

**DECISION NOTICE  
AND  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
(FONSI)**

**ANALYSIS UNIT 24**

USDA Forest Service  
National Forests in Mississippi  
Homochitto National Forest  
Homochitto Ranger District  
Wilkinson County, Mississippi

**Introduction**

On July 31, 2003, the Forest Service proposed a variety of forest management activities for Analysis Unit 24 of the Homochitto National Forest. This analysis unit encompasses approximately 2,194 acres of national forest land in Wilkinson County, Mississippi. Proposed actions included using commercial timber harvest to thin and regenerate forests. Connected actions, such as site preparation, planting, and road construction, reconstruction, and maintenance, were also proposed. These actions were proposed to help meet the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan (Land and Resource Management Plan for the National Forests in Mississippi) as amended. Specifically, proposed actions were designed to contribute to red-cockaded woodpecker recovery by opening pine stands and restoring the longleaf pine component to lands where it was historically a dominant tree species, reduce risk of southern pine beetle infestation by improving vigor of pine trees, sustain a diversity of wildlife habitats and associated species by diversifying forest age classes, and support a balanced program of market and non-market outputs by providing timber products and habitat for popular game species.

This analysis unit is within the tentative HMA (Habitat Management Area) for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Amendment 14 of the Forest Plan established this tentative HMA and outlines direction for management of the area. However, because land ownership patterns restrict efficient use of prescribed fire, much of this analysis unit is difficult to maintain in desired habitat conditions for the woodpecker. Therefore, currently only 805 of the 2,194 within the analysis unit are burned regularly and managed to create desired conditions for this species.

After gathering input on this proposal from members of the public and employees, the Forest Service developed and examined alternative approaches for meeting forest management objectives in this area. Alternatives were designed to address general concerns about the proposal. Analysis of the original proposal, or Proposed Action, and the alternatives was conducted by a interdisciplinary team of resource professionals. This analysis is documented in an Environmental Assessment (available from the Homochitto District Office, 1200 Hwy 184 East, Meadville, MS, 601-384-5876).

This Decision Notice and FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact) document my decision regarding forest management activities in Analysis Unit 24. They also document the reasons for my decision and related findings on legal requirements.

**Decision**

Based on the analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment, it is my decision to implement the Proposed Action (the original proposal) with two modifications. These modifications are:

- Two stands (Compartment 250, Stand 2, and Compartment 251, Stand 16) proposed for pine-hardwood regeneration using clearcutting with reserves will receive an intermediate thinning instead, as analyzed under the Thin Only Alternative (Alternative 4).
- One stand (Compartment 250, Stand 3) proposed to be regenerated using the seedtree method will be regenerated using the irregular shelterwood method, which is described on page 30 of the Record of Decision, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Management of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and its Habitat on National Forests in the Southern Region.

These two modifications of the Proposed Action are needed to bring it into compliance with Amendment 14 of the Forest Plan, which restricts use of certain silvicultural methods within the tentative HMA.

With these modifications, the selected alternative includes: approximately 199 acres of clearcut with reserves regeneration (for longleaf pine restoration), 49 acres of irregular shelterwood regeneration of mature pine forest, 222 acres of intermediate thinning of mature pine forest within prescribed burn blocks, 429 acres of intermediate thinning of mature pine forest outside of prescribed burn blocks, 208 acres of first thinnings of young pine forest within prescribed burn blocks, 294 acres of first thinnings of young forests outside of prescribed burn blocks, and 66 acres of midstory reduction in mature pine forest.

Specifically, treatments by Compartment and Stand are:

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Clearcut with Reserves for Longleaf Pine Restoration	250	9	1918	31/10	59
	251	2	1926	25/10	34
	251	11	1916	25/10	25
	252	25	1932	31/10	40
	250	21	1918	25/10	41
Total Acres					199

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Mixed-Pine Modified Shelterwood	250	3	1926	31/10	49
Total Acres					49

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Pine Sawtimber Thin (within burn blocks)	251	4	1972	31/10	105
	251	14	1931	31/10	18
	252	9	1925	31/10	41
	252	12	1931	31/10	58
Total Acres					222

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Pine Sawtimber Thin (outside of burn blocks)	250	2	1920	31/10	31
	250	14	1921	31/10	58
	250	20	1919	31/10	27
	250	12	1922	25/10	181
	251	16	1918	31/10	19
	252	14	1931	31/10	36
	252	15	1924	25/10	19
	252	22	1921	21/10	58
Total Acres					429

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Pine Poletimber Thin (within burn blocks)	251	1	1973	31/11	89
	251	6	1985	31/11	57
	251	12	1985	31/11	11
	252	4	1984	31/11	51
Total Acres					208

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Pine Poletimber Thin (outside of burn blocks)	250	1	1989	31/11	45
	250	4	1977	31/11	48
	250	8	1987	31/11	36
	250	10	1977	31/11	61
	250	11	1988	31/11	54
	252	6	1985	31/11	18
	252	8	1985	31/11	12
	252	13	1983	31/11	20
Total Acres					294

Treatment	Compartment	Stand	Age Year	Forest Type/ Cond. Class	Acres
Midstory Reduction	251	3	1919	31/10	66
Total Acres					66

*Forest Types: 25=mixed yellow pine, 31=loblolly pine, 13=loblolly/hardwood  
Condition Class: 10=mature sawtimber, 11=immature poletimber, 12=immature sawtimber*

Other connected activities to be implemented include approximately 12.1 miles of road maintenance and spot reconstruction. There will be no new roads constructed. Approximately 0.4 miles of road will be closed. Site preparation by prescribed burn, chainsaw felling, and hand directed herbicides will be applied on approximately 248 acres in preparation for planting or natural regeneration of pine seedlings. Herbicides to be used include imazapyr, Sulfmeturon-methyl, hexazinone and triclopyr-amine & ester. A detailed discussion of quantity and rates is included in Appendix G of the Environmental Assessment.

Future activities expected to occur in this analysis unit, but which are not included under this decision, include approximately 805 acres to be prescribed burned on a three-year interval beginning one year after completion of timber harvesting. Although this decision, as well as the associated environmental analysis, anticipates this level of prescribed burning, it in no way limits future expansion of burn blocks.

### Public Involvement and Issues

Public involvement included an initial comment period, beginning July 31, 2003, in which mailings were made to all individuals on the district timber harvest activity mailing list. This list is comprised of individuals and organizations who have expressed interest in timber harvest activities on the Homochitto National Forest. The list was supplemented with other individuals considered to potentially have interest in this project, such as adjacent landowners. Also, a detailed description of the proposed activities and a request for final comments was posted in the Jackson *Clarion Ledger* (paper of record for the National Forests in Mississippi) on April 9, 2004.

Throughout the planning process, only two letters related to this project were received from the public, both from Wildlaw, an environmental law firm headquartered in Montgomery, Alabama. Issues raised by Wildlaw have been addressed directly in Appendices H and K of the Environmental Assessment, and in many cases indirectly throughout the EA. I have reviewed these letters and considered the issues they raise. Many are standard process issues that have been raised during previous analyses. We have responded to these issues with overall process changes, in this and previous analyses, to the extent we have deemed meaningful, feasible, and necessary (Environmental Assessment, pages 32-42; Appendix H and K). None of these issues are specific to this analysis unit and the site-specific conditions found there. I conclude that we have sufficiently addressed these issues and that they do not represent areas of substantial risk for environmental impact.

Both internal and external comments for this and similar previous projects were used to generate the general issues and concerns listed in Chapter 1 of the Environmental Assessment. This list was used to organize effects analysis in the assessment.

### **Alternatives Considered**

In addition to the Proposed Action, four other alternatives were developed and examined in detail to determine which would best meet the purpose and need for this project and address the concerns brought out in public and internal scoping. The alternatives considered are outlined below and compared in Table 2.7 of the Environmental Assessment:

Alternative 1: No Action. This alternative defers harvest and other connected activities to another period. Analysis of this alternative is legally required as baseline for comparing with other alternatives.

Alternative 2: Forest Plan Level Regeneration. This alternative represents an intensively managed forest regime formulated to more closely match the regeneration goals stated in the Forest Plan. Activities would include those of the Proposed Action with an additional 59 acres of clearcut with reserves for regenerating mixed pine and 197 acres for regenerating pine/hardwood, in place of some of the sawtimber thinning acres included in the Proposed Action. This alternative is designed to address general concerns about meeting forest age-class distribution and timber harvest expectations as described in the Forest Plan.

Alternative 3: No Herbicides. This alternative would involve the same harvest and regeneration activities as the Proposed Action, but would not use herbicides for site preparation. Manual methods would be used instead. All other activities would be the same as the Proposed Action. This alternative is designed to address general concerns about the environmental effects of herbicide use.

Alternative 4: Thinning Only. There would be no regeneration activities under this alternative. Consequently, there would be no site preparation required. Sawtimber would be thinned on approximately 880 acres, which includes all areas proposed for

regeneration in the Proposed Action. Poletimber would be thinned on approximately 346 acres. This alternative is designed to address general concerns about effects of the more intensive timber harvests represented by even-aged regeneration cuts.

The Environmental Assessment discloses the effects of the Proposed Action and each alternative **with mitigation measures applied** as an integral part of project design. Standard mitigation measures that generally apply to all activities across the forest, including the actions discussed in the Environmental Assessment for this project, are described in Appendix C of the Environmental Assessment. No additional project-specific mitigation was identified during the planning process

Other alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail (as described in Chapter 2 of the Environmental Assessment) include the following:

Uneven-aged Management. Uneven-aged management for the whole project area was considered, but eliminated from further consideration, for several reasons. The desired future condition, as stated in the Environmental Assessment (Chapter 1, pages 4-6), calls for a steady-state forest of relatively balanced age classes interspersed with patches of older seral stages and unregulated areas. The forest would be relatively intensively managed with small pine sawtimber poles and large hardwood and mixed pine sawtimber as the end product objective. Because the majority of the regenerated stands in Analysis Unit 24 are currently loblolly pine, it would be difficult or impossible to convert these stands using uneven-aged management to mixed pine or mixed pine-hardwood, which is a specific objective of the Proposed Action (EA, Chapter 1, pages 1-4). This alternative also does not create long-term desired conditions for the red-cockaded woodpecker, nor desired short-term conditions for many species of early-seral associated wildlife. This alternative would not meet the need for creating desired conditions for forest health. Both the single-tree selection and the group-selection methods of uneven-aged regeneration produce conditions that have lower resistance to the southern pine beetle. In addition, the Forest Plan does not provide for implementation of uneven-aged management at this scale.

No Harvest, Restoration Only. In response to public comments, an alternative was considered that would allow for salvage of pine beetle infested trees and restoration of longleaf pine to these areas without conducting a timber sale. Restoring native longleaf pine on sites now occupied by loblolly pine requires overstory trees be felled to reduce loblolly seeding and provide sunlight necessary for longleaf seedling development. Reduction of southern pine beetle risk also involves the felling of trees. To evaluate this option we assumed a cost of \$150 per thousand board feet to fell the trees, dispose of them with a whole-tree chipper, and spread the chips evenly through the stands. Multiplying this by the approximate 10,357 MBF in the Proposed Action produces a cost of \$1,535,550. This cost would fall entirely upon taxpayers of the United States.

The cost of cultural treatments needed to restore longleaf pine to these sites would also need to be funded from monies appropriated by Congress. When commercial timber sales are involved, these cultural treatments, such as site preparation and planting, are

generally funded by the Knutson-Vandenburg Fund, which is comprised of monies from the timber sale. The Homochitto National Forest is not currently allocated that much appropriated money for ecosystem restoration on a project-by-project basis. Such an alternative may also be outside the intent of the law, because both the National Forest Management Act and the Resource Planning Act provide utilization language for timber harvested on the National Forests. For these reasons, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

Natural Regeneration Only. This alternative would include forest regeneration as in the Proposed Action, but regeneration would be accomplished through natural even-aged regeneration methods (no clearcutting). Regeneration by natural methods requires an adequate seed source to be successful. Analysis Unit 24 lacks the needed concentration of available longleaf pine seed trees to make natural regeneration a viable alternative where longleaf pine restoration is an objective. With the presence of abundant loblolly pine, attempting to establish longleaf in the regeneration areas would result in failure. Since natural methods would not achieve the desired future conditions of restoring a longleaf component to the forest, this alternative was not developed in detail.

No Burning. An alternative that involved similar silvicultural treatments as the Proposed Action, but without prescribed burning was considered but not analyzed in detail. It was decided that a no-burning alternative would not meet desired future conditions, which include development and maintenance of historic, fire-dependent forest communities within a part of the analysis unit.

### **Decision Rationale**

I have selected the Proposed Action with modifications because I believe, of the alternatives analyzed, it provides the best combination of short-term habitat development and protection, and long-term habitat replacement, for the red-cockaded woodpecker. Because this area involves woodpecker habitat that is relatively isolated, and located midway between woodpecker population centers, it is not likely to be occupied by this species in the very near future. Restoring longleaf pine in this area at this time is expected to improve habitat conditions in the long-term, which is the time-frame likely to be most important for this area to contribute to meeting population objectives.

My decision includes modifications to the Proposed Action to bring it into compliance with Amendment 14 of the Forest Plan. This amendment established the tentative HMA (Habitat Management Area) for the red-cockaded woodpecker and places restrictions on silvicultural practices within this zone. Specifically, within the HMA clearcutting is only allowed for the restoration of tree species more desirable to the woodpecker than those currently occurring on a site. Clearcutting for the purpose of restoring longleaf pine, as included in this decision, is permitted; however, clearcutting for regeneration of pine-hardwood forest is not. Therefore, the two stands originally proposed for clearcutting to establish pine-hardwood stands have been switched to sawtimber thinning as analyzed under the Thin Only Alternative. Similarly, Amendment 14 restricts other even-aged regeneration to the irregular shelterwood method to ensure retention of a higher number of mature pine trees for woodpecker habitat. This change will require long-term retention

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of more mature pine trees during regeneration of the one stand originally proposed for regeneration using the seedtree method.

Inclusion of seedtree regeneration and clearcutting for pine-hardwood regeneration in the original Proposed Action occurred because the Interdisciplinary Team concluded that areas outside of the prescribed burn block could not feasibly be managed for red-cockaded woodpecker and, therefore, should not be subject to HMA restrictions. However, as Amendment 14 indicates, changing HMA boundaries must be done through Forest Plan amendment or revision.

In addition to the reasons stated above, I have selected the Proposed Action, with modifications, because no site-specific issues were raised during scoping that indicated a need to change the original proposal for management of this area.

Specific characteristics of this alternative are:

- Actions will restore on a portion of this analysis unit the historic mixed pine and open understory ecosystem that dominated upland sites on the Homochitto National Forest in settlement and pre-settlement days. Characteristics of this system are a dominant component of longleaf pine with open bluestem and low brush understory, incorporating fire as a maintenance component. Longleaf/fire dominated ecosystems, once common across the South, have been critically reduced to only 1%-2% of their pre-settlement range. This condition is the preferred habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. (Biological Evaluation; Environmental Assessment, Table 1.2, page 7)
- This alternative adequately addresses forest health issues associated with southern pine beetle and other insect and disease concerns. Thinning addresses stand and individual tree vigor concerns that make stands susceptible to infestation, and regeneration replaces ageing stands in an orderly process that insures healthy forests for the future. (Environmental Assessment, Chapter 3, pages 98-102; Appendix J).
- Actions will contribute to acceptable trends for Management Indicator Species, as indicated by forest-wide monitoring data and analysis. I have reviewed population and habitat trends and analysis referenced in the EA, as well as an update of data analysis for the Homochitto National Forest done in July 2003. These forest-wide analyses in combination with project-specific analysis (Environmental Assessment, Chapter 3, pages 109-144) indicate acceptable outcomes for these species.
- Habitat for some regionally declining populations of neotropical migrants will be improved. (Environmental Assessment, Chapter 3, pages 140-144)
- First thinnings in young pine stands will result in an immediate addition of 502 acres of habitat improvement for a wide variety of species. In their current

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condition, these stands provide limited benefits and have no identified management indicator species associated with them. After thinning they will be suitable for species associated with open pine sawtimber stands. These species include the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. (Biological Evaluation)

- Early-seral habitat will be created, resulting in a more balanced flow of age classes and habitat conditions through time. (Environmental Assessment, Chapter 3, pages 77-96)
- A balanced program of market and non-market forest product outputs will be supported. (Chapter 3 of the Environmental Assessment, pages 144-154)

The No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) was not selected because it would not meet the purpose and need of this project, nor lead the Forest toward desired future conditions. Specifically, no early-seral habitat would be created, red-cockaded woodpecker habitat would not be improved, overstocked stands would continue to be at high risk for southern pine beetle infestations, and diversity of vegetation in terms of tree ages would not be improved.

The Forest Plan Level Regeneration Alternative (Alternative 2) was not selected due to required spacing of regeneration openings, and anticipated longer rotations within the within the tentative Habitat Management Area of the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The No Herbicide Alternative (Alternative 3) was not selected because withholding the use of herbicides offered no significant environmental benefits. The probability of restoring a high percentage of longleaf pine to regenerated stands is low without herbicide treatments because of the amount of competition present and longleaf pine's characteristic of initial slow growth. This alternative would not assure the appropriate desired future condition as stated in the Environmental Assessment.

The Thin Only Alternative (Alternative 4) was not selected because it did not result in the establishment of any early-seral habitat, nor restore historic longleaf pine forest to the analysis unit. Even though extensive thinning would minimize southern pine beetle hazard, without an even flow of habitat replacement, future suitability of habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker could not be insured.

### **Findings of Consistency with Laws, Regulations, and Previous NEPA Decisions**

National Forest Management Act. I find that this decision complies and is consistent with the Forest Plan (Land and Resource Management Plan for National Forests in Mississippi) as amended, because it contributes to goals, objectives, and desired conditions described in the Forest Plan, and incorporates standards from the Plan.

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I have determined that the land on which harvesting has been proposed is suitable for timber production as described in the 16 U. S. C. 1604(k) and 36 CFR 219.14 and 36 CFR 219.27(c)(1). Specifically:

1. The land is forested land capable of producing crops of industrial wood;
2. Technology is available to harvest timber from the land without irreversible resource damage to soil productivity or watershed conditions;
3. The land that will be regenerated can be adequately restocked within 5 years of final harvest;
4. The land is not withdrawn from timber production by act of Congress, the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Chief of the Forest Service;
5. The land has not been deemed inappropriate for timber production due to assignment to other resource use or considerations of cost efficiency.

All proposals involving the manipulation of tree cover for any purpose comply with the seven requirements found in 36 CFR 219.27(b). Specifically they:

1. Are best suited to the multiple use goals for the area;
2. Occur on lands where adequate reforestation can be assured;
3. Were chosen after consideration of the effects on residual trees and adjacent stands;
4. Were not chosen primarily because they gave the greatest dollar return of timber output;
5. Avoid impairment of site productivity and ensure soil and water resource coordination;
6. Provide the desired effects on all affected resources;
7. Employ practical timber harvest techniques and transportation systems.

I find that populations and habitat of Management Indicator Species have been monitored and evaluated in accordance with 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6) and that this project will contribute to acceptable trends in populations and habitats. This finding is based on analysis presented in the Environmental Assessment (pages 109-144), forest-wide reports referenced in the Environmental Assessment (pages 35 and 110), and a July 2003 update of population and habitat trend analysis.

Based upon the need to provide restoration of the historic longleaf component for long-term improvement of habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, I have determined that clearcutting with reserve trees is the optimum regeneration method where it is prescribed. It is optimal because a suitable seed source for longleaf pine is currently not present. The existing dominant species, loblolly pine, is a prolific seeder with aggressive initial growth characteristics. Longleaf pine is highly shade intolerant. Natural regeneration methods, including uneven-aged regeneration strategies, cannot provide for longleaf regeneration in the absence of a seed source, and would result in excessive competition if underplanting or other methods were used. Clearcutting removes the loblolly seed source and provides appropriate light conditions for longleaf pine establishment. In addition, retention of reserve trees will mitigate many of the adverse impacts typically associated with clearcutting (Environmental Assessment, pages

14-21). This determination is in accordance with the requirements of 16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(f)(i) and (ii).

Based upon Forest Plan direction and analysis in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that the even-aged silvicultural system is the appropriate forest management system where it is prescribed under the selected alternative. The irregular shelterwood method is the appropriate harvest method for the one stand where it is prescribed because: 1) this stand has mature loblolly pines that are showing increasing mortality; 2) existing pine seed trees are suitable for the regeneration of a mixed pine stand; 3) there are sufficient numbers of well formed, seed producing pines to provide adequate numbers of well-distributed seedtrees; 4) there is suitable rootstock for regeneration of a desirable hardwood component, which would meet the standards set by the Forest Plan; 5) on this site, longleaf restoration is not the objective because of the difficulty of implementing prescribed burning over the long-term; 6) the modified shelterwood method is a sound method for regenerating the desired tree species, which are shade intolerant, and 7) this method best meets habitat objectives for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker as reflected in Amendment 14 of the Forest Plan.

National Historic Preservation Act. Consultation was initiated with the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure that cultural resources are not adversely affected. The Cultural Resource Report concluded that 8 sites would be protected and monitored according to Class I and Class II Property Avoidance Procedures outlined in Appendix E of that Memorandum of Understanding; SHPO has concurred with this determination. (Appendix E of the Environmental Assessment)

Clean Water Act. The actions implemented under this decision will have only slight, short-term effects on water quality. Those effects are limited to slight increases in sedimentation. No other adverse effects are anticipated. (Environmental Assessment, pages 68-74)

Endangered Species Act and Forest Service Sensitive Species Policy. A Biological Evaluation was prepared for this project to evaluate effects on species listed under the Endangered Species Act and on the Regional Forester's list of sensitive species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the findings of that evaluation on September 24, 2003. However, because modifications to the Proposed Action made with this decision involve the federally-listed red-cockaded woodpecker, the Biological Evaluation has been revised to reflect these changes. The US Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the revised evaluation on July 22, 2004. In addition to revision of the woodpecker evaluation, the revised Biological Evaluation also more clearly addresses use and adequacy of surveys for threatened, endangered and sensitive species in response to comments submitted by Wildlaw, an environmental law firm.

National Environmental Policy Act. Based on my review of the Environmental Assessment and project record, I find that the modifications made to the Proposed Action will not substantially change the environmental effects disclosed in the Environmental Assessment. All modifications are within the range of actions analyzed in the assessment (thinnings), or are of lesser intensity (irregular shelterwood). Therefore, I find that

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consideration and disclosure requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act have been met.

### **Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based on my review of the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that this is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. This determination is based on the following factors:

1. The analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment did not identify any individual or cumulatively significant adverse or beneficial short- or long-term effects. (Chapter 3 & Appendix F, Environmental Assessment)
2. The decision will not result in any adverse effects on public health and safety (Chapter 3, p. 160, Environmental Assessment).
3. This decision will not result in adverse effects to wetlands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, ecologically critical areas, or other unique characteristics of the area (Chapter 3, p. 68, Environmental Assessment).
4. Effects disclosed in the Environmental Assessment are not highly controversial. Controversy here refers to extent or types of effects, not to the level of opposition (Chapter 3, Environmental Assessment).
5. I am satisfied that the analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment discloses the effects of the alternatives and that they do not involve uncertain, unique, or unknown risk (Chapter 3, Environmental Assessment).
6. This proposal does not establish a precedent for future action beyond the alternatives proposed.
7. This proposal is not related to other proposals that would cause a cumulatively significant impact. The cumulative effects of this action and other actions are documented in the Environmental Assessment. Those effects are not significant (Chapter 3, Environmental Assessment).
8. This proposal does not affect any properties on or eligible for listing for the National Register of Historic Places. It will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources (Chapter 3, pg. 158, & Appendix E, Environmental Assessment).
9. Documented in the Biological Assessments is the conclusion that no Threatened or Endangered species are likely to be adversely affected by implementing this timber sale. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has concurred with this determination (Appendix C, Analysis Unit 24 Environmental Assessment).
10. I find that this proposal does not threaten a violation of any Federal, State, or local law or requirement for protection of the environment (Chapter 3 & Appendix C, Analysis Unit 24 Environmental Assessment).

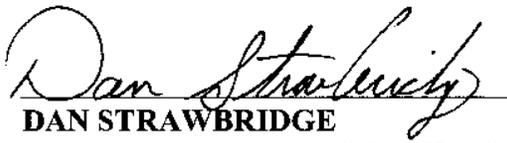
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**Implementation and Request for Review**

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 215.7. A written notice of appeal must be postmarked or received within 45 days after the date the legal notice of this decision is published in the Clarion-Ledger, Jackson, Mississippi pursuant to 36 CFR 215.13. The Notice of Appeal should be sent to USDA Forest Service, Southern Region, ATTN.: Appeals Deciding Officer, 1720 Peachtree Road, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30367-9102.

Appeals must meet content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14. For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact the District Silviculturist, Jay Pittman, at (601) 384-5876.

If no appeal is received, implementation of this decision may occur on, but not before, five (5) business days from the close of the appeal filing period. If an appeal is received, implementation may not occur for 15 days following the date of appeal disposition.

  
**DAN STRAWBRIDGE**  
District Ranger (Responsible Official)  
Homochitto Ranger District

7-27-04  
Date