



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Mt. Hood
National Forest

Hood River Ranger District
6780 Highway 35
Mt. Hood/Parkdale, OR 97041
541-352-6002
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File Code: 1950 NEPA

Date: 01 February 2008

DB Cooper Fuel Reduction Demonstration Project

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Hood River Ranger District is seeking comments on a proposed fuel reduction demonstration project on 17 acres in the Cooper Spur area located on the north side of Mt. Hood. A need to reduce overstocked trees as well as reduce fuel created by beetle-killed lodgepole pine in the area was identified and considered by a collaborative working group composed of local landowners, special interest groups, residents, state and local firefighting agencies, along with the US Forest Service. Although a need for fuel reduction on National Forest System lands adjacent to private land exists on a much wider scale in the Cooper Spur area, the collaborative group preferred to start with a demonstration project at a smaller scale. Once this project is completed, it will be reviewed on-the-ground and adjustments made, as needed, to the project design criteria. This information will then provide the basis for development of a proposal at the larger scale. Please refer to the attached map for proposed project location.

It is well known that fire suppression has altered forest stand structure and composition in forests across the western United States. Stands have become overstocked as shade tolerant species have proliferated in the absence of fire. These stands easily carry crown fire and often threaten firefighter safety as they fight to protect values at risk such as ski area infrastructure, private lands and homes, municipal watersheds, recreation amenities, remnant old growth ponderosa pine, western larch and Douglas-fir, and the aesthetics of the foothills of Mt. Hood.

The area chosen for treatment does not fall within proposed wilderness or any identified zone of contribution for the Crystal Springs water supply, as described in proposed wilderness legislation for the Mt. Hood National Forest (as of February 2008). It is directly adjacent to private land and in the wildland urban interface as designated in the Hood River Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

The fuel reduction treatment would include removing smaller diameter trees and reducing the overlap of overstory trees to 45 percent canopy cover, reducing ladder fuels to lower the probability of torching and crowning, and either piling and burning or masticating (mechanically treating) activity fuels.

The legal location for the project is T.2 S., R. 10 E., N ½ sec 7 & S ½ sec 6. The proposed action will be analyzed under a categorical exclusion, which is “a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment ... and ... for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.” (40 CFR 1508.4). It will be analyzed under category 12: “Harvest of live trees not to



exceed 70 acres, requiring no more than ½ mile of temporary road construction.” (FSH 1909.15-2007-1, 31.12, 2/15/07). The analysis for this project will be undertaken by an interdisciplinary team and documented in a project file. If it is determined that no extraordinary circumstances exist (see FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3), the proposed project may be documented in a Decision Memo. The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of this legal notice in *The Oregonian* (CFR 215.6(a)(2)). Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be accepted as appellants. Comments must be signed or in the case of electronic or telephone submissions, those commenting must verify their identity upon request to be eligible to appeal.

We are seeking your comments on this proposal. Please send your comments to Steve Jones, Hood River Ranger District, 6780 Highway 35, Mount Hood-Parkdale, OR 97041 or FAX: (541) 467-2271. Electronic comments may be submitted to comments-pacificnorthwest-mthood-barlow@fs.fed.us in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc). For more information, you can contact Steve Jones at 541-467-5103.

Sincerely,

DAINA L. BAMBE
District Ranger

Date: _____