



File Code: 1950

Date: July 18, 2012

Dear Interested Party:

I have signed a Record of Decision (ROD) on July 17, 2012 to implement the South George Vegetation and Fuels Management Project on Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District. South George project planning area is approximately 21,000 acres in size and is primarily situated in Asotin County, Washington with a small portion in Garfield County, Washington. It is located in South Fork Asotin Creek and Upper George Creek Subwatersheds of Asotin Watershed (see attached vicinity map).

A final environmental impact statement (FEIS) has been completed for this project. Public comments received during the 45-day comment period on the Draft EIS were reviewed and are located in Appendix K of the FEIS (pages K-1 to K-258). We anticipate a notice of availability (NOA) for the FEIS will be published in the Federal Register on Friday, July 27, 2012.

After careful examination of comments received during the 45-day comment period, consideration of analyses disclosed in the FEIS, resource specialist reports in the project file, and a review of the comparison of effects from selecting an action alternative versus taking no action, I have selected Alternative B (proposed action and preferred alternative) with modifications for implementation of this project.

The Record of Decision explains my rationale for the decision to implement activities described for Alternative B (See Table 1 below) and the modifications I included in Alternative B. Several other alternatives, including the no action alternative, were considered as shown in the ROD and the FEIS prepared for this project.

The modifications I made to Alternative B (now identified as Alternative B-Modified) are as follows:

- Implementation of helicopter logging in units #1 (approximately 100 acres) and #10 (approximately 158 acres) will be based on economic feasibility at the time of operation. If not economically feasible, stand characteristics in these units may still be manipulated by other methods such as manual thinning and burning. This strategy will only be implemented if the remaining stand structure can be properly protected to maintain other resource values. This will also result in less temporary road construction (approximately 0.64 miles).
- Decommissioning of approximately 31 miles of system roads (approximately 4.3 miles of seasonal open roads and 26.6 miles of closed road as listed in the FEIS Appendix G, Table G-3) upon completion of project activities and availability of funding<sup>1</sup>.
- Any unauthorized non-system roads or trails located in harvest units will have entry areas made impassable after harvest activities.
- Hogback Road, Forest Road (FR) 4302 will have the existing seasonal closure extended annually from September 15 to November 30th and will change from an operational maintenance level 3 (passenger vehicle) to operational maintenance level 2 (high clearance vehicle).

<sup>1</sup> These roads to be decommissioned are not connected actions to the commercial timber harvest activity and will require separate funding (FEIS, Chapter 2, page 2-26).



Implementing Alternative B-Modified will result in the following activities:

**Table 1 – Summary of Activities - Alternative B-Modified (Selected Alternative)**

ACTIVITY	Alternative B-Modified (**Units of measure)
<b>Fuels Treatments – Activity Fuels</b>	
Mechanical Grapple Piling/Pile Burning	870 acres
Prescribed burning of activity fuels (Jackpot and Broadcast)	2,030 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,000 acres</b>
<b>Fuels Treatments – Natural Fuels</b>	
Non-commercial mechanical thinning and ladder fuel removal	800 acres
Non-commercial manual thinning and ladder fuel removal	350 acres
Landscape prescribed fire	3,000 acres
RHCA non-commercial mechanical fuels treatment	25 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,175 acres</b>
<b>Vegetation Removal</b>	
Intermediate Harvest: Improvement Cut	*3,020 acres
Intermediate Harvest: Low Thinning	80 acres
Regeneration Harvest: Seedtree w/reserves	550 acres
Regeneration Harvest: Clearcut w/reserves	250 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,900 acres</b>
Volume of timber removed	47,250 ccf
<b>Logging Methods</b>	
Helicopter	*300 acres
Skyline	850 acres
Conventional Ground Based (tractor or skidder)	2,750 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,900 acres</b>
<b>Roads Used – Haul Routes</b>	
Seasonal Open System – Maintenance level 3	33 miles
Seasonal Open System – Maintenance level 2	13.5 miles
Closed System – Maintenance level 1	32.5 miles
<b>Total</b>	<b>79 miles</b>
<b>Other Road Activity</b>	
New temporary road construction – decommissioned post project activities	*3 miles
System roads decommissioned (FEIS, Appendix G, Table G-3)	***31 miles
Extension of Seasonal Closure on Hogback road , FR 4302 annually from September 15 to November 30	Yes
Danger tree removal	As Needed
<b>Economics</b>	
Total Timber Value at Predicted High Bid Rate (Revenue)	\$2,315,250
<p>*Units #1 and #10 (approximately 258 acres in total) will not be harvest if not economically feasible at the time of operation. Vegetation may be manipulated by manual methods and burning, with no commercial removal of timber. Temporary road construction will be reduced by 0.64 miles if these units are not commercially harvested.</p> <p>** Units of measure are approximate (acres, miles, CCF,and dollars).</p> <p>***Implementation will be dependent on funding not associated with a timber sale package.</p>	

The ROD and FEIS for South George Vegetation and Fuels Management Project can be viewed on the internet at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=26469>

A copy (CD-ROM) of the ROD and FEIS is enclosed with this letter if you commented during the 45-day comment period or previously requested a copy of the ROD and FEIS. If you did not comment during the comment period or previously request a copy and would like a copy of the ROD and or FEIS (CD-ROM or paper) please contact Terri Jeffreys at 509-843-4626 or email [tjeffreys@fs.fed.us](mailto:tjeffreys@fs.fed.us).

The Record of Decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR 215. The appeal must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Appeal Deciding Officer Kevin D. Martin, Forest Supervisor, Umatilla National Forest. Mail written appeals to USDA Forest Service, ATTN: Appeals Officer, Kevin Martin, 72510 Coyote Road, Pendleton, Oregon 97801. The location for hand-delivery or express delivery is the same as the mailing address above. Send faxes to: (541)-278-3920. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic appeals must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to:

[appeals-pacificnorthwest-umatilla@fs.fed.us](mailto:appeals-pacificnorthwest-umatilla@fs.fed.us)

For electronically mailed comments, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of receipt, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means. It is the responsibility of persons submitting an appeal by electronic means to ensure that their appeal has been received. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

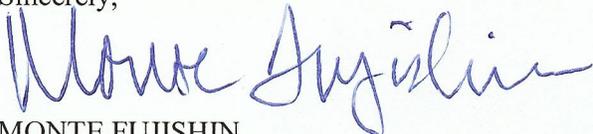
Appeals, including any and all attachments, must be received within 45 days from the publication date of the legal notice of decision in the *East Oregonian*, our newspaper of record. Appeals and/or attachments received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in the *East Oregonian* newspaper is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal (36 CFR 215.15 (b) (3)). Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Individuals or organizations who provided comments or otherwise expressed interest in this project by the close of the comment period specified at 36 CFR 215.6 may appeal this decision. The notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

If no appeals are received within the 45-day appeal filing time period implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the appeal filing period. If appeals are filed, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of the last appeal disposition.

If you need additional information please contact Dan Castillo, Project Leader, at the Pomeroy District office (509) 843-1891 or email [dcastillo@fs.fed.us](mailto:dcastillo@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,

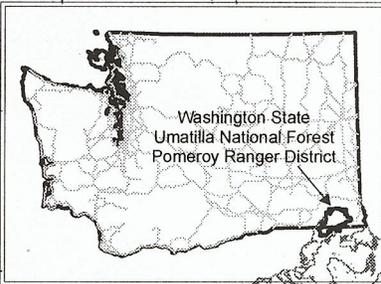
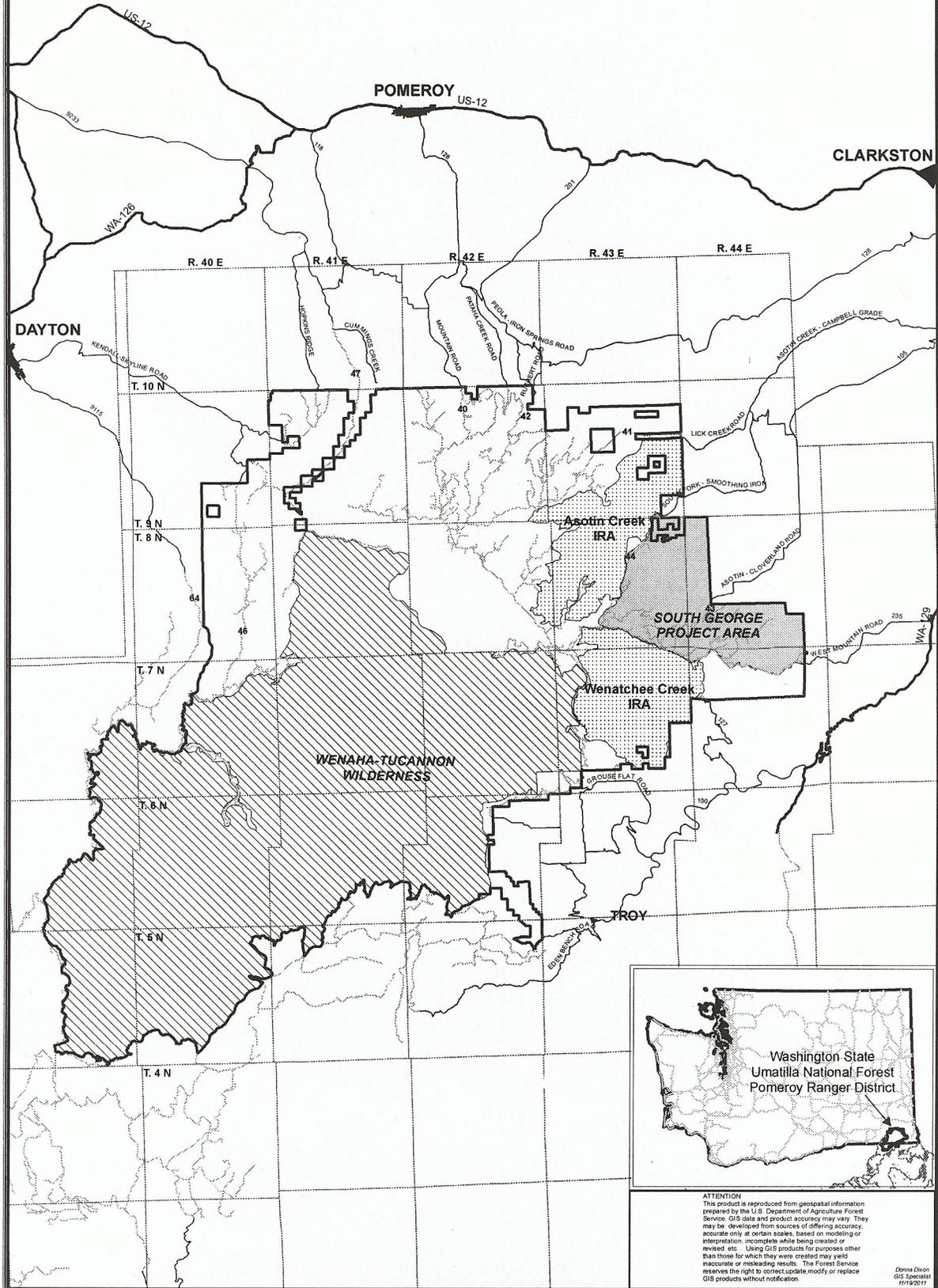


MONTE FUJISHIN

District Ranger

Attachment – Vicinity Map

**Pomeroy Ranger District  
Umatilla National Forest  
South George Project Planning Area  
Vegetation and Fuels Management Project  
Vicinity Map**



**ATTENTION**  
This product is reproduced from geospatial information prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify or replace GIS products without notification.

Donna Dixon  
GIS Specialist  
11/16/2011