



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Olympic National Forest

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File Code: 1950

Date: June 20, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

By the issuance of this letter, I withdraw my September 15, 2006, Bear Creek Saddle Project Decision Notice that would have implemented Alternative B (modified) as described and analyzed in the Bear Creek Saddle Environmental Assessment. My decision would have approved commercial thinning on 2,179 acres, which would hasten development of desired late-successional habitat elements. My decision would have also approved the more effective closure and decommissioning of some unclassified abandoned roads in the project area, resulting in watershed benefits.

The Bear Creek Saddle project was the subject of the lawsuit, Olympic Forest Coalition v. United States Forest Service et al, C07-5344 RBL, Western District of Washington. On May 9, 2008, the court ruled against the Forest Service on the narrow issue of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedural deficiency regarding the Project's compliance with the Aquatic Conservancy Strategy. However, I believe the Bear Creek Saddle project purpose and need is still valid and actions to meet the need would be beneficial to the forest and would help move the project area toward desired conditions as identified in the Olympic National Forest Plan.

I intend to cure the procedural deficiency by issuing a new NEPA analysis for this project and will make a new decision based on that analysis. Until that time, no aspect of the project will be implemented.

Sincerely,

DALE HOM
Forest Supervisor

cc: Lance J Koch, Kathy OHalloran, Dick Carlson, Timothy E Davis, Susan Zike

