United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Allegheny National Forest
Marienville Ranger District
HC 2, Box 130
Marienville, PA 16239
(814) 927-6628
FAX (814) 927-2285

File Code: 1950-1
Date: November 9, 2006

Dear Interested Party:

I invite you to provide comments on the Proposed Action and alternatives for this project. The Public Comment Package for the South Branch Kinzua Creek Project is now available for public review and comment. This package is also available on the Allegheny Forest website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/vegetative_management/.

The South Branch Kinzua Creek Project is located on the Marienville Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest in northwestern Pennsylvania. The project is located in Wetmore and Hamlin Townships in McKean County, Pennsylvania. The area within the project boundary includes approximately 4,754 acres of National Forest land and lies within Management Areas 3.0 and 6.1.

Proposed activities include timber harvest, improvements to roads, wildlife habitat enhancements, non-native invasive plant species treatments, soil and water restoration activities, and timber stand improvements. Details of the proposed action, alternatives, and analysis are described in the attached Public Comment Package. The full environmental analysis of effects is currently ongoing and the completed Environmental Assessment will include a detailed analysis and disclosure of these effects.

Information contained in the Public Comment Package includes:

- Cover Sheet and Document Summary
- Background and Description of Project Area
- Desired Future Condition based on Allegheny National Forest Plan
- Purpose and Need for this Action
- Connected Actions Under All Alternatives
- Issues
- Affected Environment
- Summary of Anticipated Effects
- Maps
- Design Features and Mitigation Measures specific to this Project

The Forest Service has prepared this Public Comment Package in order to invite your comments, ideas, and concerns. The document describes the Proposed Action and alternatives, the reasons for making this proposal, the known issues, and the anticipated effects.

For this project, we are now requesting public input for both the scoping and 30-day comment periods. The 36 CFR 215 regulations state that "The Responsible Official shall…determine the most effective timing for publishing the legal notice of the proposed action and opportunity to formally comment." As the Responsible Official, I have determined that now would be the most effective time for the 30-day notice and comment period. This constitutes notice of opportunity to comment on the South Branch Kinzua Creek Project (36 CFR 215.5). We do not plan to have another comment period for this project.

How to Comment and Timeframe

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this project will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of this notice in *The Kane Republican* (Kane, Pennsylvania newspaper). The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this analysis. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. The regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period (36CFR 215.6).

Written comments must be submitted to: Robert T. Fallon, Marienville District Ranger, HC2 Box 130, Marienville, PA 16239 or via facsimile (814) 927-2285. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 7:30am – 4:00pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone (814) 927-6628 or in person.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc), or any software supported by Microsoft applications to comments-eastern-allegheny-marienville@fs.fed.us. Comments must have an identifiable name attached or verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic comments.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. However, those who submit anonymous comments may not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 215.

Appeal Eligibility

This decision will be subject to appeal pursuant to the regulations in 36 CFR 215. An appeal may be filed by any person or non-Federal organization or entity that provided comments or otherwise expressed interest in the proposed action during the specified comment period. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them during the comment period.

Your views on this project are important, and if you need more information, or if you wish to comment, please contact me at (814) 927-6628, ext. 134 or Kevin Treese, ext. 124.

Sincerely,

ROBERT T. FALLON
District Ranger