Public Scoping Notice
South Nestucca Restoration Project

The Siuslaw National Forest Hebo District Ranger is proposing the South Nestucca Restoration Project, a landscape scale restoration project in the Nestucca watershed. The project boundary includes the Mt. Hebo Special Interest Area and the Hebo-Nestucca Inventoried Roadless Area, however no project actions are proposed within the Inventoried Roadless Area. This project is guided by the Siuslaw Forest Plan, as amended by the Northwest Forest Plan. To make an informed decision about this project, we need your help. Your comments can help us develop and consider other ways of achieving the goals of the project.

Project Goals

The goals of the project are to restore terrestrial and aquatic conditions and processes in the northern and western portions of the Nestucca watershed:

- Terrestrial conditions—Accelerate the development of late-successional forest habitat, especially large trees. Improve habitat diversity in plantations and control invasive weeds;
- Aquatic conditions—Enhance the health of streams and associated aquatic ecosystems by restoring the processes associated with large wood, and accelerating the development of large diameter conifers and hardwoods in areas adjacent to some riparian areas.

This project is proposed because of needs identified in the 1998 Late-Successional Reserve Assessment for Oregon’s Northern Coast Range Adaptive Management Area and the 1994 Nestucca Watershed Analysis. The project is designed to help move forestlands toward greater diversity and complexity as directed by the Northwest Forest Plan. The type and amount of work proposed is based on existing known conditions as well as past work of a similar nature. As the planning team conducts their more in-depth analysis, the quantity and type of work may change as new or more accurate information becomes available.

Proposed actions that restore terrestrial conditions (estimated quantities):

These actions emphasize thinning previously burned and planted or clear-cut and planted stands (plantations), using commercial or noncommercial (cut trees will be left on site) methods. The objective is to accelerate the development of late-successional forest habitat. About 1,015 acres of 28 to 50 year old plantations (14 stands) have been identified for commercial thinning. Approximately 1,311 acres of 76 to 100 year old plantations (25 stands) comprised of off-site genetic stock have also been identified for treatment. To accomplish this thinning, about 3 miles of existing nom-key roads would be repaired and temporarily reopened. About 10 miles of existing temporary road prisms would be temporarily reopened, and 2 miles of new temporary road would be built. These roads would be waterbarred and re-closed or decommissioned at the end of the project. This work would be accomplished as part of the timber sale. To increase understory development and increase tree species diversity, about 500 acres of commercially thinned plantations may be planted with shade-tolerant conifers and about 100 acres of 1/2 to 1 acre openings in commercially thinned plantations may be planted with conifers and hardwoods. After commercial thinning, snags and down wood would be created in thinned plantations and adjacent stands to increase structural diversity. In the older off-site stands, increased levels of snag and down wood creation are proposed.

Proposed actions that restore aquatic conditions (estimated quantities):
The Nestucca watershed analysis identified several streams that are not as healthy as they could be in order to support aquatic species (mostly due to high temperatures and lack of large wood in the streams). To improve the shade on some streams and accelerate the development of large wood that could fall into some streams, commercial and noncommercial thinning would occur in nearby plantations. Because of concerns voiced by some members of the scientific community, streams that provide habitat for coho salmon and streams that could deliver wood to coho salmon habitat would be buffered so that thinning has no effect on coho or its designated critical habitat.

The Siuslaw National Forest, Hebo Ranger District, is has completed an inventory of the Forest Service road system in the Nestucca basin. This inventory will assess the condition of the current road system and will identify the type of road system that is appropriate and affordable for necessary management of and access to National Forest System lands in the Nestucca watershed.

**Why Are Comments Important?**

Your comments can help us design better projects, make us aware of issues we don’t know about, and in general, help us do a better job of planning. Site-specific comments are the most helpful. For example, simply stating that you are opposed to road closures is not as helpful as telling us which road you would like us to leave open and why.

The Forest Service would like your comments by **September 7, 2012**. Written comments should be sent to: John Casteel, Hebo Ranger District, 31525 Hwy. 22, PO box 235, Hebo, OR 97122; or by e-mail at “comments-pacificnorthwest-siuslaw-hebo@fs.fed.us”. Written comments shall include:

1. Your name, address, and (if possible) telephone number.
2. Title of the proposed project on which you are commenting.
3. Specific facts or comments along with supporting reasons that you believe the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision.

Although written comments are preferred, oral comments are also accepted. To provide oral comments or to receive additional information, contact John Casteel at the Hebo Ranger District office by calling (503) 392-5119 between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM on weekdays.