



File Code: 1950

Date: September 12, 2016

Dear Interested Citizen:

I am pleased to announce that the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Invasive Plant Management Project has been completed. I have carefully considered the information in the FEIS and have documented my decision to select Alternative 2 in a draft Record of Decision (ROD). Both the final EIS and draft ROD, along with additional information on the project, are available on the project website at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=24104.

The draft ROD documents my rationale for the selection of Alternative 2. Alternative 2 approves integrated invasive plant treatments throughout the Forest. Alternative 2 allows for a wider variety of herbicides to be used on the Forest and includes an updated "Early Detection and Rapid Response" process that will provide a timely and effective response to invasive plants found in any given year. Alternative 2 also amends the Okanogan and Wenatchee Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans), adding the use of aminopyralid to the list of acceptable herbicides. All treatments will be done in a manner that minimizes risk of adverse effects. Alternative 2 is the most cost-effective of the alternatives.

Comments on the Draft EIS were received during the 45-day public comment period, ending on June 21, 2016. The Forest Service addressed comments about the merits of the alternatives and the adequacy of the EIS in the preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. Responses to comments are provided in Appendix F of the FEIS.

Administrative Review: My decision selects a project or activity implementing a land management plan that is not authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-148, 117 Stat 1887). Therefore, my decision is subject to pre-decisional administrative review and objection pursuant to subparts A and B of 36 CFR Part 218, subparts A and B. My decision includes a Forest Plan Amendment to authorize use of aminopyralid to treat invasive plants.

The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Forest-wide Site-Specific Invasive Plant Management Project was originally scoped under the provisions of 36 CFR Part 215. For this project, individuals or organizations who submitted specific, written comments in response to scoping conducted under 36 CFR Part 215 or provided comments to the draft environmental impact statement will be considered to have standing to object under 36 CFR Part 218, Subparts A and B.

Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless the issue is based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.



The following address should be used for objections sent by regular mail: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region, Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service, Attn: 1570 Appeals and Objections, PO Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208-3623. Objections delivered by mail must be received before the close of the fifth business day after the objection filing period.

Objections sent by private carrier or hand delivery must go to: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region, 1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97204. Hand deliveries can occur between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday except legal holidays.

Objections can be faxed to the Objection Reviewing Officer, Attn: 1570 Objections at (503)-808-2339. The fax coversheet must include a subject line with "Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Site-Specific Invasive Plants Treatment Project" and should specify the number of pages being submitted.

Electronic objections must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer via email to objections-pnw-regional-office@fs.fed.us. with "Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Forest-wide Site-Specific Invasive Plant Management Project" in the subject line. Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software (e.g., MS Word, PDF, Rich Text Format) and be searchable. An automated response should confirm your electronic objection has been received.

The objection must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR § 218.8(d), and include the following information: 1) the objector's name and address, with a telephone number or email address, 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 as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2 (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request); 4) the name of the project being objected to, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the national forest and ranger district on which the project will be implemented; 5) a description of those aspects of the project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the project and, if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; and supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and 6) a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity for formal comment. With certain exceptions (36 CFR § 218.8(b)), all documents referenced in the objection must be included with the objection.

Objections, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of a "Legal Notice of the Opportunity to Object" for this project in the *Wenatchee World*, the newspaper of record (78 FR 241, p. 76101, 12/16/2013). Attachments received after the 45-day objection period will not be considered. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object this project should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

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. Responses that do not adhere to these requirements make review of

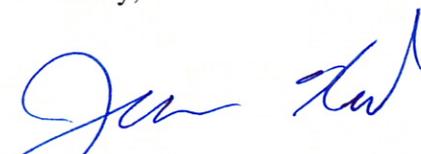
an objection difficult and are conditions under which the reviewing officer may set aside an objection pursuant to 36 CFR § 218.10.

Federal register and newspaper legal notices will be posted along with the Final EIS, Draft Record of Decision, and other information on the following project website at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=24104.

For more information or copies of the Final EIS and Draft Record of Decision, please contact Project Coordinator, Brigitte Ranne at invasiveplants@fs.fed.us. Thank you for your interest in the Invasive Plant Management Project and the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

Sincerely,



For
MICHAEL R. WILLIAMS
Forest Supervisor