



Planning and Project Implementation Update



October 2002

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

The purpose of the Chippewa Quarterly is to provide a summary of environmental analyses on the Chippewa National Forest. Issued quarterly, this is intended to complement other public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers. Legal notices will continue to be published in the following local newspapers: Bemidji's *The Pioneer* for Forest Supervisor decisions; and Blackduck's *American*, *Cass Lake Times*, *Western Itasca Review*, and Walker's *The Pilot-Independent* for District Ranger decisions.

Projects are classified into one of three categories:

Environmental Analyses in Progress

This category includes projects in which public input is being or is about to be solicited. It also includes those projects that are currently under study or analysis. Environmental analyses include Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments (EA), and Categorical Exclusions (CE).

Completed Decision Documents

These are projects that have culminated in the preparation of completed environmental analyses and decision documents since the last issue. These decision documents include Records of Decision (ROD), Decision Notices (DN), and Decision Memos (DM). Findings of No Significant Impacts will be included in this category, also.

Proposals withdrawn or deferred

Some projects are initiated and published in this Quarterly but may be withdrawn or deferred for various reasons. These projects may or may not be picked up for completion at a later date. Project summaries include reasons for discontinuing the project.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Read through the list of proposed projects. If you want to provide site-specific comments on a project, get more information, or be placed on the project mailing list, write or call the contact person listed for that project. We value your site-specific involvement. A generic statement of interest in all projects is not specific enough. It is only through site-specific input that we can be responsive to and incorporate your concerns into project development. Project specific involvement is required for standing.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Appeal Period - The 45-day period after publication of a decision in which an appeal can be filed.

Categorical Exclusion (CE) - A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

Comment Period - The time allowed for interested persons to provide comments to a Responsible Official on a proposed action.

Decision Memo (DM) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision to implement an action that has been categorically excluded from documentation.

Decision Notice (DN) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A document that presents issues and concerns important to a project, alternate means of accomplishing a project, and environmental effects of each of those alternatives.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - This document is required for proposed actions that may have significant effects on the human environment. The contents are similar to an environmental assessment, and it includes some additional sections.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) - A document prepared by a federal agency presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The procedural guide for the decision making process for site-specific projects.

Proposed Action - A proposal made by the Forest Service to authorize, recommend, or implement an action on National Forest System lands to meet a specific purpose and need which is subject to public notice comment provisions.

Scoping - Includes internal and public involvement to determine the range of issues to be addressed. Scoping aids in the development of alternatives for a proposed action.

Significance - As used in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires consideration of both context and intensity.

Anticipated "Walk-in" Business

Requests from the public occasionally necessitate analyses be completed with a short turn-around. This may mean that decisions are made without prior announcement in this Update. As these projects come up for consideration however, they will continue to be announced by legal notices in newspapers. Examples of walk-in requests include special use roads and utility rights-of-way. Scoping efforts for these requests will be conducted as applicable.

Forest Policy on Distributing Documents

Draft and Final Environmental Assessments and Decision Notices/FONSI's and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision are routinely mailed to individuals who submit written comments to any projects. We do not routinely distribute biological assessments or biological evaluations with the previously listed documents. If you wish to receive biological evaluations or biological assessments for NEPA projects, please contact the district and/or Supervisor's Office NEPA Coordinators.

Privacy on Comments Received

Comments received in response to solicitation as part of the NEPA process, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on a proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within stated number of days.

SCHEDULE OF NEPA PROPOSED ACTIONS

Blackduck Ranger District
417 Forestry Drive
Blackduck, MN 56630
(218) 835-4291 TTY: (218) 835-4189

MARK VAN TASSEL, Acting District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Leo Johnson (ljohnson@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
B106	Sandplain Vegetation Management	T145 28, 29,30 T146 29, 30	Developing Proposal to include thinning and Prescribed burning	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	December 2002	Mark VanTassel (218) 835-3112
B108	Cass Lake Vegetation Management	T145N,R30,31W; T146N,R30,31W, T147N,R31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Norway Beach parking lot, Norway Beach Work Center Building, Bike Trail, and Star Island toilet	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	December 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B109	Carlson SU Road Permit	T147N,R31W, Sec. 32	Easement for a private road	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	November 2002	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117
B110	County Road 22 Reconstruction & Easement	T148N,R31W	Reconstruct and pave the county road	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	November 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B111	Bowstring River Bridge Replacement	T149N,R27W, Sec. 23 and 26	Easement (about 400 feet by 66 feet) and replace a narrow bridge	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	November 2002	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B113	Goble Small Tract	T149N, R27W	Land exchange for small private trespass.	Not begun yet.	Not begun yet.	January 2003	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B115	Beaulieu Road Paving	T147N, R31W	Pave ¼ mile of FR 2211E for access to private housing area near Flora Lake. Reduce erosion and dust. Increase safety.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress.	November 2002	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B116	Mission Buried Water Line	T146N, R31W	Permit for installing a buried water line 3/4 mile long to private housing areas along Highway 33 in the ditch.	Included and analyzed in Cass Lake Veg project.		December 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B117	Mississippi Riparian Planting	T146N, R29W	Planting trees on 7 acres by the Mississippi River	Scoping completed	Not begun yet.	November 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B118	Popple and Dunbar Rock Reefs	T148N, R28W	Construct 2 walleye spawning reefs in the Popple and Dunbar Rivers.	Scoping completed	Not begun yet.	November 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B119	Rambling Woods Resource Management	T146N,R29,30,31W, T147N,R29,30,31W T148N,R30,31W T149N,R30,31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Minor Recreation Projects.	Planned for February 2003	Not begun yet.	June 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107

Completed Decision Documents

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
B91	Winnie Watershed North Vegetation Management EA	T146N/R29W, T147N/R26W,R28W Northwest of Lake Winnie	Harvest and regenerate and thin approx 1100 acres of aspen, hardwoods and upland conifers.	DN June 28, 2002 Ad published June 30, 2002	Mid-August	September 2002 Project upheld	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B97	Livestock Special Use permit	T149N, R29W sec 30	Re-issue two special use permits to use National Forest Land as livestock area	DN signed 8/12/2002	Mid-September	No appeals	Chantel Cook (218) 335-8662
B114	FR 2177 Beltrami Electric Buried Cable	T147N, R31W	Permit for buried electric cable for ¼ mile in ditch along FR 2177.	8/8/02	Non-appealable CE	N/A	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117

Projects Deferred.

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
B107	Permanent Forest Opening Maintenance	Districtwide	Maintain openings for wildlife in a grass/forb condition	Letter sent 2/28/2002	Included in larger vegetation projects		Bart Tobin (218) 835-3118

Walker Ranger District
201 Minnesota Ave. East
Walker, MN 56484
(218) 547-1044 Fax: (218) 547-3260

THOMAS G. SOMRAK, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Chris Brunner (cbrunner@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
W64	Boy River Resource Management (formerly Maboy Vegetation)	T141-143N R26-29W	Prescribed burning, timber harvest, road decommissioning, and snowmobile trail reroutes.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	February 2003	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044
W68	North Star Resort	T144N R28W Sec 17	Resolve an encroachment through sale with Small Tracts Act.	Letter sent September 12, 2002	Analysis in progress	February 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W69	Pike Bay Shoreline Stabilization	T145N R31W Sec 25	Stabilize the bottom of steep slopes primarily with rock on about 660 feet of severely eroding shoreline in front of up to three summer homes under special use permit.	Letter sent September 12, 2002	Analysis in progress	February 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W70	Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance	District-wide	Evaluate the renewal of road special use permits near expiration to access private land. Permits are valid for five years.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Throughout the year	Jim Tande (218) 547-1044
W71	Leech Lake River Resource Management	T142-T145N R26-28W	Timber harvest, prescribed burning, planting, and road decommissioning	Should begin in November		May 2003	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044

Completed Decision Documents

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
W44	Rice Lake Vegetation Management	T141N R25W and R26W	Prescribed burning, timber harvest, and road obliteration.	DN June 25, 2002 Ad published June 27, 2002	Mid-August, 2002	August-September Project upheld	Cindy Miller (218) 547-1044

Deer River/Marcell Ranger District
 1037 Division Street
 Deer River, MN 56636
 (218) 246-2123 TTY: (218) 246-9743

Marcell Office
 49554 State Hwy 38
 Marcell, MN 56657
 (218) 832-3161

WADE SPANG, District Ranger
 NEPA Coordinator: Michael Jiménez (mjimenez@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
D29	Private Road Access to Bowstring Lake Property	T147N, R26W, Section 2, SWSW and Section 11, NWNW.	Applicant has requested special use permit for a ¾ mile road crossing NF lands to access private land	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	January 2003.	Gregg Alle (218) 832-3161
D45	Cuffe Road Special Use Permit	T148N, R26W, Section 35 SESE.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	January 2003.	Jane Munnell (218) 246-2123
D46	Noard Road Special Use Permit	T141N, R25, Section 15.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping completed.	Analysis in progress	January 2003.	Jane Munnell (218) 246-2123
D41	Upper Bowstring Intergrated Resource Project (IRP)	Encompasses the Upper Bowstring Watershed including Spring, Jessie, Rice, Caribou, and Turtle Lakes.	Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, wildlife, & watershed management and restoration in the Upper Bowstring Watershed.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress.	March 2003.	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123
D44	Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance	Various locations throughout Marcell/Deer River Ranger Districts.	Evaluates the renewal of land special use permits near expiration. The majority of these permits involve road uses and are valid for five years.	Ongoing scoping	Analysis in progress	February 2003.	Dave Sorenson (218) 246-2123
M53	Rice Lake Access an Snowmobile Trail Reroute	T60N, R26W, Section 32.	Proposal is to consider a snowmobile trail re-route and trailhead improvement.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	December 2003.	Mike Martin (218) 246-2123
D42	Eagle Nest Road	Road extends from Hwy 46 to South Deer Lake Campground. T147N, R27W, Sections 14,15,21,22, &28.	Project will look at small realignments, reconstructing bridges and adding bituminous surface to Eagle Nest Road. Project will also encompass the rehabilitation of East and West Seelye Campgrounds adjacent to this road.	Scoping completed.	Analysis to be initiated in December 2002.	August 2003.	Mike Martin (218) 246-2123

Completed Decision Documents

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
M54	Marcell Experimental Forest – Relocation and Expansion	T58N, R25W, Section 14	Proposal evaluates the relocation of the Marcell Experimental Forest Administrative Site and considers adding 500 acres of National Forest lands to the Marcell Experimental Forest	DN signed Sept. 25, 2002 Legal ad published Sept. 26, 2002	Mid November 2002	November - December 2002.	Sandy Verry (218) 326-7108
M40	Revised Rice River Vegetative, Habitat and Watershed Management and Restoration Projects	T60N, R26W, T59N, R26W, and T58N, R25W.	Evaluates the vegetative management alternatives in a portion of this sub-watershed.	DN July 11, 2002 Ad published July 11, 2002	Late August 2002	September 2002 Project upheld	Michael Jiménez (218) 246-2123

Forest Plan Revision

The Chippewa and Superior National Forests are working together to revise both Forest Plans under a joint NEPA analysis. One environmental impact statement will be prepared, and two revised Forest Plans will be developed—one for each National Forest.

The planning team is currently analyzing the environmental impacts of the alternatives and preparing documentation for the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which the Forests expect to release to the public in January 2003. The DEIS will identify which alternative is preferred by Regional Forester, Randy Moore.

A Draft Revised Plan for each Forest will be released along with the DEIS. The Draft Revised Plans will be developed based on the preferred alternative. Both documents will be sent directly to individuals on the Forest Plan Revision mailing list. Copies will also be available at the Chippewa and Superior National Forest offices. The same information will be posted on the Forest Plan Revision web site noted below. This web site contains helpful background information and some preliminary analysis.

Interested individuals and organizations are encouraged to review the DEIS and Draft Revised Plans and submit written comments during the 90-day comment period following release of the documents. All comments will be reviewed and substantive comments will be addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statement. More information about how and where to submit comments will accompany the documents and will be a topic at public meetings. A schedule of public meetings will be announced and posted on the web site at the same time as, or shortly after, the release of the documents.

The final Environmental Impact Statement and final plans will be completed in 2003 based on the response to the draft EIS and draft plans. The Regional Forester will select an alternative for implementation. The final Revised Forest Plans will guide management of the Chippewa and Superior National Forests for 10 to 15 years following approval by the Regional Forester..

For more information:

Chippewa National Forest web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa

Specific questions concerning revision may be directed to:

Duane Lula, Forest Planner, Superior National Forest (218)626-4383, dlula@fs.fed.us

or

Tracy Beck, Forest Planner, Chippewa National Forest (218)335-8619, tbeck@fs.fed.us

In order to request revision documents not available on the internet:

Please call (218)335-8681, ttruecker@fs.fed.us

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Individuals and organizations with legal, economic, or preservation interests may request to participate in consultation on the project's effects on historic properties.

Chippewa National Forest
200 Ash Avenue NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633-8929