Middle East Fork Project
Summary of Objection Issues and Suggested Remedies

Project Name: Middle East Fork Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project
Objector: Fitzpatrick, James and Jessica
Objection Number: 0018

Issue 1. (OTHER) We live on the eastern edge of the project boundary and feel that Alternative 2 will negatively affect this area. It will greatly increase noxious weeds, disturb soils, increase sediment, while not reducing the urban fire threat or the pine beetle infestations.

Suggested remedy:
Alternative 3 focuses on the urban interface, rather than back country logging. It would resolve the questionable aspects of the project proposed.

Regional Review and Response: The Region respects the opinion of the objector and we note the support for Alternative 3. The analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), however, comes to different conclusions than the objector reached. In particular, with every measurement criteria Alternative 2 does a better job of reducing the risk from fire in the wildland urban interface including reducing flame length, rate of spread and crown fire potential, as well as moving the Fire Regime Condition Class toward the desirable level. Chapter 2, pages 2-31 through 45 of the FEIS provides a comparison of the Alternatives.

In addition to fuel reduction, some treatments will reduce stand density which can reduce the susceptibility of stands at risk to Douglas-fir bark beetle attack. We are not aware of any appropriate treatments that would end the Douglas-Fir Beetle (DFB) epidemic and the Forest has not claimed this. To the contrary, the FEIS explicitly states that "direct control is not the purpose or goal of any of the treatments proposed in the MEF project (FEIS page 3.2-29). Pictures on pages 3.2-31 and 3.2-49 of the FEIS give striking evidence in the Middle East Fork drainage that past thinning has reduced the susceptibility of stands to Douglas-fir bark beetle attacks.

Effects of each alternative on the spread of noxious weeds are discussed in the FEIS on pages 3.10-2 to 3.10-14. Effects on soils are discussed on pages 3.5-13 to 3.5-47 and effects on stream sedimentation on pages 3.3-4 to 3.3-81.