

Appendix B – Scoping Comment Summary

FIDDLERS LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Comment Source Codes

Source Code	Description
AW	American Wildlands
AWR	Alliance for the Wild Rockies
DOA	Dubois Outfitter Association
FCC	Fremont County Commissioners
WOC	Wyoming Outdoor Council
WYS	Wyoming State Offices

Comment type descriptions

Type Code	Type	Description
ALT	Alternative Development	Comments that could provide an alternative to the proposed action.
AP	Analysis Process	These comments will be responded to by discussion in the comment disposition, project file, the EA, or in an appendix to the EA.
GC	General Concern	Comments of a general nature. These comments are generally supported by comments captured elsewhere, and may receive no specific response in the EA analysis. Concerns will be considered by the decision maker.
OC	Opinion Comment	Comments expressing an opinion or are statements and do not require a response.
OS	Outside Scope	Comments where a decision has already been made or is beyond the scope of the proposed action.
PC	Process Comments	Comments are more related to the NEPA process, rather than cause/effect statements relating the proposed action to a possible consequence.
RD	Recommend Decision	These comments express a preference for a final decision, or an aspect of the decision. They will not generally be responded to in the analysis, but will be considered by the decision maker.
REG	Regulation	Comment that is already decided through an existing law, regulation, Forest Plan or other higher decision.
RM	Recommended Mitigation/Monitoring	These comments recommend specific mitigation measures or monitoring.

Fiddlers Lake Comments

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
WOC	2-1	It appears that seven out of the eight proposed cuts either directly border or are in close proximity to the road. How does the Forest Service plan to mitigate the visual impacts of this clear-cut?	Yes	ALT	See Chapters 1 and 2 of the EA. See Visual Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA.
WOC	2-4	It is WOC's hope that the Forest Service will plan to enhance the roadside visual impacts of this proposal by decreasing the acreage of timber clear-cut.	Yes	ALT	See Chapters 1 and 2 of the EA.
AW	6-2	AWL would like to see a map indicating the roadless areas and any activities that may impact or fragment the last portions of this unfragmented habitat. The project must also comply with the 18-month roads moratorium.	Yes	AP	See Figure 19 in Appendix A and the Specially Designated Lands Section in Chapters 3 and 4.
AW	6-3	Please include a discussion of the total open road density of the project area and surrounding areas, and whether there are any road closures and how effective they have been	Yes	AP	See the Wildlife, Travel and Transportation, and Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4, Appendix C of the EA, and the Fiddlers Lake Roads Analysis.
AW	6-8	Please include careful analysis of impacts the proposed activities will have on fisheries. This should include considerations of sedimentation, channel stability, and increases in stream water temperature.	Yes	AP	See the Soil, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA.
AW	6-9	The NEPA document should disclose the current condition of fisheries habitat, including spawning and pool riffle habitat, and what the anticipated effects of the project will be.	Yes	AP	See the Soil, Water, and Aquatic Resources section in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA.
AW	6-11	How does each of the project alternatives affect possible biological corridors in the project area, including species-specific assessments of corridor location and use? This assessment should emphasize corridor use of both MIS (i.e. elk) and TES species. The intrusion of the past or future development in the area and these impacts to functioning corridors should be evaluated.	Yes	AP	See the Wildlife Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA. See Appendix C of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
AWR	3-2	Please take into account the fact that dead and dying trees contribute substantially to the overall health of a forest ecosystem	Yes	AP	Proposed silvicultural treatments will affect less than 1 percent of the forested landscape within the Atlantic Analysis area. Numerous dead trees exist over the entire Analysis area as a result of a mountain pine beetle epidemic during the 1970's, the continuous mortality caused by commandra rust and dwarf mistletoe, and lack of natural fires in the area. Due to these diseases, the probability of a shortage of dead trees within forested ecosystem on the Washakie district is minimal. See also the Wildlife Resources section in Chapter 4 of the EA, and Appendix C of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
AWR	3-3	The deteriorating lodgepole pines infected with commandra rust and dwarf mistletoe are not detrimental to the over all health and productivity of the forest. Further environmental analysis must address the positive role that disease plays in a functioning ecosystem.	Yes	AP	Forest Health Management Service Centers recognize that insect and disease incidence has become more periodic than cyclical in nature since natural disturbance processes such as fire have been suppressed. The Forest Service recognizes the role that disease plays in a functioning ecosystem and also recognizes the importance of reducing the incidence of disease in specific areas to maintain healthy productive stands. Proposed silvicultural treatments are not designed or intended to eradicate disease. The disease problems that plague lodgepole pine on the Shoshone Forest will not be eliminated through the proposed silvicultural treatments. The proposed silvicultural treatments are designed to improve the health and productivity of specific stands and represent less than 1 percent of the forested landscape within the Atlantic Analysis area. See also Wildlife Resources section in Chapters 3 and 4 and Appendix C.
AWR	3-5	What is the history of the area surrounding the proposed site? Has it been extensively logged in the past? Where is the most recent logging activity in the area?	Yes	AP	See the Cumulative Effects on Vegetation section in Chapter 4 of the EA. For other history information, refer to the Travel and Transportation and Soil, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapter 3 of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
DOA	7-1	We concur with multiple use in this partnership but want you to understand as you implement procedures of management with regards to these areas that we want you to specifically address the wildlife needs. Should the activity required to manage these areas detrimentally affect big game parturition and or migration necessities your procedures should be reevaluated.	Yes	AP	See Wildlife Resources section in Chapter 4 of the EA and Appendix C of the EA.
WOC	2-2	How will this (proposed harvest) affect the experience of the Loop Road's many visitors? How will it affect the experience of the areas hunters and anglers?	Yes	AP	See Recreation and Visual Resources sections in Chapter 4 of Fiddlers Lake EA.
WOC	2-6	For how long will this clear-cut affect recreational practices by locals and visitors? How will this practice in the area affect future use patterns?	Yes	AP	See Recreation and Visual Resources sections in Chapter 4 of Fiddlers Lake EA.
WOC	2-8	Any conflicts with recreational activities in the project area should be disclosed in the NEPA documentation and fair consideration for recreation users should be integrated into any logging alternatives.	Yes	AP	See Mitigation in Chapter 2 and Recreation Resources sections in Chapter 4.
WOC AWR	2-9 3-7	WOC asks that the Forest Service determine the overall economics and net public benefit of the proposed project. Net public benefit is determined by numerous inputs and outputs, some of which are quantifiable and others which are more qualitative.	Yes	AP	A financial analysis was conducted for the Fiddlers Lake EA. A discussion can be found in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA. Analysis data can be found in Appendix D of the EA.
WOC	2-14	How will clear-cutting impact the sediment budget of the area? The Forest Service must analyze the impact of dried and eroded soils on pioneer species and forest succession.	Yes	AP	See the Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA.
WOC	2-15	How will the northern-most cut affect water quality in Fiddlers Lake? How will cumulative impacts of the cuts impact water quality in the Popo Agie watershed?	Yes	AP	See the Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources and Vegetation sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA.
WOC AW	2-18 6-4	WOC would like to see the Forest Service conduct effects of clear-cutting on wildlife. WOC would like to see the Forest Service conduct an analysis of the effects of the proposed activities on all forest indicator species. The reduction of cover and the projects impacts on big game must be evaluated.	Yes	AP	See the Wildlife Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA. See also the Fiddlers Lake BA/BE in Appendix C of the EA.
WOC AW	2-21 6-7	The removal of any standing dead trees, especially at the levels proposed by the Forest Service, may have deleterious effects on cavity nesting/snag dependant species. The consequences of this proposal should be discussed fully in the NEPA documentation.	Yes	AP	See the Wildlife Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA. See also the Fiddlers Lake BA/BE in Appendix C of the EA.
WYS	4-1	We have concerns that timber harvest may alter important accipiter habitat components and cause short-or long-term displacement of individuals and habitat abandonment due to increased human disturbance, should the road corridor become wider than at present.	Yes	AP	See the Wildlife Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA. See also the Fiddlers Lake BA/BE in Appendix C of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
WYS	4-2	<p>We request that the impact analysis consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retention of residual pockets of spruce-fir in treated lodgepole pine stands for big game cover and future snag habitat for cavity-dependant wildlife • surveying for goshawk and lynx prior to logging activities; if active goshawk nests are found, retention of 200 acres of timbered habitat around each nest as a buffer against disturbance; if lynx are found, implementation of Forest Service draft guidelines for lynx habitat • surveying for wetlands; if any are identified, mitigation for a no-net-loss in wetland habitat • soil erosion potential of logging on slopes over 40% • completion of the sale within two calendar years • completion of the sale without any new road construction • skidding and decking of harvested logs near Louis Lake Road • permanent, physical closure of any new roads upon completion of harvest activities • disposing of large slash material by piling and burning, and finer slash material by either broadcast burning or roller chopping • seeding clear-cuts with a mixture of native warm and cool season grasses and forbs at a rate of at least 20 lbs/acre; the addition of native shrubs if appropriate • designing the sale to realize no net loss of habitat function in Cow Lake, a trophy brook trout fishery; mitigation could include buffer zones, seasonal timber harvest restrictions, and reclamation of roads 	Yes	AP/PC	See the Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources and Wildlife Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA, Chapter 2 of the EA, and the Fiddlers Lake BA/BE in Appendix C.
AWR	3-6	The scientific community along with the Forest Service has finally realized the positive role that wildfire plays in a healthy forest ecosystem. Why not allow fuel to accumulate and let fire occur naturally, when its appearance would play an important role in overall ecosystem health	No	GC	Fuels have been accumulating since the forest has been under the protection of the Forest Service. Accumulations have reached the point that control of wildfire will be very difficult given the possibility of fires of catastrophic proportions. Human safety could be jeopardized under such situations considering the amount of use the Forest receives. See also Forest Vegetation sections in Chapters 3.0 and 4.0 of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
WOC	2-10	Why is the Forest Service pursuing such a Draconian action as clear-cutting in the Fiddlers Lake area?	No	GC	It is the most effective method to regenerate mistletoe infected stands, while controlling the mistletoe on those acres.
WOC	2-12	How does the Forest Service justify the aforementioned purpose and need? Regardless of whether this is a stated responsibility in the Shoshone National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, this is not a requirement of the U.S. Forest Service. There is no statutory authority applicable to the National Forest System to maintain community stability in the management of National Forests.	No	GC	The purpose for this proposal is to improve the visual quality of the Loop Road corridor in the Fiddlers Lake area and to improve the overall health and productivity of forest vegetation within the Atlantic analysis area. By doing this it is also possible to provide wood products to local industry.
WOC	2-24	WOC questions the necessity of clear-cutting 100 acres in the Fiddlers Lake area. The primary purpose and need of the action “to improve the overall health and productivity of the identified stands” while laudable, does not necessitate the use of clear-cutting.	No	GC	See response to 2-10.
WOC	2-11	How does the Forest Service justify a clear-cut to meet its secondary purpose “to provide wood products to the local industry?” Couldn’t selective cutting attain the same desired objective? How many jobs will be created by this action? How much money will be generated?	No	GC/OS	Clear-cuts are justified as the best way to treat disease problems in mistletoe infected stands. Job creation is beyond the scope of this project. See the Social and Economics sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA and the financial analysis data in Appendix D.
FCC	1-1	We agree with your primary objective to improve the overall state of health and productivity of the timber stands involved. We agree that management should be based on Silviculture. We also concur with your secondary objective to provide wood products to the local timber industry.	No	OC	
AW	6-10	The NEPA document must discuss the projects compliance with INFISH standards and guidelines for protection of native fish. Priority watersheds and riparian habitat conservation areas must be disclosed and any proposed modifications to them must be discussed.	No	OS	INFISH is applicable to the Columbia River Basin in the Pacific Northwest. It is beyond the scope of this EA.
WOC	2-5	Legally the Forest Service is mandated to seriously take into account esthetics when planning timber harvest. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 require both productive and esthetically pleasing forests.	No	PC	See the Purpose and Need in Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and the Visual Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4 of the EA.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
WOC	2-7	Has the Lander area Chamber of Commerce been contacted about the proposal?	No	PC	The Lander Chamber of Commerce was not on the original scoping mailing list. They were added to the list so that the draft EA, final EA, and Decision Notice could be mailed to them.
WOC	2-23	WOC asks that the NEPA document explore a reasonable range of alternatives. Alternatives that maximize biodiversity and wildlife habitat instead of simply treating the Shoshone as a source of timber production are required by NEPA	No	PC	Alternative development is discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 of the EA.
WOC	2-16	WOC requests that all riparian areas be excluded from timber harvest and that any crossing of riparian areas by ground based logging equipment or for road construction be minimized.	Yes	RD	See Mitigation section in Chapter 2 of the EA, and the Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapter 4 of the EA.
AWR	3-1	The scoping document states that the proposed project would require an amendment to your Management Plan changing the current visual quality objective of the area. The reasoning behind this does not seem very sound. Why contradict the objectives behind your Plan through on the ground activities?	No	REG	See Chapters 1, 3 and 4 of the EA.
WOC	2-13	WOC notes that the Land and Resource management Plan (LRMP) will need to be amended concerning visual quality standards. WOC cautions the Forest Service that such an important amendment cannot be achieved in a site- specific proposal but rather, but must be formally changed through the LRMP amendment process.	No	REG	See Chapters 1, 3, and 4 of the EA.
WOC AW	2-17 6-1	Regardless of the Services final decision regarding this project, the agency must comply with state water quality standards. The analysis must also discuss how the Clean Water Acts's federal antidegradation policy will be implemented for this project	No	REG	See the Mitigation section in Chapter 2, the Soil, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4, the BMP's in the project file.
WOC AWR AW	2-20 3-4 6-6	WOC asks that a biological assessment and evaluation of the impacts of this project on Threatened or Endangered, Candidate or sensitive animals be included in the documentation. An evaluation of diversity units would also be appropriate.	No	REG	A BA/BE was completed for Fiddlers Lake and is included in Appendix C of the EA. Species were evaluated on a level appropriate for the particular species evaluated.
WOC	2-22	WOC would like to see a thorough discussion of the Best Management Practices (BMP's) and the mitigation measures the Forest Service is proposing to control sediment from entering Fiddlers Lake and any local streams. The discussion should go beyond a mere listing, and include the following: 1) their relative effectiveness in achieving their intended goals; 2) how dependent they are on outside funding sources; 3) the likely consequences should those funding sources not be realized; and 4) specific locations BMP's will be applied.	No	REG	See the Mitigation section in Chapter 2, the Soils, Water, and Aquatic Resources sections in Chapters 3 and 4, and BMP's in the project file.

Source	No.	Comment	Significant?	Type	Disposition
WOC AW	2-19 6-5	WOC asks that the Forest Service offer viable and specific mitigation measures that compensate for any possible adverse impacts to wildlife in the project area.	Yes	RM	See Mitigation section in Chapter 2 of the EA, Wildlife Resources section in Chapter 4.0 of the EA, and Appendix C.
WYS	4-2	We request that the impact analysis consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• retention of two snags per acre (DBH > 10”) for cavity-dependent wildlife	Yes	RM	See Mitigation section in Chapter 2 of the EA