

Decision Summary - Roadless

Project Name	Frozen Moose		
Forest	Flathead National Forest	Region	Northern
Choose Type of Activity (Wilderness, Roadless, Energy infrastructure, Minerals, Vegetation CE, Land Management Plan) and level of Decision (No DM, DM, DN/FONSI, ROD)			
Roadless DN/FONSI			
Planned Decision Date	March 1, 2021		

Summary Description

Purpose/Need
To reduce tree densities and fuel loadings within the wildland-urban interface to result in less intense fire behavior near communities and facilitate safe wildland fire operations; improve the diversity and resilience of vegetative communities and associated wildlife habitat; maintain and improve aquatic ecosystems; and to provide a mix of forest products to contribute to economic sustainability.
Intended Selected Action
<p>An EA was prepared that evaluated the no action alternative and one action alternative. The proposed selected alternative in the draft DN includes 3,180 acres of commercial harvest and 4,897 acres of non-commercial treatments (pre-commercial thinning, understory removal, underburning, prescribed burning, sagebrush restoration) intended to reduce hazardous fuels in a WUI and improve resilience of forest stands to disturbance (88% of all the treatments are in WUI). Additionally, culvert replacements and removals are proposed in the selected action.</p> <p>While this project is still in the objection review process, it is likely that non-commercial whitebark pine treatments in the recommended wilderness area will be dropped at this time (about 827 acres). These acres are included in the totals above.</p> <p>Within the Mount Hefty inventoried roadless area (IRA), the proposed selected action includes 523 acres of commercial thinning within the WUI. No road construction would occur as defined by the 2001 Roadless Rule. Approximately 20% of the project area has been impacted by wildfire since 1988, with a general pattern of wildfire starts occurring in the western portion of the project area and moving east toward this IRA, homes, private lands, and Glacier National Park.</p>
Potentially Significant Effects or Extraordinary Circumstances (if any)
No significant effects are expected
Public Involvement (include State, local governments and Tribal consultation)
In December 2019, a scoping letter was provided to about 600 landowners and interested parties announcing the proposed action for the project. In February 2020 the IDT attended the North Fork Interlocal meeting to summarize project progress, share input received on the proposed action, and answer questions from the public on the project. In July 2020, the EA was published and a 30-day comment period was initiated. A public meeting was held in mid-July to share information with the public. Approximately 17 comments/letters were received on the EA. Several site visits were also made to discuss site-specific activities with members of the public. Issues the public raised included concerns about effects of activities in a recommended wilderness area, wild and scenic river corridor, and an

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IRA area along with effects to grizzly bears, Canada lynx, and bull trout from roading and vegetation treatments. We did not receive feedback from local governments as the nearest community is about 35 miles away on mostly a gravel road although we did hear from 2 different community groups who are located within the project area. All substantial issues have been addressed.

Both the Blackfeet Tribe and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe were contacted during scoping and the EA comment periods. No comments were received. Additionally, this project was included in the annual program-to-program consultation with the CSKT Tribal Historic Preservation Department in April 2019 and no issues about this project were raised by the tribe.

Timeline Considerations (statutory, court-related, administrative) and Objections Status

A legal notice announcing the 45-day objection period was published on October 16, 2020. Ten objections were received. A 30-day extension for review of the objections was allowed by the Regional Forester in mid-February. An objection meeting with most of the objectors occurred on February 3, 2021. The objection review period will conclude on February 15, 2021.