Decision Notice
and
Finding of No Significant Impact

East Wedge Project

USDA FOREST SERVICE
COLVILLE NATIONAL FOREST
THREE RIVERS RANGER DISTRICT
STEVENS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Introduction

This Decision Notice (DN) documents my decision regarding actions proposed in the East Wedge Project Environmental Assessment May 2013. The East Wedge Environmental Assessment (EA) is available on request from the Three Rivers Ranger District, 255 West 11th Avenue, Kettle Falls, Washington 99141, or the Colville National Forest Supervisors Office, 765 South Main, Colville, Washington 99114. The EA is also available on the Colville National Forest internet page at http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/colville/landmanagement/projects.

The EA, which is incorporated by reference in this Decision Notice, documents the site-specific analysis conducted by an interdisciplinary team to determine the potential environmental effects connected to the proposed activities.

The East Wedge planning area is located in Stevens County Washington, approximately 21 miles north of Kettle Falls, in an area between the Kettle River and the Columbia River (locally known as “the Wedge”). The project area is approximately 43,000 acres, not including approximately 5,630 acres in private or other ownership, and extends from the vicinity east of Pierre Lake north to the United States-Canada border. (See DN Appendix A.)

The East Wedge Project planning area occupies portions of two 4th field sub-basins: the Kettle River and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake sub-basins. Both sub-basins cross the US/Canadian Border but this analysis only deals with the US portion. The Kettle River sub-basin is further divided into the Boulder watershed and then the Deep Creek and Toulou Creek sub-watersheds. The Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake sub-basin is divided into the Onion Creek watershed containing Big Sheep Creek, Fivemile Creek, Crown Creek, Rattlesnake Creek and Flat Creek sub-watersheds. The actions included in this decision will occur on National Forest System lands in these seven sub-watersheds.
The legal description is as follows:

Sections 1-4, 9-12 T39N, R37E;  
Sections 4-6 T39N, R39E;  
Sections 1-36 T40N, R38E;  
Sections 1, 2, 4-9 T39N, R38E;  
Sections 1-5, 9-16, 21-28, 33-36 T40N,  
Sections 28-33 T40N, R39E.

Updates to the EA

An addendum to the East Wedge hydrology report was completed to clarify the connection between listed Best Management Practices and the newer National Best Management Practices for Water Quality Management on National Forest System Lands¹. The hydrology report addendum was added to Appendix E.

Updates to the management indicator species analysis were incorporated into the effects analysis in Chapter 3 of the East Wedge EA. These updates reflect Forest-level viability information (Youkey², 2012).

Decision

Based upon my careful review of the project purpose and need, issues identified by the public, the interdisciplin ary team analysis described in the East Wedge Project EA and the project file, collaboration with the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition (NEWFC), consultation with the local tribes, and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies, I have decided to implement a modified version of Alternative C (described in the EA pages 22-24). This decision will include all Design Elements (as modified to clarify intent) and monitoring in DN Appendix B and Best Management Practices contained in Appendix E of the EA. The EA documents the environmental analysis and conclusions upon which this decision is based. I have also determined these actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) accompanies this decision.

The Selected Action reflects four primary changes to Alternative C as described in the EA:

1. Commercial and precommercial thinning in lynx habitat discussed in Alternative C of the EA will not occur at this time. Some of the commercial thinning units described in Alternative C will be treated with prescribed burning. This modification


follows direction found in the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy\(^3\) to provide for the habitat requirements of lynx.

The modification removes approximately 960 acres from the commercial thinning treatments and adds approximately 655 acres to prescribed fire treatments. The prescribed fire will decrease ground fuel loading but will not reduce canopy closure. This modification also removes approximately 2,250 acres of precommercial thinning to maintain potential foraging habitat for hares—the primary food source for lynx. Although it will take longer than if treated, the dropped stands would incur some natural thinning due to effects of competition. The eventual tree size will be smaller, on average, than comparable stands that have been precommercially thinned, and the trees more susceptible to effects of insects and diseases. (Silvicultural Report Addendum in project file)

2. No treatment will occur within 600 feet of the US/Canada international border to protect grazing allotment natural barriers. Vegetation located adjacent to the international border currently provides a barrier to cattle movement, thereby preventing their movement from the East Wedge project area into Canada. To meet the needs of the range allotment permittees for management of their cattle, this vegetative barrier will be retained. (project file)

3. Existing system roads will not be decommissioned as part of this decision. The proposed action proposed decommissioning roads to offset the resource impacts that could occur from construction of new system roads. (EA pg 19) Alternative C retained that activity although no new road construction was proposed. (EA pg 22)

New system road construction is not included as part of this decision, therefore there is no need to offset effects of ‘new system roads’. I find the project analysis does not include sufficient analysis to identify management opportunities for changing the current road system to better address future needs, budgets, and environmental concerns. Before deciding which roads, if any, will be decommissioned, I will ask a team of resource specialists to examine the ecological, social and economic issues related to roads within the East Wedge project area.

4. Authorized use of Forest Road 1500 would not change. Alternative C proposed to change the authorized use of Forest Road 1500 from ‘open to highway legal vehicles’ to ‘open to all vehicles’. (EA pg 22) Forest Road 1500 goes in an east-west direction through the East Wedge project area. The road has a native surface and is currently open to highway legal vehicles (maintenance level 3). However, it is not included on the Forest’s Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) as open for smaller, off-highway vehicles (OHV) that may not be licensed for highway use. I received

some public comments expressing concern that decommissioning roads (as identified in the proposed action) might preclude future opportunities for OHV routes. Changing use status of FR 1500 was one option considered as a way to address that concern.

As no existing system roads would be decommissioned as part of this decision, future options have not been altered. In addition I would like to further develop a motorized mixed-use analysis to determine that such use would be consistent with management objectives (including, but not limited to, natural and cultural resources, recreational opportunities, access needs, conflicts among uses) and make reasonable accommodation for the public’s safety before changing the status of FR 1500.

None of these modifications alter analysis results or effects determinations listed in the East Wedge EA.

**Rationale For My Decision**

I have selected this alternative to meet the purpose and need while addressing concerns about environmental impacts expressed by the public. (Silvicultural Report Addendum and Fuels Report Addendum in project file)

- Protect natural barriers within grazing allotments and along the US/Canadian international border to meet management needs and resource protection within cattle allotment permit areas.

- No new system roads will be constructed under this decision which address public comments about concerns related to soil and hydrologic function, economics, and access. Also, when East Wedge was first initiated, the interdisciplinary team developed the proposed action based on resource needs, Forest Plan direction and other guidance available at that time. Subsequently, a portion of the Colville National Forest was identified for implementing the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). Part of the direction contained within the CFLRP designation is that no new system roads would be constructed on National Forest System lands. The Selected Action meets this direction.

- Meets direction for management of Canada Lynx habitat by deleting precommercial and commercial thinning and proposing management of understory vegetation/fuels through use of prescribed fire within the lynx analysis units.

I find this decision best addresses the goals identified in the purpose and need of this project related to fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface and the Canadian border zone and the needs related to Forest Health in the rest of the planning area. This decision meets the purpose and need of the project as follows.

*Break up the existing fuel continuity on National Forest System lands to reduce the risks of wildfire damage to federal and non-federal lands and structures. Stand conditions are such that fuel reduction methods are needed to thin and/or remove the vegetation, reduce*
ladder fuels, and remove surface fuels. (EA pg 3)

The selected action will break up the continuity of fuels both at the stand and landscape levels. Approximately 11,500 acres and National Forest System lands (about 26% of the project area) would be treated to reduce fuels and decrease horizontal and vertical fuel continuity. The fire regime condition class (the degree to which an area has departed from historic fire regimes) would be improved or maintained in all treatment areas. Treating approximately 5,500 acres within the wildland urban interface area and the Canadian Border Zone will move those areas toward condition class 1. (addresses purpose and need measure [EA pg 4] and alternative formulation issue 2 [EA pg 14]) Treatments will decrease the probability that a future wildfire would develop into, or be sustained as, a stand-replacing or crown fire, and will improve the resiliency of the forest landscape to wildland fire.

Treatments would increase public and fire fighter access and egress along Churchill Mine (County) Road and Forest Roads 1500, 1520, 1500960, and 1500460 should a fire event occur. The selected action includes reducing fuel levels along approximately 24 miles of key roads within the East Wedge boundary important to ingress and egress and 1.5 miles of private property boundaries. (addresses purpose and need measure [EA pg 4]; also see EA Chapter 3, page 41). The fuel conditions along these roads typically include dense canopies or ladder fuels with moderate surface fuel loadings. Should a larger wildfire event occur and threaten to spread along or across these roads, most of them would be unsafe to travel and ineffective as fire breaks. Canopy, ladder and surface fuel treatments are proposed to occur along and near many of these roads, property boundaries, campground and communication site to provide defensible space, which is intended to provide more time, safer access, and improved suppression opportunities for firefighters during a fire event.

In the absence of larger fuel treatment units (as is the case in some stretches along the key roads and property boundaries,) canopy, ladder and surface fuel treatments along roads would allow these roads to be used as secondary evacuation routes for Forest users, depending on fire behavior, extent, and location. Suppression action would be less hazardous for firefighters in these areas and would provide greater opportunities for indirect and direct suppression methods. The effectiveness of aerial suppression would be enhanced, and the need for fireline construction would be lessened as roads could be used more effectively as fire breaks. Fuel treatments along private property boundaries would further the defensible space of any fuel treatment being conducted by landowners. (EA pg 40-49; Fuels Report addendum [project file])

*Improve overall forest health on National Forest System land through active management as it relates to the forest health within the planning area. Stand treatments are needed to reduce susceptibility to continuing insect and disease-caused mortality, promote late-successional characteristics and landscape level diversity, develop or protect horizontal and vertical forest structure, and reduce susceptibility to cyclic repetitions of stand-replacing fires. (EA pg 4)*
The selected action will treat approximately 4,700 acres of overstocked (36% of existing) and 1,900 acres of insect-impacted stands (26% of existing) within the East Wedge project area. (Purpose and need measure; EA pg 5; alternative formulation issue 2, EA pg 14) The proposed treatments would result in less severe effects from an insect outbreak and existing diseases such as dwarf mistletoe and Armillaria.

Treatments remove understory trees which reduces inter-tree competition in the stand and enables the remaining trees to better withstand the effects of insects and diseases. The selected action will target stands identified as having high or moderate insect and disease treatment priority. Thinning from below would move multi-storied stands with large trees toward single-story stands with large trees, conditions more reflective of historic structure. Thinning in dense stands without large trees would reduce inter-tree competition and speed the rate at which smaller stands grow into large-tree dominated stands.

The effects of precommercial thinning treatments would not be realized for at least one decade, but treatment would contribute to maintaining early seral species, controlling stocking and improving tree growth. Any fuel bed resulting from precommercial thinning treatment would be temporary and risk reduced through either hand piling or not treating portions of these stands. (EA pg 35-40; Silvicultural Report addendum [project file])

The Selected Action will provide both mechanical and prescribed fire treatments on approximately 11,496 acres in 295 stands. Breakdown of treatment by acres is identified in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Approximate Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed fire</td>
<td>4564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomass thinning</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuelbreak treatments</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelterwood/seedcut</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial thinning</td>
<td>1089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable density thinning</td>
<td>3453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvage</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group selection</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precommercial thinning</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An estimated 520 acres of regeneration need (about 14%) will be created in 1-10 acre scattered shelterwood patches as part of the variable density thinning. (Silvicultural Report addendum [project file])

Alternative formulation issue 1 addresses public comment related to road construction and associated effects. (EA pg 13)

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4 Overstocked = stands that exceed a stand density index of 50% of maximum density.
No new National Forest system roads will be constructed. Approximately 3.6 miles of temporary road will be constructed and approximately 52 miles of Forest System road will be lightly or moderately reconstructed. The amount of temporary road included in the Selected Action is slightly less than Alternative C due to additional field review of access needs. A short temporary road located in T40N, R37E, NW ¼ section 11 is not included as part of the Selected Action. This removes a proposed crossing of Deep Creek. (DN Appendix A.)

The Forest Service will not authorize public use of the temporary roads during or after project implementation. Temporary permits will be pursued to units in T40N, R38E, Sections 3,10, and 25; T40N, R 39E, Sections 28, 30, 32, and 33; units in T39N, R39E, Sections 4 and 5; and units in T39N, R 39E, Sections 30, 4, and 5. (EA pg 18, 56-57)

Consistency with the Forest Plan, Laws, Regulations, and Policies

NEPA

This Decision Notice and FONSI constitute compliance with the NEPA requirements.

Forest Plan

The Colville National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan was developed and approved December 29, 1988. I find that this project is consistent with the Colville National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and its amendments.

The Colville National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) is the guiding management direction for the East Wedge Project area. The East Wedge EA incorporates the Forest Plan by reference, and is tiered to the Forest Plan’s FEIS (Final Environmental Impact Statement, USDA Forest Service 1988). The Forest Plan contains Standards and Guidelines and Management Area designations and prescriptions that apply to the entire Colville National Forest, including the East Wedge project area. Impacts of programmatic decisions contained in the Forest Plan are disclosed in the Forest Plan FEIS. The Forest Plan amendments are also management direction for this project. Relevant amendments are:

Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2 entitled Revised Interim Management Direction Establishing Riparian, Ecosystem and Wildlife Standards for Timber Sales (USDA Forest Service 1995a). This amendment replaced the interim ecosystem and wildlife standards from Regional Forester's Forest Plans Amendment #1. In this interim direction, the Regional Forester directs National Forests in eastern Washington to maintain, and/or enhance late and old structural stages in stands subject to timber harvest. Forest Plan Amendment #2 is also referred to as the “Eastside Screens.” (EA pg 10, 36-41, 93-94, 97-100)

Inland Native Fish Strategy (USDA Forest Service 1995 b). This amendment replaced the interim riparian standard from Regional Forester's Forest Plans Amendment #1. The Inland Native Fish Strategy is also referred to as “INFISH.” (EA pg 11, 71-78)
Regional Forester’s October 11, 2005 amendment to forest plans in Region 6, *Preventing and Managing Invasive Plants*, (Preventing and Managing Invasive Plants Record of Decision, Appendix 1-1). This management direction includes invasive plant prevention and treatment/restoration standards intended to help achieve stated desired future conditions, goals and objectives. (EA pg 11, 105-108)

The project was designed in conformance with standards and guidelines for management areas in the planning area (Forest Plan pages 4-35 through 4-60). (EA pg 9-10)

- **Management Area 1** (815 acres – 1.7% of planning area) Emphasis is on providing Old Growth dependent species habitat. The goal is to contribute to the maintenance and diversity of wildlife habitat and plant communities.
- **Management Area 5** (2,807 acres – 5.7% of planning area) Emphasis is scenic/timber: The goal is to provide a natural appearing foreground, middle, and background along major scenic travel routes while providing wood products.
- **Management Area 6** (1,065 acres – 2.2% of the planning area) Emphasis is scenic/winter range: The goal is to provide a natural appearing foreground, middle, and background along major scenic travel routes while providing for big game winter range management.
- **Management Area 7** (33,302 acres – 67.5% of planning area) Emphasis is wood/forage: The goal is to manage to achieve optimum production of timber products while protecting basic resources.
- **Management Area 8** (5,698 acres – 11.5% of planning area) Emphasis is big game winter range: The goal is to meet the habitat needs of deer and elk to sustain carrying capacity at 120 percent of the 1980 level, while managing timber and other resources consistent with fish and wildlife management objectives.
- **DNR & Private Lands** (5,626 acres – 11.4% of planning area) These are holdings within the project area.

The actions are consistent with direction contained in Regional Forester's Forest Plan Amendment #2 and with INFISH Direction (EA pages 10 and 11).

The actions are consistent with the Forest Plan because Design Elements (DN Appendix B) and Best Management Practices (EA Appendix E) have been fully applied in the selected action. The project is feasible and reasonable, and it results in applying management practices that meet the Forest Plan overall direction of protecting the environment while producing goods and services. (EA Chapter 3 and specialist reports [project file])

**Congressionally Designated Areas**

There are no congressionally designated areas with the planning area. There are no Wilderness Areas, no designated or proposed Wild and Scenic areas or Potential Wilderness Areas. There are no Inventoried Roadless Areas within the planning area.
The planning area contains no other existing or candidate Congressionally Designated areas. (EA pg 11, 132)

**National Forest Management Act (NFMA)**

The selected actions which alter vegetation meet the minimum specific requirements of the National Forest Management Act (see Forest Service Manual 1921.12). Rationale is as follows:

1. If all natural elements and processes remain intact, impacts to soil would be nearly undetectable within 20 to 40 years. Freeze-thaw cycles, soil organisms, and root growth would help alleviate compaction and rutting. Design features and sale contract provisions would minimize soil displacement; however, these effects are within Forest Plan guidelines. (EA pg 62) See Soils report in the project file (Vander Meer and Marques 2011)

2. There is assurance that the lands can be adequately restocked within five years after final regeneration harvest (FSM 1921.12g). (EA pg 38) See page 45 Silvicultural report in the project file (Kaney and Strand 2011).

3. Streams, streambanks, shorelines, lakes, wetlands, and other bodies of water are protected from detrimental changes in water temperatures, blockages of water courses, and deposits of sediment where harvests are likely to adversely affect water conditions or fish habitat: See EA pages 62-78 and the Hydrology report (Wasson 2011) and Fisheries reports (Newman 2011) located in the project file.

4. The harvesting systems to be used are not selected primarily because they will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output of timber. (EA pg 122-125; DN pg 2-6)

5. The interdisciplinary review has been completed and the potential environmental, biological, aesthetic, engineering, and economic impacts have been assessed on each advertised sale area and the cutting methods are consistent with the multiple use of the general area. (EA Chapter 3 and specialist reports [project file])

6. Timber harvest is carried out in a manner consistent with the protection of soil, watershed, fish, wildlife, recreation, aesthetic resources, cultural and historic resources, and the regeneration of timber resources. See DN Appendix B (Design Elements); EA Appendix E (Best Management Practices); and effects analysis in EA Chapter 3.

**Other Laws, Regulations, and Policies**

This project is consistent with all laws, regulations, and policies listed below.

**Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Amendments of 1972 (the Clean Water Act), and Executive Order 11990 Protection of Wetlands:** The project is in compliance with the Clean Water Act and EO 11990 because it has no significant adverse impacts on water quality or wetlands. See EA pages 9 and 71, DN Appendix B (Design Elements), and EA Appendix E (Best Management Practices).
36 CFR 296 Protection of Archaeological Resources, and 36 CFR 800 Protection of Historic Properties: The project is in compliance with regulations that protect archaeological and historic properties. (EA pages 121-122, DN Appendix B (Design Elements), and Colville National Forest Section 106 Compliance letter dated August 13, 2012 in the project file.)

National Environmental Policy Act of January 1, 1970, and Forest Service Manual 1950: This project is consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act and Forest Service Manual 1950. Project planning and the environmental analysis (a) used a systematic interdisciplinary approach in planning and decision making, (b) considered the environmental impact of proposed actions (EA Chapter 3), (c) identified adverse effects which could not be avoided should the project be implemented (EA page 131) (d) considered alternatives to the proposed actions (EA pg 15-24), (e) considered the relationship between local short-term uses of the human environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, (EA page 131) and (f) identified any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented (EA pages 77, 131).

The environmental analysis followed regulations at 40 CFR 1500-1508, which establish procedures and rules governing environmental analysis and documentation; ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and the public (see EA pages 11-13 and Chapter 4), including identification of issues (see EA pages 13 and 14); and provide direction to assist public officials in making decisions based on an understanding of environmental consequences.

The environmental analysis also followed Forest Service implementing procedures in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, chapters Zero, 10, and 40.

Endangered Species Act: The effects on endangered or threatened species and their habitats are discussed in the Biological Evaluation in the project file, with results summarized in the EA on pages 78-105 for terrestrial wildlife; pages 71-78 for fish; and pages 110-115 for plants.

The Selected Action “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” grizzly bears (threatened) or grizzly bear habitat (EA page 93). The USFWS officially removed the gray wolf from the threatened and endangered species list in eastern Washington May 5, 2011, so it is not discussed (EA page 89). The Selected Action "may affect but is not likely to adversely affect" lynx (threatened) (EA page 87). The Selected Action is “not likely to adversely affect” Bull Trout (threatened) since they are not found in the project area however, habitat does exist and will be protected under INFISH (EA page 73). The Selected Action will have no effect to Woodland Caribou (endangered) (EA page 104). No federally listed threatened or endangered plants or plants proposed for federal listing are known to occur in the project analysis area (EA page 110).

The Biological Evaluation was submitted for review to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service June 20, 2012. A letter of concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service dated August 13, 2012 is available in the project file.

**Direction Letter for Neotropical Migratory Birds:** The project is consistent with various requirements for conservation of migratory birds. See EA pages 94-97.

**Clean Air Act of August 7, 1977:** The primary objective of the Clean Air Act is to establish federal standards for air pollutants from stationary and mobile sources, and to work with the states to regulate polluting emissions. The Act is designed to improve air quality in areas of the country which do not meet federal standards and to prevent significant deterioration in areas where air quality exceeds those standards.

The act requires states to develop state implementation plans, which set limits on emissions to assure that air quality within the state will meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. By including requirements for approval from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources prior to fuel reduction ignitions, and by Washington State Department of Ecology monitoring of dust potentially created during rock crushing operations, the project is consistent with the Clean Air Act. (See EA pages 126-129).

**Purpose of and Need for Action**

The Purpose and Need for the East Wedge project focused on two areas: fuels reduction and forest health. (EA pg 3-5)

**Fuels Reduction**

During the past century, fire suppression has contributed to heavy ground and ladder fuel conditions, and increased over-stocked stands in much of the East Wedge planning area. As these hazardous fuels have increased over time, the potential for high intensity stand-replacing fires (or crown fires) has also increased. Wildfires are becoming increasingly expensive to suppress, dangerous to firefighters and members of the public, threatening to wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, recreational use, and adjacent property. Project activities are proposed to break up the existing fuel continuity on National Forest System lands to reduce the risks of wildfire damage to federal and non-federal lands and structures. Stand conditions are such that fuel reduction methods are needed to thin and/or remove the vegetation, reduce ladder fuels, and remove surface fuels.

A portion of the planning area contains approximately 12,640 acres that are within the Stevens County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (SCCWPP) identified as Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Additional portions of the proposal related to fuels, is the 1.5 miles along the US-Canada border referred to as the Canadian Border Zone (CBZ) which contains approximately 9,170 acres. Because of the proximity of the planning area with the Canadian border, it was determined to treat this area in the same manner as a designated WUI in an effort to reduce the potential for a large wildfire on National Forest system lands to cross into Canada.
There is a need to create defensible space along key routes that access the planning area while increasing fire fighter and public safety and improving the ability to control fire spread.

**Forest Health**

Due to fire suppression and past management resulting in biomass accumulation, stands are limited in their ability to function within their historic range of variability. Stand treatments are needed to reduce susceptibility to continuing insect and disease-caused mortality, promote late-successional characteristics and landscape level diversity, develop or protect horizontal and vertical forest structure, and reduce susceptibility to cyclic repetitions of stand-replacing fires.

Fire suppression reduced the natural tree thinning action of fire in the planning area, resulting in denser forests. Trees growing closely together are in direct competition with each other for light, water, and nutrients so the trees become less vigorous and more vulnerable to insects and diseases. The resulting increase in insect- and disease-caused tree mortality adds to the already heavy fuel load. There is a need to treat these stands to improve stand vigor, decrease the susceptibility to insects, and to promote existing healthy trees of species resistant to fire and strains resistant to disease. This would decrease the stand flammability and the rate of dead fuel production.

The East Wedge area is dominated by forested acres with substantial inter-tree competition. Bark beetle populations are currently endemic, living on the fringes of root rot pockets and occasional down and broken off trees. Scattered trees have defoliating insects. Mistletoe is evident in older larch trees that are competing with multiple specie understories. *Schweinitzii, Armillaria, Tomentosus*, laminated rot root, butt rots, and Western larch, lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir dwarf mistletoe are all present in the project area. Their prevalence is likely increased from the historic range of variability due to past harvest and fire suppression.

Since the Forest Service cannot treat every acre of land, treatments need to be strategically placed to achieve the greatest efficiency. Treatment of the greatest amount of the strategic area would maximize the Forest’s ability to achieve the purpose and need.

**Issues**

Issues were used to formulate alternatives, prescribe mitigation measures, and to define the scope of the environmental analysis. The responses received during the scoping period were reviewed and significant issues were identified. The issues used to formulate alternatives are described below using an issue statement and background information on the issue. Disposition of additional concerns identified during the scoping efforts are available in the project file. (EA pg 13-14)

**Public Involvement**

Feedback from 46 public comments, 3 public meetings, conversations with Stevens County Commissioners, and several meetings with Tri-County Motorized Recreation
Association, Stevens County Public Lands Advisory Committee, Stevens County Cattlemen’s Association, Stevens County Farm Bureau, Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition and the US Border Patrol were reviewed and considered. A list of people who submitted written comments can be found in Chapter 4 of the East Wedge EA and in the project file. Oral comments received during public meetings can be found in the project file. (EA pg 11-13)

**Tribal Consultation**

Letters inviting consultation and participation were sent to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe, and the Kalispel Tribe of Indians on January 8, 2010, March 3, 2011 and September 26, 2011. These same governments were contacted with the opportunities letter, public meeting notices, and scoping letter described below. Input was received from the Spokane Tribe on January 27, 2010 indicating that no cultural resources were reported in the area of potential effect and gave their approval for the project to move forward.

**Public Participation**

The East Wedge project was first listed in the April 1, 2010 edition of the Colville National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions⁵ (SOPA) and has appeared in the SOPA every three months since that date. The opportunities letters for input on the proposal were mailed January 11, 2010 to 92 members of the public, adjacent landowners and government agencies outlining the opportunities for treatments in the planning area, asking for input in developing the project and to attend a public meeting on January 20, 2010. The mailing list was developed by querying the Stevens County Assessors database for residents adjacent to and near the planning area, as well as from the general mailing list maintained in the project file for persons and agencies with general interest in Forest planning. The mailing included a map of the planning area and potential treatments, a description of the project objectives, and some general information regarding the planning area. The public meeting presentation included project goals and objectives, a request for participants to share their knowledge and expertise of the local area and how comments would be used to develop the proposed action.

A second public meeting/presentation and request for public input was held August 17, 2010 with approximately 120 letters of invitation mailed August 3, 2010.

On March 5, 2011 a scoping letter was sent to 109 members of the public, Tribes, and other government agencies outlining the proposed action. The follow-up public meeting was held March 17, 2011.

On September 28, 2011 a letter was mailed to approximately 79 members of the public, Tribes and other government agencies, and Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell, notifying them the EA was available

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⁵ The *Schedule of Proposed Actions* is a quarterly publication that provides notice of upcoming proposals that may undergo environmental analysis and documentation.
for review, the project was entering a 30-day comment period and outlining the 
comment process.

All comments were placed in the project file where they were reviewed by 
interdisciplinary team (IDT) members for topics of concern. A draft summary of the 
concerns was made available to the IDT and updated as comments were received. These 
comments and the concerns identified from them became the basis on which the 
opportunities were modified.

A public meeting was held near the project area on January 20, 2010. Letters of 
invitation were sent to 92 members of the public and other government agencies (as 
above). A press release announcing the meeting was published in the Colville Statesman 
Examiner January 13, 2010. The public meeting was attended by 27 people. 
Presentations were given on the roles of the Stevens County Conservation District and 
Forest Service and the project goals and objectives. Also presented was information on 
State and Federal grant programs designed to help private land owners treat fuels on their 
own land. Notes from this meeting were made available to the IDT. These notes and 
additional public comments were used to fine tune the project into a draft proposed 
action.

On August 3, 2010 a letter was sent to 109 members of the public, Tribes, and other 
government agencies inviting their input on the ID Teams preliminary draft proposed 
actions. The letter provided information on the project background and goals and 
solicited site-specific relevant oral/written comments. Publication of the public meeting 
appeared in the Colville Statesman-Examiner on August 4, 2011 and August 11, 2010 
and in the Chewelah Independent newspaper on August 5, 2010. Seventeen people 
participated in the meeting and provided comments which were used in refining the draft 
proposed action

On March 5, 2011 a scoping letter was sent to 109 members of the public, Tribes, and 
other government agencies. The follow-up public meeting was held March 17, 2011 with 
14 participants attending. The meeting was publicized in the Chewelah Independent on 
March 10, 2011 and the Colville Statesman Examiner March 9, 2011. A description of 
the proposed action and project maps were included in the mailing and available at the 
meeting. A presentation on the proposed action was given followed by a question and 
answer period. Notes from this meeting plus written comments received from 9 citizens, 
organizations, local governments, and agencies were used to fine tune the project and its 
analysis.

On September 27, 2011 a letter was sent to all 79 public participants notifying them the 
EA was available for review, that the project was entering a 30-day comment period, and 
describing eligibility for appealing the final decision. The legal notice beginning the 30-
day comment period was published on September 28, 2011 in the Colville Statesman-
Examiner. The EA was placed on the Colville National Forest external webpage, and 
paper copies made available at the District front desk on that same date.
Tri-County Motorized Recreation Association

The Tri-County Motorized Recreation Association is a user created group of motorized recreation enthusiasts. The District Ranger and members of the IDT met with the group's president and other members to review the proposed action and receive feedback. Meetings took place in December 2010, February 2011 and October 5, 2011. They were mailed letters to attend public meetings in January 2010, August 2010 and March 2011. The group commented during the scoping period. These meetings and their comments were reviewed for concerns relevant to the proposed project, and incorporated into the proposed action and analysis as described in this EA.

Stevens County Participation

The East Wedge project was first introduced to Commissioners of Stevens County with the invitation letter to the January 20, 2010 public meeting. This was followed by an invitation to the Stevens County Conservation District (SCCD) Annual meeting attended by 91 participants held February 18, 2010 where a project update was given. On April 5, 2010, the SCCD gave a personal project presentation to the Commissioners in their office. April 15, 2010, a project update was presented to the Public Lands Advisory Committee, an ad hoc public group that promotes council interests with the Stevens County Commissioners. A letter of invitation was sent to the Commissioners to attend the public meeting August 17, 2010. Don Dashiell, Commissioner elect, attended several of the collaboration meetings with SCCD staff, CNF staff and NEWFC, November, 2010 through January 6, 2011. On November 22, 2010, project staff gave an update to the Commissioners. A project update was presented to the Public Lands Advisory Committee on December 16, 2010.

Commissioners received an invitation to the SCCD Annual Meeting attended by over 100 people on February 15, 2011 where a project update was presented. The Commissioners were mailed a scoping letter on March 5, 2011 and Commissioner Don Dashiell attended the scoping meeting on March 17, 2011. September 26, 2011, project staff hand-delivered and discussed the EA and cover letter with the Commissioners. The Stevens County Commissioners submitted positive written comments during the 30-day comment period on the EA. In addition, a Commissioner regularly attends the monthly SCCD Board meetings where a written and/or oral project report is presented. Commissioners received an SCCD Newsletter/invitation (mailed 2/1/2012 to 258 people) to attend the SCCD Annual Meeting February 16, 2012 attended by 114 people including Commissioner Dashiell.

Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition Participation

Guidelines developed by the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition (NEWFC) were used for preliminary project development. NEWFC prescriptive guidelines used during collaboration included their Roads Policy 4, Regeneration Guidance Revised 20100309 v2, Old Growth Restoration Guidelines 78, Mesic Restoration Treatment Agreements, and 20090213 Revised Thinning Guidance -10.
The East Wedge collaboration process consisted of a series of meetings held with IDT members, NEWFC, and the FS August 18, 2010, November 2, 2010, November 17, 2010, December 8, 2010, December 16, 2010, January 6, 2011 and February 17, 2011. The meetings were open to the public. Photos, GIS layers and IDT personal knowledge of the area were also provided. Minutes of the collaboration meetings are located in the project file. The project file contains a letter dated January 10, 2011 from Lloyd McGee, NEWFC President, describing collaboration results. NEWFC was sent the letters of invitation to the public meetings described above. NEWFC members attended the January 20, 2010 and March 17, 2011 public meetings. NEWFC provided written comments during the public scoping period.

On September 28, 2011 a letter and a copy of the EA were hand-delivered to the chairman of the NEWFC inviting them to comment, notifying them that the project was entering a 30-day comment period and outlining the comment process. On October 5, 2011, their members participated in a meeting with SCCD staff, CNF staff, and the Three Rivers District Ranger to discuss the EA and issues for the Responsible Official consideration. They submitted written comments on the EA.

**Thirty-day Comment Period**

The EA was made available to the public for a 30-day comment period when the legal notice was published in the *Colville Statesman-Examiner*, the newspaper of record, on September 28, 2011. A letter was sent to interested participants on September 27, 2011, notifying them that the project was entering a 30-day comment period, and describing eligibility for appealing the final decision. The EA was placed on the Colville National Forest external webpage, and paper copies made available at the District front desk on that same date. Comments received were reviewed and considered for development of the Selected Action. (30 day comment letter & 30 day comment legal notice [project file])

**Concerns**

Concerns raised during the scoping period by the public and other agencies are filed and summarized in the East Wedge project file. Of these, concern that construction of system roads may impact the ecosystem by displacing soil that could result in erosion and impacts to streams and fisheries and increase long-term road maintenance costs; limiting future opportunities for Off Highway Vehicle uses through road decommissioning; and not treating enough acres to fully address the purpose and need of reducing fuels and improving forest health were identified as issues within the scope of the project. These concerns were tracked throughout the EA, and are mitigated as needed either through project design (Chapter 2), Design Elements (DN Appendix B), and/or, Best Management Practices (EA Appendix E).

**Alternatives Considered**

A total of five alternatives were considered during the analysis. Two alternatives were considered and eliminated from detailed study. Three alternatives were considered in
detail. Below is a brief discussion of the alternatives considered. A more detailed description can be found on pages 15-24 of the EA.

**Alternatives Considered, but Eliminated from Detailed Study**

An alternative was considered to address the issue related to harvest levels. This alternative was developed to address comments made during scoping and public meetings. Some commenters questioned whether enough acres were being considered for treatment during the proposal development. During the development of the Proposed Action a preliminary proposal was developed which treated higher levels of even-aged management and required higher levels of road construction. These treatments would have resulted in unacceptable resource impacts. To reduce potential impacts of this level of treatment to other resources and to meet requirements of the Eastside Screens and Forest Plan riparian management standards and guidelines, some road construction was reduced, some treatment levels were reduced and some treatment areas were altered or eliminated. These treatments, as modified, became the proposed action. Therefore this preliminary alternative was eliminated from detailed study. (EA pg 15)

An alternative was considered that would not construct any system or temporary roads in response to requests from some commenters during scoping. Preliminary analysis revealed that approximately 553 acres would not receive treatment: 30 acres in the WUI; 350 acres in the CBZ; and 173 acres to improve forest health. The purpose and need for this proposal is directly related to these objectives. The responsible official determined that some access beyond what is currently available would be needed to meet these needs. The proposed action, including some level of road access, could meet Forest Plan standards and guidelines and management area goals and objectives. Therefore, an alternative with no system or temporary road construction was eliminated from detailed study. (EA page 15)

**Alternatives Considered In Detail**

**No Action Alternative**

The No Action alternative would continue with a management policy of fire exclusion. Under the No Action alternative, no stand treatments would take place and there would be no temporary or system road construction. Other activities currently occurring within the analysis area would continue. These include road maintenance, fire suppression, recreational activities, and firewood cutting. (EA pg 16)

**The Proposed Action (EA pg 16-22)**

*Fuels Reduction and Forest Health*

The proposed action was developed to break up the existing fuel continuity in the project area to reduce the risks of wildfire damage to federal and nonfederal lands and structures within the wildland urban interface and Canadian border zone. Vegetation treatment would also address resiliency of the landscape to effects of overstocking, insects and
diseases. Approximately 14,960 acres would receive either mechanical treatment, prescribed fire treatments, or both.

Fuelbreak treatments would cover 910 acres. Prescribed fire treatment only would be implemented on 4,070 acres. The proposed action would treat 11,000 acres in Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 2 and 710 acres in FRCC 3, moving these acres towards FRCC 1 (not including precommercial thinning [PCT]). Additionally, the proposed action would treat 1,620 acres in the Canadian border zone and 3,737 acres in the wildland urban interface areas through various mechanical and/or prescribed fire methods (not including PCT).

Roads
Temporary permits would be needed to units in T40N, R38E, Sections 3, 10, and 25; T40N, R 39E, Sections 28, 30, 32, and 33; units in T39N, R39E, Sections 4 and 5; and units in T39N, R 39E, Sections 30, 4, and 5. The proposed action included approximately six miles of road construction, 3.8 miles of temporary roads, and 62 miles of reconstruction to facilitate the treatment of stands. Approximately 7.8 miles of system roads, all with operational and objective maintenance levels of 1 (closed roads) would be decommissioned.

Rock Sources
Three existing and two inventoried rock sources within the planning area and one existing source southwest of the planning area would be used as rock sources.

Alternative C (EA pg 22-23)
Fuels Reduction and Forest Health
Alternative C was developed to address the issues related to constructing new system roads and to address the issue related to off-highway vehicle (OHV) use and the removal of future potential OHV opportunities.

Alternative C would provide both mechanical and prescribed fire treatments on 14,059 acres. Fuel break treatments would cover 858 acres. A treatment of prescribed fire only is planned on 3,908 acres. This alternative would treat 5,534 acres of overstocked stands. The proposed action would treat 10,100 acres in Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 2 and 700 acres in FRCC 3, moving these acres towards FRCC 1 (not including precommercial thinning [PCT]). Additionally, the proposed action would treat 1,600 acres in the Canadian border zone and 3,400 acres in the wildland urban interface areas through various mechanical and/or prescribed fire methods (not including PCT).

Roads
Temporary permits would be needed to access units. With this alternative there would be no system road construction. Alternative C proposed approximately 3.8 miles of temporary road and 61 miles of road reconstruction. Approximately 7.8 miles of system roads, all with operational and objective maintenance levels of 1 (closed roads) would be
decommissioned. It changes the authorized use of Forest Road 1500 from ‘Open to Highway Legal Vehicles’, to ‘Open to All Vehicles’. (See Map G in EA Appendix A)

Rock Sources

Three existing and two inventoried rock sources within the planning area and one existing source southwest of the planning area within a distance of less than 15 miles would be used as rock sources.

Finding of No Significant Impact

I have determined through the East Wedge Project Environmental Assessment that this is not a major federal action individually or cumulatively that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. In considering the context of this project, all impacts will occur locally and will not have a cumulative effect on the Region or Nation as a whole. The following factors were considered in regards to the intensity of the localized impacts:

1. **Analysis of the beneficial and adverse impacts** (see EA Chapter 2 for a summary of consideration of comments, Chapter 3 for full discussion of effects and Addendums to the Silvicultural Report and the Fuels Report (in project file) for discussion of modification of Alternatives).
   - Approximately 26% of the project area treated (Silvicultural Report addendum [project file]);
   - Approximately 55% of key routes treated (EA pg 41);
   - After treatment, 37% of project area less susceptible to crown fire (EA pg 43);
   - No net change of late and old structure habitat (EA pg 38);
   - Defoliator susceptibility is not reduced Silvicultural Report addendum [project file];
   - Bark beetle susceptibility reduced by about 27% Silvicultural Report addendum [project file];
   - Potential for erosion to occur, but unlikely delivery to streams due to maintenance of RHCAs (EA pg 63-71);
   - Long term reduction in sedimentation due to road reconstruction improving management of water from roads (EA pg 63-71);
   - Low risk of change in stream function (EA pg 63-71);
   - Small (nearly undetectable) immediate short-term increase in peak flows in sub-watersheds (EA pg 63-71);
   - Riparian management objectives will be maintained (EA pg 63-78);
   - No negative effects to RHCAs (EA pg 63-78);
   - No effect to endangered and sensitive aquatic species (EA pg 71-78);
   - May affect, but not likely to adversely affect bull trout (threatened) or critical habitat (EA pg 73);
   - Positive long term effect to woodpeckers due to promotion of large trees (EA pg 97-100);
   - No effect to woodland caribou (EA pg 104);
• May effect not likely to adversely affect grizzly bear and Canada lynx (EA pg 82-87 and 90-93);
• Slight positive effect to barred owls and great gray owl (EA pg 80, 89-90);
• Slight positive effect to blue (dusky) grouse (EA pg 81-82);
• Not likely to effect or no effect to invertebrate species (EA pg 104-105);
• Noxious weed populations not likely to spread substantially and could decrease (EA pg 105-108);
• Potential increases in range forage quality (EA pg 108-110);
• Potential compromise of natural livestock barriers in some units. Follow up monitoring and actions will mitigate (EA pg 108-110);
• No effects to sensitive plants (EA pg 110-115);
• Potential enhancement of visual quality (EA pg 117-120);
• No effect to heritage sites (EA pg 120-122);
• Temporary increases in traffic due to logging activity and short-term restriction of traffic on some routes. (EA pg 116-117, 128)

2. The degree to which the Selected Action affects public health and safety:
There are a number of health and safety hazards to Forest Service Employees, private contractors involved with carrying out the Selected Action, and the general public. None are unusual or unique to the East Wedge Project. These are discussed in the EA on pages 126 - 129, and include discussions of effects related to Smoke, Dust, Mine Shafts, Increased Traffic, Logging Hazards, Noise, Prescribed Burning Hazards, Weed Treatments, Improved Road Safety, and Reduced Wildfire Risk. Based on the discussions in the EA and review of many similar projects, these public health and safety effects are not significant.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area, such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.
The East Wedge planning area does not contain any unique characteristics or features relative to the geographic area (EA page 132).

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.
Projects of this type have been done a large number of times not only on National Forest System lands but also on state and private lands for several decades. The effects of this type of project are well known and are documented in Chapter 3 of the EA as well as the numerous references used in this analysis. Therefore, the effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks:
There were no highly uncertain, unique, or unknown risks identified for the East Wedge project (EA page 132).
6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects:
None of the selected actions in the East Wedge project set precedents (EA page 132).

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant impacts:
Each effects analysis contained in the EA discusses cumulative effects by resource area; none are significant.

8. The degree to which the action may affect scientific, cultural, or historical resources.
There are no scientific resources in the East Wedge planning area. The effects on cultural or historical resources are discussed in the EA on page 11, 121-122. Identified sites will be protected during layout and implementation. Design features are in place to protect any newly discovered sites. (DN Appendix B) The project has been certified as complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (in project file).

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect endangered or threatened species or habitats:
The effects on endangered or threatened species and their habitats are discussed in the Biological Evaluation in the Analysis File, with results summarized in the EA.

The Selected Action

- “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” grizzly bears (threatened) or grizzly bear habitat (EA page 93).
- “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” Canada lynx (threatened) (EA page 87).
- “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” bull trout (threatened) or bull trout habitat (EA page 73).
- “will have no effect” on woodland caribou (endangered) (EA page 104).

The Gray wolf was delisted in NE Washington, May 2011. (EA pg 89) No federally listed threatened or endangered plants or plants proposed for federal listing are known to occur in the analysis area (EA page 110).

The Biological Evaluation was submitted for review to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service June 20, 2012. A letter of concurrence was received on October 5, 2012.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of environmental laws or requirements.
The East Wedge project has been examined in relation to a number of environmental laws and requirements, and has been found to be in compliance in all cases.
Discussion of compliance with environmental laws or requirements was discussed on the following EA pages:
- the Clean Water Act, (EA pages 9 and 71),
- the National Historic Preservation Act (EA pages 9, 121 and 130)
• the Endangered Species Act (EA on pages 105 for terrestrial wildlife; page 71-78 for fisheries, page 110-115 for plants and the USFWS concurrence letter in project file.)
• the National Environmental Policy Act (EA page 9);
• the National Forest Management Act (EA pages 9-11);
• the United States Clean Air Act (EA pages 126-128).

The Selected Alternative would have no irretrievable effects. (EA page 126).

Prime farmlands, prime rangeland, wetlands and floodplains near the planned actions will not be significantly affected (EA page 130-130).

Consumers, civil rights, minority groups, and women will not be significantly affected (EA page 129-130).

Implementation

This project will not be implemented for at least 50 days from the date the legal notice of the decision appears in the Colville Statesman-Examiner newspaper. This decision is expected to result in multiple contracts with advertisement of the first contract to occur in 2014.

This decision is subject to appeal. Individuals and organizations who submitted substantive written or oral comments during the 30-day comment period may file an appeal pursuant to 36 §CFR 215. Any written notice of appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 §CFR 215.14, “Content of an Appeal,” including the reasons for appeal and how the decision fails to consider comments previously provided.

The signatory(ies) or holder(s) of a written authorization to occupy and use National Forest System land covered under 36 CFR §251.82 (e.g., special use permit) who seeks relief from a written decision related to that authorization may file an appeal pursuant to 36 CFR §251. Any written notice of appeal under this authority must be fully consistent with 36 CFR §251.90, “Content of Notice of Appeal.”

The notice of appeal must be filed with the Regional Forester, Appeal Deciding Officer, Pacific Northwest Region (R6) Regional Office, ATTN: 1570 APPEALS, 333 SW First Avenue, PO Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208-3623, FAX 503-808-2339, within 45 days of the date legal notice of this decision appears in the Colville Statement-Examiner. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

It is the responsibility of those who appeal a decision to provide the Regional Forester sufficient written evidence and rationale to show why my decision should be changed or reversed. The written notice of appeal must:

State that the document is a Notice of Appeal filed pursuant to Title 36 CFR Part 215;

List the name, address, and if possible, a telephone number of the appellant;
Identify the decision document by title and subject, date of decision, and name and title of the Responsible Official;

Identify specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks or portion of the decision to which the appellant objects; and

State how my decision fails to consider comments previously provided, either before or during the comment period specified in Title 36 CFR §215.6 and, if applicable, how the appellant believes the decision violates law, regulation or policy.

Appeals can also be filed electronically at appeals-pacificnorthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us. Electronic appeals must be submitted as part of the actual e-mail message or as an attachment in Microsoft Word (.doc/.docx), rich text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf) only. E-mails submitted to e-mail addresses other than the one listed above, in formats other than those listed, or containing viruses, will be rejected. It is the responsibility of the appellant to confirm receipt of appeals submitted by electronic mail.

Contact Information

For further information, contact District Ranger Rodney Smoldon, Colville National Forest, at Three Rivers Ranger District, 255 West 11th, Kettle Falls, WA 99141, or phone (509) 738-7700.

Signature of Responsible Official and Date Signed

[Signature]
LAURA J. WEST
Forest Supervisor
Deciding Official

[Signature]
June 25, 2013
Date