



File Code: 1950, 2470

Date: October 11, 2007

Subject: Hogback Project

To: Interested Parties

30-Day Notice and Comment Period

Hogback Project

The Cheat Potomac Ranger District of the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Hogback project. The Hogback project area is located in northern Tucker and southern Preston Counties, WV. The Hogback proposal calls for implementing vegetation management and associated activities in the Hogback area over the next ten years to help meet the desired conditions described in the Monongahela Forest Plan (2006). These activities include commercial timber sales, timber stand improvements, tree planting, road work, herbicide applications, and wildlife habitat improvement.

We are conducting a 30-day Notice and Comment period on the proposed Hogback project in accordance with 36 CFR 215. We are sending you a copy of the draft EA because you previously expressed interest in this project or in projects in this area.

The comment period ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice in the *Parsons Advocate* newspaper. This publication date is the exclusive means for calculating the time to submit comments on the proposed action. Those wishing to comment on this proposal should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source.

Only those who provide comment or otherwise express interest in the proposed action during this comment period will be eligible as appellants. Interest expressed or comments provided on this project prior to or after the close of this comment period will not constitute standing for appeal purposes. Comments must meet the requirements of 36 CFR 215.6. Comments that are within the scope of the proposed action, specific to the proposed action, or have a direct relationship to the proposed action and include supporting reasons are most helpful.

How to submit comments:

- 1) Written comments should be sent to Jeff Kochenderfer, Silviculturist, at the Potomac office address above.
- 2) Verbal comments may be made by phoning Jeff Kochenderfer at 304-257-4488, extension 17.
- 3) E-mail comments may be sent to comments-eastern-monongahela-cheat@fs.fed.us. Please include the project name in the subject line of the e-mail. E-mail comments may be in word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), Adobe (.pdf), or hypertext markup language (.html).
- 4) Comments may be hand delivered weekdays 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Potomac office.

To be eligible to appeal, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Comments received in response to this scoping, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted only anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments may not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 215.

The USDA Forest Service is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeffery J. Hammes
JEFFERY J. HAMMES
Cheat Potomac District Ranger and Deciding Official

10/11/07
Date

Enclosed is the draft EA, which contains the following sections:

- Title Page, Preface, Table of Contents, Lists of Tables and Figures
- Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need for Action
- Chapter 2 – Alternatives
- Chapter 3 – Environmental Consequences
- Figure 2.1 – Alternative 1 – No Action Map
- Figure 2.2 – Alternative 2 – Proposed Action Map
- Figure 2.3 – Alternative 3 - Map
- Figure 2.4 – Timber Stand Improvement Map for Alternatives 2 and 3