



File Code: 1950
Date: June 17, 2015

Dear National Forest User,

The Sitka Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest has completed the Draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Commercial Harvest of Spruce Tips project. These documents are available online at: <http://goo.gl/FW536B>. The EA is located under the "Project Documents - Analysis" heading. The Draft Decision Notice is located under the "Project Documents-Decision" heading.

To request a copy of this EA or Draft Decision Notice in hard copy or CD format, please contact: Thomas Witherspoon at (907) 747-4213 at the address listed at the end of this letter.

The EA is the same as the document released in April 2015. The Draft Decision Notice explains my selection of Alternative 2 as my draft decision. In my draft decision we would authorize the commercial harvest of 2,000 pounds of spruce tips from NFS lands, with the potential to incrementally increase harvest limits upon annual review, not exceeding 10,000 pounds annually across the Sitka Ranger District; allow the Sitka Ranger District to offer, at its discretion, preferred harvest areas that would not exceed 5 contiguous acres; and require an annual review of effects on subsistence and personal use.

The Draft Decision Notice contains my rationale for this draft decision, provides a finding of no significant impact and describes the outreach we completed to seek input. The Draft Decision Notice also summarizes the comments and concerns we heard from the public and provides a summarized response to those comments. A more extensive description of comments and our responses are found on the project webpage.

This project is subject to the Predecisional Administrative Review Process (Objection Process) pursuant to 36 CFR 218, subparts A and B. Objections will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project during scoping or other designated opportunities for public comment in accordance with 36 CFR 218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.

Objections, including attachments, must be filed via mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays) to:

M. Earl Stewart
Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest
Federal Building
648 Mission St., Ketchikan, AK 99901-6591
Fax: (907) 228-6215
Email: objections-alaska-tongass@fs.fed.us

Electronically filed objections may be submitted by email in a format compatible with Microsoft Word.

Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the publication of a legal notice in the Daily Sitka Sentinel. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe



information provided by any other source. The regulations prohibit extending the time to file an objection.

At a minimum, an objection must include the following (36 CFR 218.8(d)):

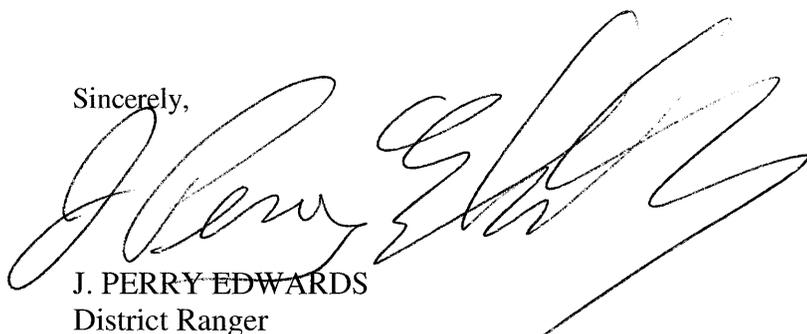
- 1) The objector's name and address, with a telephone number, if available;
- 2) A signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection);
- 3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request);
- 4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the name(s) of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented;
- 5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and
- 6) A statement that demonstrates connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection.

Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in 36 CFR 218. 8(b). It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to 36 CFR 218.9. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

If you have questions or want additional information, please contact: Thomas Witherspoon, Project Team Leader, Tongass National Forest, 204 Siginaka Way, Sitka, AK 99835, 907-747-4311, tjwitherspoon@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process.

Sincerely,



J. PERRY EDWARDS
District Ranger