



Sprouts

Site-Specific Invasive Plant Environmental Impact Statement

The Mt. Hood National Forest, Olympic National Forest, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, and Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area have teamed up to develop a Site-Specific Invasive Plant Treatment Environmental Impact Statement.

There is a serious problem with invasive plants (AKA noxious weeds and exotics) on the Mt. Hood, Olympic, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests and on the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

In recent years invasive plant populations have significantly increased on these forests. Forest inventories indicate that we have approximately 1,000 invasive plant sites. These sites occupy approximately 16,000 acres of National Forest Land, including approximately 7,500 acres on the Mt. Hood. Invasive plants continue to expand every year, and have the potential to increase at rates of up to 8-12 percent per year.

Invasive plants have the potential to degrade wildlife habitat, eliminate rare and endangered plants, impair water quality and watershed health, and adversely affect a wide variety of other resource values. Invasive plants spread across landscapes, unimpeded by ownership boundaries. These infested areas represent potential seed sources for continuation of the invasion on neighboring lands. Integrated pest management approaches, including manual, mechanical, and chemical treatments, will be proposed for these sites.

The multi-forest interdisciplinary team will conduct an environmental analysis on a range of alternatives for treatment of invasive plants. The public scoping process for this project will begin in December 2003. Also, the Notice of Intent is anticipated to be filed in the *Federal Register* in December 2003. The draft EIS is expected to be filed with EPA and available for 45-day public review in August 2004, with the Final EIS being completed in January 2005.

More information about this project can be found at the Site-Specific Invasive Plant Treatment project website <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/invasiveplant-eis/multiforest-sitespecific-information.htm> or by contacting Jennie O'Connor, Project Coordinator, at (503) 668-1645; jmoconnor@fs.fed.us.

Forest-Wide Projects

40/60 – Project may create openings-larger than the 40 or 60 acre limitations stipulated by the National Forest Management Act, 36 CFR 219.27. Such creation requires 60 day public notification and approval of the Regional Forester.

CCF – 100 cubic feet

CE – Categorical Exclusion

EA – Environmental Assessment

EIS – Environmental Impact Statement

MBF – 1,000 board feet

MMBF – 1,000,000 board feet

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

VEG – This symbol indicates a project that may include treatment of unwanted vegetation. When a site-specific project to prevent or treat unwanted vegetation is being considered, the official responsible for that project is to notify the public.

Watershed Restoration 2003

Contact: John Dodd

*Hood River Ranger Station,
6780 Highway 35, Parkdale, OR 97041*

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jdodd@fs.fed.us

In the last issue of *Sprouts* we described a project called Watershed Restoration 2003. At this time several projects are still outstanding until surveys are completed. Last year's EA and the prioritization model, as well as project descriptions and maps, can be viewed at the Mt. Hood National Forest web site under Forest Publications. Look under Forest Projects at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood>.

Tamarack Rock Quarry Expansion EIS

Contact: Mike Redmond

Phone: (503) 668-1776

Email: mredmond@fs.fed.us

The Proposed Action includes expansion of the existing Tamarack rock quarry (formerly called Mud Creek) on approximately 60 acres of National Forest System land. The rock excavated from the quarry would be used over time by the Forest Service and the Oregon Department of Transportation to help meet the long-term needs of maintenance, and reconstruction of roads in the Mt. Hood area.

The project area is located approximately 4 miles south of Government Camp, in Section 2, T.4S, R.8-1/2E, Willamette Meridian, Clackamas County, Oregon. The project area does not include any wilderness, roadless areas, wild and scenic rivers, late successional reserves, or riparian reserves.

Some of the preliminary issues that have been identified include visual quality as seen from key view points on the Forest, and traffic management conflict between commercial use and recreation. The draft EIS is planned to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review winter 2004. A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the draft EIS will be published in the Federal Register. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the NOA appears in the Federal Register.

Barlow Ranger District Projects

Juncrock Planning Area

Contact: Becky Nelson

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: bnelson01@fs.fed.us

The draft EIS has been completed. It is available on the internet at www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood. The comment period is over, and responses to comments are being formulated. The target date for completing the responses and having a Final EIS and ROD is winter 2004.

Knebal Springs Trail Reconstruction

Contact: Dennis Beechler

Phone: (541) 328-6211

Email: dbeechler@fs.fed.us

The original project consisted of reconstruction of four miles of the Kenable Springs Trail, Three miles of the Bottle Prairie Trail, and construction of two water crossings over the Middle Fork of Fivemile Creek. After further consideration and analysis, the scope of the project has been reduced. The project will now consist of approximately 100 yards of new trail construction on the Knebal Springs trail, construction of the bridges, construction of approximately 500 feet of new trail to connect the bridges to the existing trail, and the obliteration of approximately 200 feet of the existing trail down to the current stream crossings. Work on this project will begin again in the spring of 2004

Pen Creek Underburn (2,500 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

Formally known as East of 27 #2, this underburn has been put on hold until funding is available.

Swisher/West Gobbler Underburns (1,480 acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

Analysis of the two underburn areas has been completed. The purpose of these underburns is to introduce fire back into the ecosystem to reduce the natural accumulation of litter, reduce the bark build-up around the base of large ponderosa pines and to enhance the fire dependent native grasses, forbs and shrub species. Underburning would reduce the risk of a stand replacing fire, enhance deer and elk forage quantity and quality, and protect large ponderosa pine trees from the effects of future fires. These underburns are consistent with the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan for the protection of the wildland/urban interface. A Decision Memo was signed on October 30, 2003 and a public comment period is open until February 1, 2004. Completion of the project is planned for spring or fall of 2004.

Sportsman's Park Fuel Modification (250 Acres)

Contact: Joel Pomeroy

Phone: (541) 352-6002

Email: jpomeroy@fs.fed.us

This project has been put on hold until funding is available. Little work will be done on this project until funding is resolved.

Long Prairie Grazing Allotment

Contact: Dan Fissell

Phone: (541) 467-5117

Email: dfissell@fs.fed.us

An Environmental Assessment is scheduled for this grazing allotment during 2004. This analysis will determine the level and intensity of grazing management within this allotment. The plan will also identify restoration opportunities. The Decision Notice is anticipated in the summer/fall of 2004.

Barlow Ranger District Projects

Removal and Possible Replacement of Three Stringer Bridges

Contact: Ken Huskey

Phone: (541) 467-5117

Email: khuskey@fs.fed.us

The three bridges are located on the east side of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Holes in the decking, surface and subgrade failures at the approaches, and advanced rot in structural members have resulted in vehicle closures of these bridges for safety concerns.

The East Fork Salmon River Bridge, Forest Development Road (FDR) 3500220, and Klinger Bridge, FDR 4300221, are located on the Hood River District. The Cedar Creek Bridge, FDR 2730160 is located on the Barlow District.

Analysis is ongoing to determine if there is a need to replace the bridges and when. Also to be determined is at what Traffic Service Level and Maintenance Level the roads beyond the bridges would need to be to meet resource objectives on lands accessed by these roads. One possible alternative would be to include decommissioning and changing the roads to trails.

Wildlife Guzzlers on the Ramsey Creek Parcel

Contact: Rich Thurman

Phone: 541-467-2201

Email: rthurman@fs.fed.us

This proposed project would install two wildlife guzzlers on the Ramsey Creek parcel in T 2S, R 12E, Sec. 16 & 17. Water is in short supply on this ridge and guzzlers would benefit all wildlife, especially deer and wild turkeys. Environmental analysis is planned for the spring or summer of 2004. The proposed installations of the guzzlers would occur in the fall of 2004 or summer of 2005.

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

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

Clackamas River Ranger District Projects

Shellrock Trailhead Reconstruction

Clackamas County, Oregon. Oak Grove Fork of the Clackamas Watershed.

Contact: Jacquelyn Oakes

Phone: (503) 630-8815

Email: joakes@fs.fed.us

The Shellrock Trailhead is located 4.5 miles down Forest Road 5830. We are looking at options for accommodating horse trailers, including reconstruction and parking horse trailers along Forest Road 5830 and installing a vault toilet at trailhead.

Imp Timber Sale

Clackamas County, Oregon. Located in the Upper Clackamas Watershed.

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

The purpose of this initiative is to regenerate 88 acres of older forest stands that are fragmented and growing slowly, to create young productive forest stands, and to provide forest products consistent with the Northwest Forest Plan goal of maintaining the stability of local and regional economies now and in the future. The Decision Notice is planned for January 2004. The EA is available on the Forest web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood>.

Special Use Permits

Contact: Glenda Woodcock

Phone: (503) 630-8724

Email: gwoodcock@fs.fed.us

The Clackamas River Ranger District is proposing to reissue one 20-year special use permit for telephone and power lines to Cascade Utilities. The new permit would replace three existing permits that have expired. No new developments are proposed and the new permit would cover only those facilities that have been authorized in the past.

Thinning Program

Second-growth stands across the District are being examined for thinning opportunities. At this time four planning areas are moving forward into the early stages of environmental analysis.

Descriptions of the purpose and need and the details of the proposed action, including maps and photos, are available on the Forest web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood/> under Forest Projects.

Oak Grove Area

970 Acres

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

Upper Clackamas Area

700 Acres

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

Collawash Area

340 Acres

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

South Fork Clackamas and Clear Creek Area

590 Acres

Contact: Jim Roden

Phone: (503) 630-8722

Email: jroden@fs.fed.us

Hood River Ranger District Projects

Bear Knoll Planning Area

T.4S., R.9E., Sec. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, ,34, 35, 36 and T.5S., R.9. 2, 3, 4, 10

Contact: Becky Nelson

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: bnelson01@fs.fed.us

This planning effort was begun in 1998. It has been on hold for the last year, while other work was being completed. Rather than an EIS, two EA's are proposed for the Bear Knoll Planning Area. One EA proposes to thin overstocked immature stands through commercial timber sales and the sale of special forest products (post, poles and firewood). The other EA proposes to treat over mature stands, especially those heavily infected with Indian Paint Fungus, by a regeneration harvest. Safety concerns along Highway 26 have prompted the proposal to remove trees that could reach the road if they fell. Temporary road construction, road closure and decommissioning are also proposed. The two EA's are planned for the spring of 2004.

Mill Creek Planning Area

Contact: Rich Thurman

Phone: (541) 467-2291

Email: rthurman@fs.fed.us

The Hood River Ranger District is proposing to treat approximately 7200 acres located approximately 5 miles southeast of the community of Mt. Hood.

Concerns identified include:

- Forest condition due to the lack of fire over the last 100 years.
- The invasion of non-native plant species.
- The high level of roading and the resulting wildlife harassment and poaching
- Aquatic habitat degradation due to roads and grazing operations.

A decision is expected in the fall of 2005.

Sale of Public Land – Hood River Ranger Station Property

Contact: Doug Jones

6780 Hwy 35, Mt. Hood, OR 97041

Phone: (541) 352-6002, ext. 682

Email: dgjones@fs.fed.us

Two years ago, the Ranger District took title to the 6-acre parcel where our main office is located on Highway 35. This acquisition was part of a land exchange. Unknown to either party in the exchange, the neighboring home on the southeast corner has a septic drain field in the land that is now National Forest System land. Since agency policy does not allow for permits or easements for septic systems, a solution is to sell some land to the homeowner using the authority of the Small Tracts Act. The Small Tracts Act is used to deal with encroachments on public land where it is not reasonable to require the owner to remove the encroachment. The district proposes selling the homeowner 0.25 acres at fair market value, approximately \$500. This L-shaped piece of land contains the existing drain field and room for a replacement field should the current one fail (Hood River County regulation).

Zigzag Ranger District Projects

Timberline Ski Area

New Chair lift and Ski Trail System Construction

Contact: Paul Koehler

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext. 614

email: pkoehler@fs.fed.us

Work on the Environmental Impact Statement continues. The proposed action consists of constructing a new detachable quad (four passenger) chairlift and 6 new trails in the southwest corner of the ski area's special use permit boundary. The proposal also includes an addition of approximately 10 acres to the existing 1,400-acre permit boundary. A draft EIS is anticipated to be completed and available for public review by April 2004.

Mt Hood Ski Bowl Resort

Contact: Paul Koehler

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext. 614

email: pkoehler@fs.fed.us

A new term permit would be issued to H. Ski Corporation for the operation and maintenance of Mt. Hood Ski Bowl Resort. No changes in the current authorized uses, facilities or the current permit area are proposed. The term of the permit would be for a maximum of 40 years.

Government Camp Trails Planning

T.3S., R.8E., Sec. 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, and T.4S, R.8 1/2 E., Sec 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, 36, and T.4S., R.9E., Sec 7, 18, 19, 20, 29, 30

Contact: Kathleen Walker

Phone: (503) 622-3191, ext. 641

Email: kwalker@fs.fed.us

The Community of Government Camp, working with Clackamas County Economic Development Agency, developed a Trails Master Plan in 2000 to construct and reconstruct winter and summer trails around the community. Nearly all the trails are located on National Forest lands. The Forest plans to complete an Environmental Assessment (EA) for projects proposed in the Master Plan. The Forest may also consider some trails in the surrounding area. The objectives of the plan are to establish a trail system in and around the Government Camp that allow visitors to get to and from town and the adjacent destinations. The EA is intended to be completed by fall of 2004.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 202-720- 5964 (voice or TDD). USDA Forest Service is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Mt. Hood National Forest Offices

Mt. Hood National Forest

Headquarters Office

16400 Champion Way

Sandy, OR 97055

Business: **503-668-1700**

Visitor Information: **503-622-7674**

Hours: 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Barlow Ranger District

780 NE Court Street

Dufur, OR 97021

Phone: **541-467-2291**

Hours: 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Clackamas River Ranger District

595 NW Industrial Way

Estacada, OR 97023

Business: **503-630-6861**

Visitor Information: **503-630-8700**

Hours: 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM, M-Sat

Closed weekends during winter months.

Hood River Ranger District

6780 Highway 35

Mt. Hood - Parkdale, OR 97041

Phone: **541-352-6002**

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Summer Hours: May 30 - Sept. 6

8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, 7 days a week

Zigzag Ranger District

70220 E. Highway 26

Zigzag, OR 97049

Phone: **503-622-3191 or**

503-668-1704

Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, M-F

Mt. Hood Information Center

*Forest Service Information in partnership
with Clackamas County and Mt. Hood
Area Chamber of Commerce Visitor
Information*

65000 E. Highway 26

Welches, OR 97067

Phone: **503-622-7674**

Hours:

Saturday thru Thursday, 8 am-4 pm;

Friday 8 am-6 pm

(Closed Dec 25)



OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for Private Use \$300

Sprouts is a quarterly publication of the Mt. Hood National Forest. Printed on recycled paper. Please recycle.

To order a free subscription of *Sprouts* or inquire about existing subscriptions, contact: Sprouts, Mt. Hood National Forest, 16400 Champion Way, Sandy, Oregon 97055; 503-668-1675.

Email address: syork@fs.fed.us

Website: www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood

MTH 91 02

In an effort to better serve you and conserve resources and energy, *Sprouts* is available online. You can now view the most current issue of *Sprouts* on the Mt. Hood National Forest Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood>