratively Withdrawn – Mather Memorial Parkway MA 8A. Portions of the road reconstruction and maintenance activities that will occur on roads utilized to access the forage units are located in Riparian Reserves (see Figures 6 and 7).

**Administratively Withdrawn – MA 8E:** The project will create 21 permanent forage openings, totaling approximately 171 acres within inventoried elk winter range, as per the standards and guidelines established for Administratively Withdrawn - MA 8E.

**Administratively Withdrawn – MA 8A:** Wildlife improvements are appropriate as long as visitor conflicts are minimized and visual management objectives are met. With implementation of management requirements and mitigation measures, I have determined that this project will not conflict with visitors to the Mather Memorial Parkway and that it will meet “partial retention”

visual quality objectives as seen from Highway 410 (10/24/07 Recreation Report and 10/26/07 Visual Resources Report).

**Riparian Reserves/Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) Objectives:** The Greenwater Elk Forage Management Project will be consistent with Riparian Reserve Standards and Guidelines and ACS objectives. The ACS objective discussion from the Soil and Water and Fisheries Reports, which follows, addresses consistency.

**Objective 1: Maintain and restore the distribution, diversity, and complexity of watershed and landscape-scale features to ensure protection of the aquatic systems to which species, populations and communities are uniquely adapted.**

The Greenwater elk forage project will restore landscape and watershed vegetative diversity to a landscape simplified by timber harvest and even-aged forest stand management. At the site scale, there will be no change to the riparian conditions which include large areas of even-aged, 40-year old conifer stands. Natural disturbances within channel migration zones (flood, fire, wind, insects, and disease) will gradually diversify the riparian areas. There will be no measurable or observable impact to instream aquatic habitats or the aquatic community.

**Objective 2: Maintain and restore spatial and temporal connectivity within and between watersheds. Lateral, longitudinal, and drainage network connections include floodplains, wetlands, upslope areas, headwater tributaries, and intact refugia. These network connections must provide chemically and physically unobstructed routes to areas critical for fulfilling life history requirements of aquatic and riparian-dependent species.**

The spatial and temporal connectivity of habitats and functions within and between watersheds will be maintained by maintaining the full Riparian Reserves. Floodplains and wetlands will not be affected at the landscape scale, and the size and shape of the forage units are proposed such that no connections to drainage networks will be affected. At the site scale, temporary roads will cause a short-term (length of the sale) obstruction to limited-mobility riparian dependent species. Connectivity conditions related to the existing road system will remain unchanged. There will, therefore, be no measurable or observable impact to the life history requirements of aquatic or riparian dependent species.

**Objective 3: Maintain and restore the physical integrity of the aquatic system, including shorelines, banks, and bottom configurations.**

No forage openings will be created within Riparian Reserves, so the physical integrity of aquatic systems will be maintained within the elk forage units. Road improvements for hauling will require the replacement of three culverts on perennial streams. Each of these unnamed streams are approximately 2 feet wide and 2 inches or shallower during summer base flows when the culverts will be installed. None of these streams support anadromous fish near the road crossings due to their steep gradients and shallow waters. Portions of these streams may seasonally support resident trout. Use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for fish passage and culvert installation will maintain the integrity of the streams at these crossing within standards that promote aquatic organism passage.

There will also be 1.0 mile of temporary new road constructed, which will be obliterated after use. A portion of the temporary road access will be via a bridge over Slide Creek, which is a perennial stream that supports coho and resident trout, and potentially chinook and steelhead at its mouth where it flows into the Greenwater River. The bridge to be installed is a 60-foot long portable bridge that will be supported by ecology blocks. The ecology blocks will not be placed within the wetted width of the channel. The only likely

entry into the wetted channel will be when an excavator crosses the channel at summer base flow to install the bridge, and once again after the units are created to remove the bridge. If possible, the excavator will be walked over logs placed temporarily in the channel to protect the channel bottom. Slide Creek at summer base flow will be only a few inches deep.

**Objective 4: Maintain and restore water quality necessary to support healthy riparian, aquatic, and wetland ecosystems. Water quality must remain within the range that maintains the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the system and benefits survival, growth, reproduction, and migration of individuals composing aquatic and riparian communities.**

While an increase of erosion will be expected for one to three years following the creation of openings and fuel treatments, the full Riparian Reserves will filter fine sediments generated in the forage units, and no measurable or observable changes in water quality impacts will be expected. Road BMPs and treatments after the project will prevent water quality impacts beyond some incidental flushes of fine sediment with the first runoff after the project.

Nothing in the proposed project will be inconsistent with the provisions of the TMDL for the Upper White River, and the project will therefore meet Clean Water Act requirements. Placing roads (Roads 7000-115, 7000-118, 7000-119, 7200-223, 7200-224, 7200-420 and 7270) in storage is consistent with the identified need in the TMDL and MOA with the Department of Ecology for stabilizing roads and reducing road-related sediment.

**Objective 5: Maintain and restore the sediment regime under which aquatic ecosystems evolved. Elements of the sediment regime include the timing, volume, rate, and character of sediment input, storage, and transport.**

The elk forage project will not change the sediment regime of the area and will contribute in a minor way to improving local erosion problems. No additional permanent roads will be constructed, culverts will be upgraded to pass the 100-year flood flow and debris, temporary roads will be closed and stabilized, and vegetative cover will be established on the units. Except for a one or two-year flush of some fine sediment after treatment, the sediment generated on the units will be similar to the natural sediment regime. Erosion problems on some roads will be corrected by placing roads in Maintenance Level 1 after the project. These roads will have drainage modified to be self-maintaining and reflect natural hillslope drainage patterns.

The Riparian Reserves will filter sediment and other contaminants and prevent contamination of water. The sediment regime of the subwatersheds of the upper White River drainage is recovering from intensive past management. Stabilization and decommissioning of roads will continue to reduce management-related sediment.

**Objective 6: Maintain and restore in-stream flows sufficient to create and sustain riparian, aquatic, and wetland habitats and to retain patterns of sediment, nutrient, and wood routing. The timing, magnitude, duration, and spatial distribution of peak, high, and low flows must be protected.**

The Riparian Reserves within the area were impacted by past management activities, and are recovering. Large wood is currently not available in most of the reserves; shade is recovering slowly; and nutrient filtration is well established. The project will not enter Riparian Reserves except at some road crossings. Riparian Reserve function will continue to improve as the reserves grow. It will be decades before full riparian function is restored, but the elk forage project will not alter that recovery. The timing, magnitude, duration, and spatial distribution of peak, high, and low flows will slowly continue to recover in the watershed.

**Objective 7: Maintain and restore the timing, variability, and duration of floodplain inundation and water table elevation in meadows and wetlands.**

The project will not affect floodplain inundation, and wetlands and meadows will be avoided in order to maintain the integrity of those features.

**Objective 8: Maintain and restore the species composition and structural diversity of plant communities in riparian areas and wetlands to provide adequate summer and winter thermal regulation, nutrient filtering, appropriate rates of surface erosion, bank erosion, and channel migration and to supply amounts and distributions of coarse woody debris sufficient to sustain physical complexity and stability.**

Riparian reserves will not be entered. Recovery of these areas from past management is progressing and will continue unaltered. It will be a number of decades before full plant species composition and structure returns; however, riparian function will not be altered by the proposed project.

**Objective 9: Maintain and restore habitat to support well-distributed populations of native plant, invertebrate and vertebrate riparian-dependent species.**

The project will maintain the existing Riparian Reserves, which are in the process of recovering from past intensive management that removed much of the forest from the riparian areas. The elk forage openings will add to the overall habitat diversity of the area that currently consists of large areas of even-aged conifer forests. The openings will create

hardwood, shrub, and grass-forbs habitats next to Riparian Reserves that could be utilized by the invertebrate and vertebrate riparian-dependent species while the Riparian Reserves mature and diversify.

The Greenwater Elk Forage Project is located within the Greenwater and Upper White River Watersheds. Watershed analysis has been completed for both (2000 Upper White and Greenwater Watershed Analysis).

On July 24, 2007, the Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture signed a new Record of Decision (complete title: *Record of Decision To Remove the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines from Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*), which removed certain requirements from all of the National Forest's land and resource management plans (LRMPs) 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 ROD as modified by subsequent annual species reviews as allowed by the modified October 11, 2006 injunction. Implementation of this project will have no impact on any of the rare and uncommon species addressed in the ROD (10/07 Botanical Report).

**ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES**

My decision falls under a categorical exclusion that is subject to review and appeal under the provisions of 36 CFR 215. Appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 215.14 (Content of a Notice of Appeal) and must provide sufficient evidence and rationale to show why the Responsible Official's decision should be remanded or reversed.

The appeal must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer, Attn: 1570 Appeals, 2930 Wetmore Avenue, Suite 3A, Everett WA 98201; faxed to (425) 782-0314, 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 must be postmarked or delivered within 45 days of the date the legal notice for this decision appears in Enumclaw Courier Herald. The publication date of the legal notice in the Enumclaw Courier 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 part of the actual e-mail message, or as an attachment in Microsoft word, .rtf, or .pdf format only. E-mails submitted to e-mail addresses other than the one listed above, in other formats than those listed, or containing viruses will be rejected. 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.

Only those who provided comments during the 30-day comment period may appeal. It is the appellant’s responsibility to provide sufficient project- or activity-specific evidence and rationale, focusing on the decision, to show why the Responsible Official’s decision should be reversed.

It is also the appellant’s responsibility 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.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

If an appeal is filed, this 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, the decision may be implemented five days after the close of the appeal period.

**CONTACT PERSON**

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Doug Schrenk, Environmental Coordinator, at Snoqualmie Ranger District, 42404 SE North Bend Way, North Bend, WA; by telephone at (425) 888-1421, extension 233; or by e-mail dschrenk@fs.fed.us.

/s/ Jim Franzel  
**JIM FRANZEL**  
District Ranger  
Snoqualmie Ranger District  
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

March 28, 2008  
Date

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