

**Pack and Saddle Stock Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit Issuance
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Okanogan County, Washington**

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service

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Abstract: The USDA Forest Service is proposing to issue 10-year term special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with 4,620 total service days. The permits would be issued to the existing holders who are in good standing at the time of the decision, or replacements who meet term permit requirements. The project area is located in Okanogan, Skagit, and Chelan Counties, Washington, on the Tonasket, Methow Valley, and Chelan Ranger Districts. Three alternatives, including a No Action alternative, are analyzed in this DEIS. Alternative 1 is the No Action alternative. No pack and saddle stock outfitter-guide permits would be issued under this alternative. Alternative 2 is the proposed action and the preferred alternative. It would issue 10-year special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with a total of 4,620 service days. This alternative would amend the Okanogan and Wenatchee Forest Plans to prohibit pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides from increasing the amount of barren core in any established campsite; and in campsites where the existing amount of barren core exceeds 5,250 square feet, outfitter-guides shall not use more than 5,250 square feet, and use the same area on successive visits. Alternative 3 would also issue 10-year term special use permits to pack and saddle stock outfitter-guides, with a total of 2,660 service days. This alternative would amend the forest plans to prohibit the outfitter-guides from increasing the amount of barren core in established campsites; and in campsites where the existing amount of barren core exceeds 2,800 square feet, outfitter-guides shall not use more than 2,800 square feet, and use the same area on successive visits. It would also limit the party size for outfitter groups to 12 (any combination of people and stock).

Reviewers' Obligations: Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the draft environmental impact statement. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the final environmental impact statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. *City of Angoon v. Hodel* (9th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

Comments on this DEIS must be hand delivered, e-mailed or postmarked to the comment addresses described in the document cover letter no later than October 25, 2010.

Website address for electronic copy of the DEIS and Summary:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/projects/projects.shtml>

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