

## APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCOPING

A Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the Elk Bugs and Fuel Project was published in the Federal Register on November 15, 2002. A Scoping letter describing the background of the project, including P.L. 107-206, purpose and need, specific project proposals, and instructions on how to comment was mailed to 1,538 individuals and organizations. The Black Hills National Forest also issued a press release that was published in the Rapid City Journal on November 17, 2002. The comment period for the project ended on December 16, 2002.

The public scoping comment period generated twenty e-mails, fourteen letters, and two phone calls. The Interdisciplinary Team Fuels Specialist attended a meeting of the Lawrence Count Fire Advisory Board. Issues concerning the Proposed Action were determined through the above correspondence as well as an ID Team review of the Proposed Action for any internal issues.

The following individuals and organizations responded to the Scoping letter:

Note: E=email; L=letter; Ph=phone call and the number corresponds to the location of the document in Section A.1.5 of the Project Record.

Jim Eichner	E-1
Joe Seme	E-2
Donna Eliason	E-3
Doug and Charlene Eliason	E-4
Roger Burdick	E-5
Gary and Darla Cook	E-6
Bruce and Jean Stinson	E-7

Frank and Mary Alexander	E-8
Jerry and Louise Chaffee	E-9
Mark Nelson (State)	E-10
Curt Pudwill	E-11
Neil Hodges VA Black Hills Health Care System	E-12
Greg Mum, Land Use Chair Dakota Territory Cruisers Black Hills Four Wheelers	E-13
David Super	E-14
Kristie L. Albrecht Berg	E-15
Lawrence County Environmental Review, Timber Committee	E-16
Sam Clauson, Sierra Club	E-17
Native Ecosystems Council; Brian Brademeyer	E-18
David Richards	L-1
Curt Eide	L-2
Charles W. Hughes	L-3
A.L. Mael	L-4
Ronnie L. Rust	L-5
Ron Island Secretary/Treasurer: Nellie B. Sawyer Trust	L-6
EPA	L-7
Biodiversity Conservation Alliance: Jeremy Nichols	L-8
Native Ecosystems Council: Sara Jane Johnson	L-9

Black Hills Regional Multiple Use Coalition: Tom Troxel	L-10
Black Hills Forest Resource Association: Aaron Everett	L-11
Vern & Bonnie Vigoren	L-12
Department of Game, Fish and Parks: Shelly Deisch	L-13
Lawrence County Fire Advisory Board	L-14
Greg Klar	Ph-1
Jim Martin	Ph-2
Carol Morgan	Ph-3
David Weeks	Ph-4

All correspondence received during the scoping period was reviewed to determine issues. The Forest Service separated the issues into two groups: significant and non-significant issues. Significant issues were defined as those directly or indirectly caused by implementing the proposed action. Non-significant issues were identified as those: 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence. Table A-1 displays the issues and the possible resolution of those issues. Issues determined to be non-significant have a brief explanation and a reference to one of the four categories on non-significance listed above.

### Issues Raised During the Scoping Period and Possible Resolution

ID No.	Issue	Resolution
<b>Roads Issues</b>		
1	Some of the roads proposed for decommissioning are under special use permit to off-road clubs and decommissioning them would violate the terms of the SUP. (E-13, Greg Mum)	Significant Issue. Issue resolved by adjusting the Proposed Action so that roads under SUP will not be decommissioned.
1a	Opposed to road closure for fire access. If close, use gates as opposed to roadbed removal. (Lawrence County Fire advisory board)	Significant Issue
2	The amount of road decommissioning is excessive and will concentrate more users on fewer roads and therefore cause more environmental effects. (E-13, Greg Mum; L-10, Tom Troxel)	Significant Issue
3	Lower standard temporary roads should be used to have less impact. (E-16, Lawrence County Environmental Review)	Non-significant Issue. (4) The Proposed Action used the minimum road standard necessary to accomplish resource objectives.
4	Use only existing roads with longer skidding distances or use “two tracks”. Do not build any new roads. (E17, Sierra Club)	Significant Issue
5	Build fewer roads by using existing road prisms. (L-11, Black Hills Forest Resource Protection Association)	Significant Issue.
6	“...and we believe that the alternatives should include travel management that offers opportunities for road and/or area closures in addition to the proposed 63.5 miles”. Analysis should also include the resource damage due to high road density, proximity of roads to key habitats and sensitive areas such as riparian/streams and meadows, and the economics of proposed road construction and future maintenance.	Significant Issue. Issue resolved since the Proposed Action decommissions all roads not necessary for management purposes. Effects of roads will be discussed in the EIS. Area closures are a non-

	<p>maintenance.</p> <p>(L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)</p>	<p>significant issue because they are beyond the scope and not part of the purpose and need. (1)</p>
<b>Vegetation Issues</b>		
7	<p>Stands in the Grizley Gulch burn should be treated because they are in a weakened condition and subject to MPB attack. (E-16, Lawrence County Environmental Review</p>	<p>Non-significant Issue. (4) Forest Service Entomologist explained that the stands in the fire area are not be more subject to MPB attack.</p>
8	<p>Bring birds or insects that are predatory to the mountain pine beetle.</p> <p>(L-3, Charles W. Hughs)</p>	<p>Non-significant Issue. (4) Forest Service Entomologist said there is no proven predator that will work.</p>
9	<p>Stands should be thinned to 70-80 BA rather than ½ the existing BA since this may result in remaining BAs too high to be effective against Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) attacks. (L-11, Black Hills Forest Resource Protection Association)</p>	<p>Significant Issue. Issue resolved since the Proposed Action will be adjusted so that all stands will to be thinned to below 80 BA.</p>
10	<p>Non-commercial thinning (NCT) seems high. Suggests the use of temporary roads easements to access NCT areas. Also suggests using non-ground based logging systems and encourages “at-the-deck” sales to help defray the added cost. He feels that all of these proposals would help reduce the amount of material left on the ground which would contribute to fuel loading and potential Ips outbreaks. (L-11, Black Hills Forest Resource Protection Association)</p>	<p>Non-significant Issue. (4) Material in non-commercial thinning areas is either too small or the areas are inoperable.</p>
11	<p>There is need to break up monotype pine stands, increase species and structural stage diversity, create and allow for uneven-aged management and create more openings. (L-13, Department of Game, Fish and Parks)</p>	<p>Non-significant Issue. (1) Beyond the scope of the Elk Bugs and Fuel Project.</p>
12	<p>Alternatives should include more aggressive</p>	<p>Significant Issue.</p>

	treatment of non-commercial pine. Non-commercial thinning is only planned on 7.5% of the project area. (L-13, Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	
13	Alternatives should include more aggressive treatment of small diameter commercial pine (6-13 inch dbh). "... it seems that more than 25% of the project area could be treated with removal of smaller diameter pine or else the Forest may be in similar fire/beetle conditions of overstocked stands again within a few years." (L-13, Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue. Similar to Issue 12.
14	Alternatives should offer uneven-aged management strategy with patch clear-cuts for even-aged management. (L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Non-significant Issue. (1), (2). Uneven-aged management is beyond the scope of the Elk Bugs and Fuel project.
<b>Wildlife Issues</b>		
15	We request that alternatives include large patch clear cuts within the stands to be "thinned" of non-commercial or small diameter commercial trees, to provide additional forage in SS1 for wildlife and to provide structural diversity. (L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue.
16	There are opportunities to enhance meadows and remove pine encroachment. We did not see this as a treatment and propose further analysis. Open spaces such as patch cuts and meadows also function as fire breaks. (L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue.
17	Will you be treating burr oak or other hardwood species? We recommend that treatments include assessment of chokecherry, rose, serviceberry, Oregon grape and other native shrubs. These species would benefit well from Rx burning and release on south-facing slopes. (L-13, Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue.
18	Certainly there are opportunities to enhance meadows and remove pine encroachment. We did not see this as a treatment and propose further analysis. Open spaces such as patch cuts and meadows also function as firebreaks. (L-13,	Significant Issue. See Issue 16.

	Department of Game, fish and Parks)	
19	Lower Forest Standard 3203 to 0% temporarily. Lower MA 5.4 and 3.31 to 0% temporarily. (L-1, David Richards)	Non-significant Issue. (4) It is not necessary to reduce Standard 3203 to this level to meet DFC..
20	One desired future condition of MA 5.4 is to create or maintain big game habitat on the National Forest so that time spent by these animals on private lands may be reduced (1997 BHNF LRMP). This should be considered as a “need” in this project, among other “needs”. (L-13, Department of Game, fish and parks)	Significant Issue.
<b>Fuels Issues</b>		
21	Lawrence County has developed a plan that calls for a 200-foot radius survivable space zones around the 4,392 structures in the county. The plan also developed 197 Wildland Urban-Interface “zones” around all the habited structures in the county. The intent of these one-mile buffer zones is to do enough fuel reduction so the average worst condition during a wildfire would not support a high intensity crown fire. (L-14 Lawrence County Fire Advisory Board)	Significant Issue.
22	Commentor is recommending treatments be focused on private-urban interface zones, recreation areas and campgrounds, ski areas, and timber production areas. (L-7, EPA)	Significant Issue. This issue is resolved since the Proposed Action took this issue into account when it was developed.
<b>Other</b>		
23	EPA recommends an adaptive management approach and included a web site address for an existing bibliography. “..., beetles, fires, and other natural disturbances may foster a healthy, diverse forest.” “A clear adaptive management process should set priorities for areas to receive treatments and the limits of this treatment (for example, how many times a stand can be entered or treated before efforts are focused elsewhere).” EPA recommends reviewing the adaptive management approach used to manage beetle infestations by the Medicine Bow-	Significant Issue, however, the legislated timeline for the Elk Bugs and Fuel project does not allow adequate time to fully explore this issue.

	Routt National Forest. (L-7, EPA)	
<b>Alternatives Proposed by Scoping Respondents</b>		
A-1	Decommission the maximum amount of roads. (L-8, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance - Jeremy Nichols)	Significant Issue. This issue is resolved because Proposed Action proposes decommissioning of all roads not necessary for management purposes.
A-2	An alternative that proposes a natural means of preventing and suppressing MPB. They suggested colonizing with a native woodpecker species. (L-8, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance - Jeremy Nichols)	Non-significant Issue. (4) See Issue 8.
A-3	An alternative that proposes prescribed burning. (L-8, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance - Jeremy Nichols)	Significant Issue. This issue is resolved because the Proposed Action proposes prescribed burning.
A-4	No commercial timber. (L-8, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance - Jeremy Nichols)	Significant Issue.
A-5	An alternative that designates a Mountain Pine Beetle RNA within the project area. (L-8, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance - Jeremy Nichols)	Non-significant Issue. (1), (2). This issue is beyond the scope of the Elk Bugs and Fuel Project.
A-6	Commenter requests an alternative that offers variable thinning for north-facing and south-facing slopes and takes into consideration current understory conditions with timber treatments aimed at increasing grasses, forbs and shrubs for wildlife. (L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue.
A-7	We would like to see an alternative that targets reducing overstocked small diameter pine, restoring early successional openings and hardwoods and retaining late successional and old growth pine and spruce. (L-13 Department of Game, Fish and Parks)	Significant Issue. The issue is resolved because the Proposed Action does this.

