



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Custer NF

2602 1st Avenue North
P.O. Box 2556
Billings, MT 59103

Reply To: 1570

Date: July 28, 1993

Robert Ament, Resource Specialist
American Wildlands
40 East Main, Suite 2
Bozeman, MT 59715

CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN
RECEIPT REQUESTED

Appeal #93-01-00-0090

Dear Mr. Ament:

I am withdrawing my May 21, 1993 decision to approve Forest Plan Amendment #15. This amendment to the Custer National Forest and National Grasslands Land and Resources Management Plan would have approved a site specific exception to create openings in excess of 40 acres to facilitate development of fuel breaks on the Sioux Ranger District.

Exceptions to this requirement are allowed as outlined in the Northern Regional Guide and the Forest Service Manual, and require Regional Forester approval. Therefore, this amendment is not appropriate and my decision is withdrawn. Procedures established in the Forest Service Manual will be followed and appropriate documentation included in the project file.

If you have any questions regarding this action, Please contact Jim Gray of my staff at 406-657-6361.

Sincerely,

for STEPHEN J. SOLEM
Deciding Officer
Acting Forest Supervisor

cc: Regional Forester Reviewing Officer
Sioux RD



Caring for the Land and Serving People

FS-6200-28 (7-82)

DECISION MEMO, NONSIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT TO THE
CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST, MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND SOUTH DAKOTA
AMENDMENT NUMBER 15, SIZE OF OPENINGS, SIOUX RANGER DISTRICT
April 1993

DECISION MEMO

Decision: It is my decision to make a site-specific amendment for size of opening to facilitate development of fuel breaks on the Sioux Ranger District. The Environmental Assessment that I approved on March 23, 1992 recommend creating openings that exceed the 40 acre maximum recommended by the Custer National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Forest Plan and Northern Regional Guide require an amendment to allow openings (timber cutting units), under even-aged silvicultural systems in excess of 40 acres in size on suitable timber lands.

Rationale for the Decision: Based on the information and environmental effects disclosed in the Sioux Ranger District Fuels Management Plan it is apparent that to facilitate protection of this area from catastrophic fire in the long-term additional large scale openings are needed. The Environmental Assessment identifies the impacts and provides guidelines to mitigate possible adverse impacts on scenic values. Because there are many large natural openings there is an opportunity to blend the new openings into the natural setting and not adversely affect visual quality.

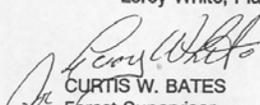
NONSIGNIFICANT NFMA AMENDMENT: This decision does not alter any of the long-term projections for goods or services as identified in the Forest Plan. Therefore, this amendment is non-significant under NFMA (36 CFR 219.10(f)), and Forest Service Manual 1922.51, item 1 and 3.

IMPLEMENTATION: This decision will be implemented upon public notice. This Decision Notice is public notice and will be sent to all those who have requested notice of Forest Plan amendments and those who have participated in the amendment process. In addition, notice of this decision will be published in local newspapers.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL: This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any written notice of appeal to this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9, "Content of Notice of Appeal". As a minimum, a written notice of appeal filed with the reviewing officer must: 1) List the name, address, and telephone number of the appellant; 2) Identify the decision about which the requester objects; 3) Identify the document in which the decision is contained by title and subject, date of the decision, and name and title of the Deciding Officer; 4) Identify specifically that portion of the decision or decision document to which the requester objects; 5) State the reasons for objection, including issues of fact, law, regulation, or policy and if applicable specifically how the decision violates law, regulation, or policy, and ; 6) Identify the specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks, (36 CFR 217.9{b}). A written notice of appeal must be filed within 45 days of the date of this decision and sent to:

US Forest Service, Northern Region
David F. Jolly, Regional Forester
PO Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59801

CONTACT PERSON: Additional information can be obtained from:
Custer National Forest, PO Box 2556
Billings, Montana 59103, phone (406) 657-6361
Leroy White, Planning Program Officer

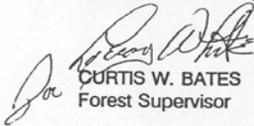

CURTIS W. BATES
Forest Supervisor

5/21/93
Date

**Forest Plan Amendment Number 15
Custer National Forest
Billings, Montana**

The Custer National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Record of Decision dated June 10, 1987 will be amended as follows:

The Forest Plan, page 24, item 2), under the Timber heading requires public involvement and/or Regional Forester approval. I am making a one time amendment to the Forest Plan to facilitate implementation of the Sioux Ranger District Fuelbreaks Project. This project was approved in March 1992 and future vegetative management activities will result in some openings exceeding the 40 acre size limitation. The openings that exceed 40 acres may include lands suitable for long-term timber management with reduced stocking levels.


CURTIS W. BATES
Forest Supervisor

5/21/93
Date