The Queets Vegetation Management project is located on the Pacific Ranger District of the Olympic National Forest in Jefferson County, Washington. The project area is located on National Forest System lands within the Queets, Sams, Salmon, and Matheny River 6th field watersheds which all lie within the larger Queets River 5th field watershed. Units proposed for treatment are located in: T23N, R10W, Sections 1, 4; T23N, R11W, Section 1; T24N, R9W, Sections 19, 20, 30; multiple sections of T24N, R10W; T24½N, R10W, Sections 31, 32, 33, 34; and T24N, R10W Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14; Willamette Meridian.

The Forest in the project planning area has been heavily influenced by past logging activities. Approximately 20,000 acres of National Forest System land in the planning area were clear cut between 1948 and 1992. Most of that acreage was replanted after harvest. As a result of this activity, much of the current forest consists of relatively dense second growth plantations in a structurally simplified stage. These stands do not provide high-quality habitat for species associated with old-growth and late-successional forests. Riparian areas that once supported large conifers are now largely comprised of small-diameter conifers and hardwoods, and the available supply of trees for recruitment of large wood, an important component of fish habitat, into streams has been reduced.

Alternative B, as modified (see discussion below under Decision and Reasons For Decision) would entail commercial thinning of approximately 4,925 acres in forest stands that are between 35 and 65 years old within the 44,000 acre planning area. Under Alternative B, within the Queets Environmental Assessment (EA), the selected stands would be commercially thinned using variable density thinning. On the majority of the treated acres, the thinning would utilize a “thinning from below” treatment which generally retains the larger trees, and would include skips (un-thinned areas), gaps (small openings), and some areas thinned more heavily to provide increased structural and spatial variation within the stands proposed for treatment. Minor tree species would generally not be cut. Logging systems would include a combination of ground-based, cable, and helicopter logging. Current National Forest Transportation System roads, reconstructed unclassified or abandoned road grades (non-system), new temporary road grades (non-system), and new specified National Forest Transportation System roads would be used to access the stands.

Management direction for the project comes from the 1990 Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended by the 1994 Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl. The 1994 Record of Decision, along with its Standards and Guidelines, is commonly known as the Northwest Forest Plan. The 1990 Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by the 1994 Record of Decision and other current amending documents, is referred to as the Forest Plan in this Decision Notice.
PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose and need was developed to close the gap between existing and desired conditions, and effectively implement management objectives within the Forest Plan. The purpose and need of the Queets project is four-fold.

1. Increase structural and habitat diversity and accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics by decreasing stocking in dense, previously managed stands in the Late-Successional Reserve land management allocation.


3. Increase structural and habitat diversity and accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics in dense, previously managed stands in the Adaptive Management Area. Test a variety of techniques intended to restore late-successional forest and riparian conditions.

4. Contribute directly and indirectly to the viability of local community economies.

The Queets EA provides an analysis of a No Action Alternative and three action alternatives. The action alternatives vary in the number of acres proposed for restoration thinning, miles of proposed road development, and proportional use of different logging systems (alternatives are described in more detail below and comparison tables are provided in the EA, Section 2.5).

DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

I have decided to implement Alternative B, the Proposed Action, as described in the EA, with one minor modification (as described below; Figure 1). My decision includes implementing the additional restoration and improvement activities described in Section 1.5 of the EA (as funding allows), and all of the project design criteria and mitigation measures described in the EA (Section 2.6). My decision is based on a review of the EA and the project record, which shows a thorough evaluation of relevant scientific information, a consideration of opposing views and key issues, and acknowledgement of incomplete or unavailable information, scientific uncertainty, and risk.

Upon review of information, I decided to forego the harvest of unit C6. I made this decision because harvest of the unit in a timely manner was not likely due to limited access to the unit from an adjacent state road. Eighty acres were dropped from the project treatment (12 acres proposed for helicopter yarding and 68 acres proposed for cable yarding). New totals are reflected in the following paragraph.

Alternative B, as modified, includes approximately 4,925 acres of commercial thinning treatments. Proposed logging systems include ground-based yarding (988 acres), cable yarding (3,303 acres), downhill cable yarding (55 acres), helicopter yarding (384 acres), and helicopter yarding with ground-based pre-bunching equipment (32 acres). Alternative B also includes 163 acres of pre-designated skips, which would receive no thinning treatment. These skips are
located in portions of units which have resource concerns or conditions precluding either access to, or feasibility of, available logging systems. They are within unit boundaries (described as the boundaries of the original harvest units) and will be identified as skips in the silvicultural prescription.

In order to access treatment units, the selected alternative includes 21.3 miles of road development. Road development includes: 17.8 miles of unclassified or abandoned roads, 1.4 miles of decommissioned roads for reconstruction, and about 2.1 miles of new road construction. Of these 21.3 miles of developed road or existing roadbed, a total of 16.0 miles will be added to the National Forest Transportation System as Maintenance Level 1 roads and closed as described in the EA (Section 2.4.2 and 2.6). The remaining 5.3 miles of road developed will be decommissioned following project completion. Additional temporary road segments may be identified for use during timber sale layout. Any additional segments of temporary roads will be decommissioned (as described in the EA, Section 2.4.2) following implementation. (See EA Appendix A, Table A-1 for a list of road segments proposed for development).

Alternative B also includes the development of up to 14 new helicopter landings; each helicopter landing would require land clearing (vegetation) on approximately one acre.

National Forest Transportation System roads are existing roads that are part of the authorized road system. Log haul would occur on about 86 miles of existing Forest system roads, including about 24 miles of Operational Maintenance Level 1 (closed) roads that would be reopened, and then closed again after project use (See Appendix A, Table A-2 for a list of roads used for log haul). Of the roads that would be used for log haul, 2.83 miles pass through riparian reserves. Road maintenance and upgrading would need to occur on some of these roads to bring them up to a standard suitable for log haul.

In making this decision, I examined the proposed thinning, road treatments, and related activities in relationship to the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan. I also considered the resource concerns noted in the watershed analyses and the EA. In addition, I considered the relevance of the decision as it relates to applicable laws, policy, and Tribal Treaty rights. I considered the effects of implementing the action alternatives and the No Action Alternative on the physical, biological, social, and economic environment. I believe Alternative B provides the best balance among these considerations.

- Implementing Alternative B with the project design criteria and mitigation measures will result in minimal impacts to resources, and will provide long term benefits to the resources. My decision to implement Alternative B meets the purpose and need for action established for this project, and is consistent with the goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines of the Forest Plan. The thinning prescription and unclassified road rehabilitation follow ecosystem management policies and scientific recommendations.

- These actions follow recommendations found in the Salmon River Watershed Analysis (QIN 2002), Sams River Watershed Analysis (USDA 1997), Matheny Creek Watershed Analysis (USDA 1995), and the Tacoma Creek-Queets River Sub-watershed Report (DeCillis 2013).
- The watershed analyses provide a scientifically-based understanding of the ecological structures, functions, processes, and interactions within the watershed and identify desired trends, conditions, and restoration opportunities.

- As required by the Forest Plan, the Quinault North and Quinault South Late-Successional Reserve Assessment (LSRA) was completed in 1996. The Queets project follows recommendations in the LSRA.

- Alternative B would also provide for local economic activity and employment opportunities within the general vicinity of the project.

**Mitigation Measures and Design Features**

Project design criteria and mitigation measures were developed for the action alternatives and will be implemented to insure compliance with direction in the Forest Plan and Forest program direction, as well as to avoid or minimize adverse impacts of project implementation. Specific project design criteria and mitigation measures were developed for the following areas: terrestrial wildlife, including threatened and sensitive species; sensitive moss, lichen, and fungi species; invasive plants; leave tree protection; soils, hydrology, and water quality; fisheries; fire and fuels; and heritage. These requirements, which are described in the EA in Section 2.6, are expected to minimize potential adverse effects of management activities. Implementation of these features is considered to be highly effective.

**How my decision meets project purposes:**

1. **Increase structural and habitat diversity and accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics by decreasing stocking in dense, previously managed stands in the Late-Successional Reserve land management allocation.**

   The action alternatives would result in stands of increased growth and vigor to accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics. In addition, treatments are designed to increase structural and habitat diversity. The modified Alternative B provides the greatest opportunity to accelerate late-successional forest characteristics, as it proposes treatment over a larger area of Late Successional Reserves than the other action alternatives.

2. **Manage Riparian Reserves for desired conditions needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives (USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management 1994b, p.B-11; C-32).**

   All of the action alternatives would result in attainment of Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives for the continued maintenance and restoration of aquatic health in riparian reserves. Alternative B would allow for maintenance and restoration of aquatic health over the largest amount of acres in the riparian reserve land allocation, compared to the other action alternatives.
3. Increase structural and habitat diversity and accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics in dense, previously managed stands in the Adaptive Management Area. Test a variety of techniques intended to restore late-successional forest and riparian conditions.

The action alternatives would all meet this purpose to varying degrees. Treatments proposed in Adaptive Management Area provide for application and testing of a wider range of treatments while still meeting desired future conditions in the Forest Plan. Since the modified Alternative B treats the most acres of the Adaptive Management Area allocation, this alternative offers the greatest opportunity to achieve this purpose compared to the other action alternatives.

4. Contribute directly and indirectly to the viability of local community economies.

All action alternatives would contribute in varying degrees to local community economies whereas the No Action Alternative would not. Commercial thinning and associated activities such as road development provide an opportunity to utilize local human and physical resources resulting in an indirect contribution to local economies. Since Alternative B provides the most acres of treatment, it offers the greatest opportunity to provide for economic activity in the local geographic area.

Monitoring
Specific monitoring activities will be implemented to assure that implementation of elements of my decision are carefully tracked during and after project implementation. Monitoring activities are described in the EA, Section 2.6.7 and the individual resource sections (EA, Chapter 3).

Other Alternatives Considered
I considered the responsiveness of the alternatives to the four key issues identified during the project planning process:

1. Minimizing potential impacts on the Federally listed endangered species.
2. Minimizing the potential for detrimental effects to sensitive soils from ground-based logging operations.
3. Addressing concerns expressed by the Quinault Tribe by minimizing the potential for detrimental effects to water quality and water temperature variation.
4. Maximizing the economic benefit from the planned vegetation treatment.

Four alternatives were considered in detail in the EA: three that included activities to reduce forest stand density and increase stand complexity with the goal of accelerating the development of late successional forest characteristics (Action Alternatives B, C, and D), and one that would not (Alternative A, the No Action Alternative). A comparison of the features of all alternatives is provided at the end of Section 2.5 of the EA.

No Action Alternative
I did not select the No Action Alternative because it does not meet the purpose and need of accelerating the development of late-successional forest characteristics in dense, previously managed stands in the planning area. These stands do not currently provide quality habitat for plant and animal species associated with late-successional forest conditions. If no action were
taken, over time opportunities for thinning would decrease, and the opportunity for hastening the development of late-successional forest characteristics would be lost. These overly dense stands would remain in an undesirable condition.

**Alternative C**

Alternative C was developed in response to the key issue of minimizing impacts to aquatic species, including concerns about sedimentation and water temperature. This alternative is different from Alternative B in that no temporary roads would be constructed in riparian reserves. This alternative also excludes all commercial thinning within riparian reserves. I did not select this alternative because it only minimally meets the purpose and need of the project compared to Alternative B. Alternative B includes PDCs and mitigation measures to minimize impacts while meeting the objectives and purpose and need of the project over a larger area.

**Alternative D**

Alternative D was developed in response to the key issue of maximizing the economic feasibility of the project. This alternative differs from Alternatives B and C in the reduction in number of helicopter yarding units, elimination of treating units in stands less than 43 years of age, and elimination of units that would have the highest costs of road building or reconstruction. While Alternative D is economically more feasible, it would move fewer acres toward late-successional conditions than Alternative B. Additionally, market conditions change over time which can change the economic feasibility of a project. Alternative B provides the greatest number of opportunities (in terms of acres covered) available over time considering such fluctuating market conditions.

**Decision**

The analysis in the EA demonstrates that none of the action alternatives would result in any measurable adverse environmental effects. I have decided to implement Alternative B because it does not conflict with the key issues that drove the development of Alternatives C and D, and it provides more benefits to late successional forest habitat conditions than either Alternative C or Alternative D because it would provide for restoration treatments over the largest number of acres.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

The Queets Project was listed on the Olympic National Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) on July 1, 2013, and will remain on the SOPA throughout the planning, analysis, objection, and decision process. On June 12, 2013, I sent scoping letters to the Quinault Indian Nation, the Quileute Indian Tribe and the Hoh Indian Tribe. On July 1, 2013, I sent a scoping letter to concerned citizens, organizations, and state, federal, and local government agencies that have expressed an interest in the Forest’s management activities. The letter described the proposed action and requested comments.

Based on comments received from the Tribes, the public, and other agencies, the Forest’s interdisciplinary team and I developed a list of key issues to address when considering alternatives to the proposed action (described above). When the draft EA was complete, it was circulated for a 30-day comment period beginning on June 6, 2014. Ten responses were received
during the comment period. One additional comment letter was received after the comment period had ended. Comments received during scoping and the 30-day comment period and my responses are found in Appendix E of the EA. Attachments containing references and other materials contributed during the comment period, along with my responses can be found in Appendix F of the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

After considering comments from the public and the environmental effects described in the EA, I have determined that implementation of Queets Alternative B does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. This determination of no significant impact is based on the EA, the design of the selected alternative, and on the following factors:

Context of Action

The activities planned for the Queets project will be local and short-term. Commercial thinning will be conducted on 4,925 acres of National Forest System lands in the Queets River 5th field watershed. All stands proposed for thinning have been previously harvested. The activities would occur over the next five to ten years.

Intensity of Effects

The environmental effects of the following actions are documented in Chapter 3 of the Queets EA: Commercial thinning of forest stands; using and maintaining open roads; opening closed system roads and re-closing them for resource protection after project use; reconstructing currently unclassified roads as specified system roads and closing them for resource protection during and after project use (as Maintenance Level 1, closed roads); constructing or reconstructing and then decommissioning existing unclassified roads after project use; constructing new temporary roads and decommissioning and rehabilitating them after project use; constructing new specified system roads, closing, and designating them as Maintenance Level 1, closed roads after use; constructing and decommissioning helicopter landings; developing and using identified rock sources; and treating activity-generated slash. My decision also includes implementing sale area restoration activities such as decommissioning additional roads that pose a risk to aquatic habitat, and creating snags and coarse woody habitat for wildlife (EA, Section 2.4.2, Table 2-5). The beneficial and adverse direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of these activities have been disclosed in the EA. Effects are expected to be low in intensity because of standard management practices and the project design criteria and mitigation measures described in Section 2.6 of the EA (Tables 2-11 through 2-23).

1. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on the balance the effects will be beneficial.

Potential beneficial and adverse effects were considered in the analysis of the proposed action and alternatives as discussed in the EA. The analysis considered both direct and indirect effects, and also the contribution, from implementing the project, to the cumulative effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the watershed. Potential adverse effects of Alternative B will be reduced or eliminated by the application of the required project design criteria and mitigation measures (EA, Section 2.6). The whole of the analysis presented in the EA provides sufficient information for
me to determine that this project will not have a significant impact (beneficial or adverse) on the land and its natural resources (EA Chapters 2 and 3, appendices, project record). My finding of no significant environmental effects is not biased by the beneficial effects of the action.

2. **The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.**

   The project will not have a significant effect on public health or safety. Roads will be closed as needed to protect public safety during logging operations. Mitigation measures and design features will protect worker safety during project implementation (EA, Section 2.6). Project design criteria, mitigation measures, and Best Management Practices applied in Riparian Reserves are consistent with current management direction for protecting water quality including the Olympic National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan standards and guidelines, Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives at the project level, and the Federal Clean Water Act. Implementation of the project as described will ensure protection of water quality and beneficial uses (EA, Sections 2.6 and 3.11, and Appendix C). There will be no effect on air quality (EA, Section 3.11).

3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.**

   The areas proposed for ground-disturbing activities have been surveyed and evaluated for the presence of heritage resources. No historic properties or cultural resources will be affected with this proposal (EA, Section 3.6; SHPO Letter of Concurrence, Project File). The project is not in close proximity to prime farmlands, floodplains, or ecologically critical areas. Wetlands located within the project area would be protected by project design criteria, Best Management Practices, and mitigation measures (EA, Section 2.6). No project activities will occur within designated Wilderness, Inventoried Roadless Areas, or within the Olympic National Park. The project is expected to be beneficial to Riparian Reserves through the decommissioning or stabilization of roads currently presenting risks to aquatic habitat (instability or sediment sources) (EA, Section 2.6, Section 3.5; EA, Appendix C).

4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.**

   The degree of controversy, with regard to effects on the quality of the human environment, is limited and considered not significant based on comments received during the scoping and comment periods (EA, Section 2.2; EA, Appendix E and F). Differing opinions do not indicate controversy.

   This project is based on the best available scientific information and site-specific data. The methodologies used to estimate effects disclosed in the Environmental Consequences Sections for each resource area (EA, Chapter 3) are widely used in similar environmental analyses and have been reviewed by the research and academic communities. I am not
aware of any credible, peer-reviewed scientific questioning of methods used in this analysis, nor its results (EA, Chapter 3).

5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.**

The Pacific Ranger District has considerable experience with the types of activities to be implemented by this project. Similar types of forest thinning activities, road work, and other connected or similar actions have occurred on this district, this Forest, and other National Forests. Monitoring of these types of project activities at the Forest and Regional level indicate that the objectives of the Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended, are being met. In addition, the findings presented in the EA do not indicate any impacts to the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (EA, Chapter 3).

6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.**

This action will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. Commercial thinning and road development are common, well-established land management practices on the Pacific Ranger District, with known results. The project design criteria and mitigation measures (EA, Section 2.6) are known to be effective in reducing risks associated with project activities. The interdisciplinary team effectively addressed and analyzed all major issues associated with the project as is reflected in the EA.

7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.**

Implementation of Alternative B does not represent potential cumulative adverse impacts when considered in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The watershed analyses applicable to the Queets project area provide a contextual basis for cumulative effects in this area.

Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into smaller component parts. There would be no significant cumulative effects as a result of this project. I have reviewed the impacts of those past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions described in the Environmental Consequences sections of the EA (Chapter 3) and find that this action will not have a significant cumulative impact on the environment.

8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant cultural or historic resources.**
This action will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. An appropriate review was conducted by this undertaking. No eligible historic properties were found during surveys of the project area. The Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation concurred with the No Effect finding (EA, Section 3.6.2; letter of concurrence, project record).

9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act.**

Formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. The Biological Opinion dated May 8, 2015 (available in the Queets project record) was received on May 11, 2015. The Biological Opinion notes U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurrence with the Forest Service determination that the proposed project “may affect, but would not likely adversely affect” northern spotted owl designated critical habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded with the opinion that the Queets project “is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the northern spotted owl”. For the marbled murrelet, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded with the opinion that the Queets project “is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the marbled murrelet” and that the project is “not likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat”. The opinion also includes concurrence with the determinations of “not likely to adversely affect” bull trout and its designated critical habitat. The Biological Opinion includes reasonable and prudent measures as well as terms and conditions relevant to implementing the measures. I will ensure that these measures are implemented as required by the non-discretionary terms and conditions provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) is currently proposed for federal listing (decision expected in spring of 2016), but was analyzed in the Queets EA as a sensitive species. The Olympic National Park and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife released 90 fishers on the Olympic Peninsula between 2008 and 2010 (Lewis 2014). Current monitoring efforts suggest that fishers on the Olympic Peninsula are widely distributed and reproducing (e.g., Happe et al. 2014). Average fisher home ranges on the Olympic Peninsula are 15,700 acres for females and 31,700 acres for males (Lewis 2014, page 32).

This project could impact individual fishers within the footprint of the treatment area, including but not limited to short-term disturbance and displacement of foraging or resting individuals. However, the scale of these effects are small or moderate (there are approximately 5,000 acres total in the pool of proposed units) relative to the size of fisher home ranges on the Olympic Peninsula (less than a single home range would be affected), and the project in the long-term would improve late-seral structural conditions that are important to the fisher’s life history. Should active denning sites be discovered during on-going monitoring, they would be protected via conservation measures (EA,
Table 2-12, pg. 41). For these reasons, it was determined that the Queets vegetation management project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the fisher.

Consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service was not required because this project has no effect on Puget Sound Chinook, Puget Sound steelhead, and Hood Canal summer chum or their critical habitat because the species’ evolutionary significant units are outside of the Queets project area. No critical habitat for Endangered Species Act listed threatened, endangered, or proposed plant species exist within the project area or would be affected by the project (EA, Section 3.3.1).

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

This action does not threaten a violation of any Federal, State, or local laws or requirements for the protection of the environment. Laws imposed for the protection of the environment are provided in the framework for the Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended. From the information provided in the EA, the project file, and other findings required (EA, Section 3.11), I find that proposed activities (Alternative B) do not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING

After considering the environmental effects described in the EA and specialist reports, I have determined that Alternative B will not have significant effects on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts (40 CFR 1508.27). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

This decision is consistent with all applicable acts and regulations including: National Environmental Policy Act; National Forest Management Act; Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the Olympic National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended by the 1994 Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl; Endangered Species Act; Clean Air Act; Clean Water Act; National Historic Preservation Act; Migratory Birds, Executive Order 13186; Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice; and the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Cultural Resource Management in the State of Washington.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

This proposed decision is subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Objections will only be accepted from individuals or organizations that submitted project-specific written comments during a designated opportunity for public participation (scoping or 30-day public comment period). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted comments unless based on new information arising after the designated comment period.

Objections must be submitted within 45 days following the publication of the legal notice in The
Daily World, Aberdeen, Washington. The date of this legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to file an objection should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source. It is the objector’s responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9).

Objections must be submitted to the reviewing officer: Forest Supervisor, Reta Laford, 1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Olympia, WA 98512. Please put OBJECTION and the project name in the subject line. Objections may be submitted via mail, FAX (360-956-2330), or delivered during business hours (M-F 8:00am to 4:30pm). Electronic objections, in common formats (.doc, .pdf, .rtf, .txt), may be submitted to: objections-pnw-olympic@fs.fed.us with Subject: Queets Vegetation Management project.

Objections must include (36 CFR 218.8(d)): 1) name, address and telephone; 2) signature or other verification of authorship; 3) identification of a single lead objector when applicable; 4) project name, Responsible Official name and title, and name of affected National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s); 5) reasons for, and suggested remedies to resolve, your objections; and, 6) description of the connection between your objections and your prior comments. Incorporate documents by reference only as provided for at 36 CFR 218.8(b).

For additional information, contact Kim Crider, Environmental Coordinator/Planner, Supervisors Office, 1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Olympia, WA 98512, 360-956-2376, or kcrider@fs.fed.us.

IMPLEMENTATION

If no objections are filed within the 45-day time period, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 5th business day from the close of the objection filing period. If an objection is filed, the reviewing officer must issue a written response to the objector(s) within 90 days of the end of the objection-filing period. The responsible official may not issue a Final Decision Notice until the reviewing officer has responded in writing to all objections (36 CFR218.12 (a)).

CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service objection process, contact Kim Crider, Environmental Coordinator, Olympic National Forest, 1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Olympia, WA 98512, email kcrider@fs.fed.us, phone: 360-956-2376.

DEAN R. MILLETT
District Ranger, Pacific Ranger District
Olympic National Forest

DATE