



---

**File Code:** 1950  
**Date:** March 5, 2015

## **OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE WESTSIDE FIRE RECOVERY PROJECT**

Dear Reviewer:

The draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Westside Fire Recovery Project is now available for public review. The EIS covers the environmental consequences of the no action alternative, the proposed action, and three action alternatives developed in response to initial public comments. The purpose of the draft EIS is to gather comments from the public to improve the quality of the final EIS and inform the decision.

The project will address the needs for 1) worker and public safety and access; 2) safe conditions for firefighters performing fire suppression and community protection; 3) a project that is economically viable, meeting project objectives and benefiting our local communities; and 4) restored and fire-resilient forested ecosystems.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the Forest Service proposes: 11,700 acres of salvage harvest units where fire-killed trees (snags) would be removed to reduce future fire risk and severity and to provide for public and forest worker safety; 650 miles of roadside hazard treatments (i.e., snag removal) along Forest system roads, state highways, and county roadways; 22,900 acres of hazardous fuels treatments (including strategic fuel breaks and treatments within ¼ mile of private property structures and other infrastructure); and 7,900 acres of reforestation (site preparation, planting, and release) to accelerate the restoration of forest habitat.

The draft EIS and supporting documents are available on the Klamath National Forest's project webpage: [http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa\\_project\\_exp.php?project=45579](http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=45579)

In order to facilitate implementation of the project, the Forest is seeking an Emergency Situation Determination pursuant to 36 CFR 218.21. Under 36 CFR 218.21(d), a proposed action is not subject to the pre-decisional objection process if the Chief or Associate Chief of the Forest Service determines that an emergency situation exists with respect to all or part of the proposed action or activity. If an emergency situation determination is not granted, the project will be subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B. Only those who submit timely project-specific written comments during a public comment period are eligible to file an objection. Individuals or representatives of an entity submitting comments must sign the comments or verify identity upon request.



In order to facilitate implementation of this project, the Forest Service requested and received alternative arrangements with the Council on Environmental Quality pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.11. The Forest Service received alternative arrangements that shortened the 45-day comment period requirement for the draft EIS by 15 days, resulting in a 30 day comment period (40 CFR 1506.10(c)). The Forest Service is also requesting alternative arrangements with the Council on Environmental Quality to eliminate 1) the 90-day requirement between the notice of availability of the draft EIS and the Record of Decision (1506.10(b)(1)) and 2) the 30-day wait period between the final EIS and the Record of Decision (40 CFR 1506.10(b)(2)).

### **How to Comment:**

Publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register is anticipated on March 13, 2015. Publication of the NOA in the Federal Register is the sole means of calculating the comment period. Once the NOA is published, it will be posted to the project webpage. A legal notice in the Siskiyou Daily News will also be published with the NOA date. Commenters should not rely on dates from other sources. The commenter is responsible for meeting this deadline for submitting comment (36 CFR 218.25). Comments received within the deadline will be considered.

The Forest Service is particularly interested in hearing about any potential issues, or points of discussion, dispute, or debate about the effects of the proposed action. Comments must be specific to the scope of the Westside Fire Recovery Project. For example, think about the following questions and provide comments about the “what” and “why”; (1) what concerns do you have about the proposal and why; and (2) what alternatives or aspects of alternatives would you like to see considered in the decision and why; and (3) what additional information would you like the Forest Service to provide and why.

Individuals or representatives of an entity submitting comments must sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection (40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21).

In order for a reference to be considered, commenters should supply referenced literature and discuss its relevancy to the project as part of their comments.

To submit comments on the Klamath National Forests’ project webpage ([http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa\\_project\\_exp.php?project=45579](http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=45579)), select the “Comment on Project” link under the “Get Connected” group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Include your group or individual contact information and provide attachments in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf).



Written comments can be submitted via fax (530) 841-4571 or mailed to the Klamath National Forest Headquarters, to Patricia Grantham, ATTN: Wendy Coats, Klamath National Forest, 1711 South Main Street, Yreka, CA 96097, or hand-delivered during normal business hours (8:00 am to 5:00pm Monday-Friday, excluding holidays). For oral comments or for more project information contact Wendy Coats at 530-841-4470 or [wcoats@fs.fed.us](mailto:wcoats@fs.fed.us).

The Forest will be hosting series of public open houses during the comment period in the local communities. Announcements will be forthcoming, and I encourage your participation. Should your organization or group desire a presentation on this project, please contact Wendy Coats at 530-841-4470 or [wcoats@fs.fed.us](mailto:wcoats@fs.fed.us), and she will share your information with public affairs. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA GRANTHAM  
Forest Supervisor

