



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Big Piney  
Ranger  
District

12000 SR 27  
Hector, AR 72845  
479-284-3630  
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**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** January 7, 2008

Dear Friend of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest:

The Chief of the Forest Service recently identified Non-Native Invasive Species (NNIS) as one of four major threats to your National Forests. With this in mind, the Big Piney Ranger District, Ozark-St. Francis National Forest is proposing a District-Wide Vegetation Management Project Environmental Assessment that would authorize the use of herbicides in order to manage our growing NNIS problem. This project will concentrate on areas currently having the greatest populations of NNIS: road right-of-ways, wildlife openings and pastures, pond and lake shores, areas being or scheduled to be harvested, and recently acquired lands. In preparing this proposal, other means of NNIS control/eradication were discussed, but the use of herbicides alone or in conjunction with other treatments is considered to be the most effective and financially feasible method. Not all the treatments in this project are for NNIS, other treatments include: management of woody vegetation along road right-of-ways, site preparation for planting, and release of existing trees from competing vegetation.

The following is a description of proposed treatment actions and where they will occur:

- **Road Right-of-Ways:** NNIS will be spot treated with herbicide within 100 feet of the centerline of all roads, approximately 3,000 miles, on Forest Service land on the district. With spot treatment method, only the area infested with NNIS will be treated to minimize the amount of herbicide used in the area. A maximum of 100 to 200 miles of NNIS treatment may occur per year. In addition to the NNIS work, encroaching woody brush will be treated within the 100 foot corridor on approximately 100 miles under this proposal. Treatments in road right-of-way on private lands would also be applied where landowner permission is granted and a signed agreement obtained.
- **Harvested Areas and Acquired Lands:** Use herbicides, fire, mechanical cutting, and handtools for site preparation and release activities on approximately 6,564 acres that include previously harvested regeneration cuts that have not been successfully regenerated, regeneration areas yet to be harvested, recently acquired lands, and in some areas of the Woodland Ecosystem Project. Sites would be prepared for reforestation using several different methods, including herbicide application (foliar, injection, and/or soil), handtools, or a combination of handtools/herbicide, and prescribed burning. Planting of pine and oak may also be required on several areas where little to no seed source remains to regenerate the area to desired conditions.
- **Wildlife Openings and Pastures:** Use herbicides, fire, disking, and planting on 1,522 acres of wildlife openings and pastures that includes a 100 foot buffer around each opening.
- **Pond and Lake Shores:** Use herbicides on a 100 foot buffer around ponds (93 acres) and one quarter mile around lakes (92 acres).

Specific herbicides used would include Triclopyr, Hexazinone, Imazapyr, Glyphosate, and Metsulfuron methyl. Detailed Risk Assessments (RA) determining the potential risk to wildlife and aquatic species will be completed and documented for each herbicide. These RAs were developed by the Syracuse Environmental Research Associates (SERA) and are to be done for each herbicide used.



This proposal includes a series of management actions which follow the management direction of the Ozark-St. Francis Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP-Revised September 2005). If implemented, it would improve the health of the forest vegetation and the plant and animal diversity in the long term.

A team of interdisciplinary specialists will review the proposed actions, along with alternative actions, to study the potential effects of these treatments on the environment. Implementation of this project is proposed to begin in late summer 2009.

Maps showing locations of planned activities encompass the entire District and are too large to include with this project notification. Maps may be viewed at the District Offices located in Hector, AR and Jasper, AR or on the internet at: [www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark/projects/planning/bayouproject.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/oonf/ozark/projects/planning/bayouproject.html).

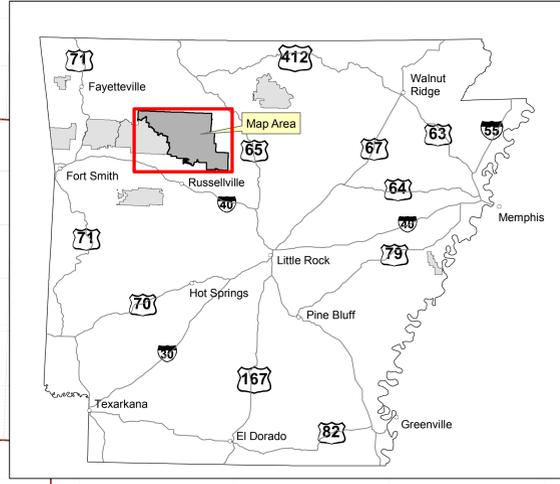
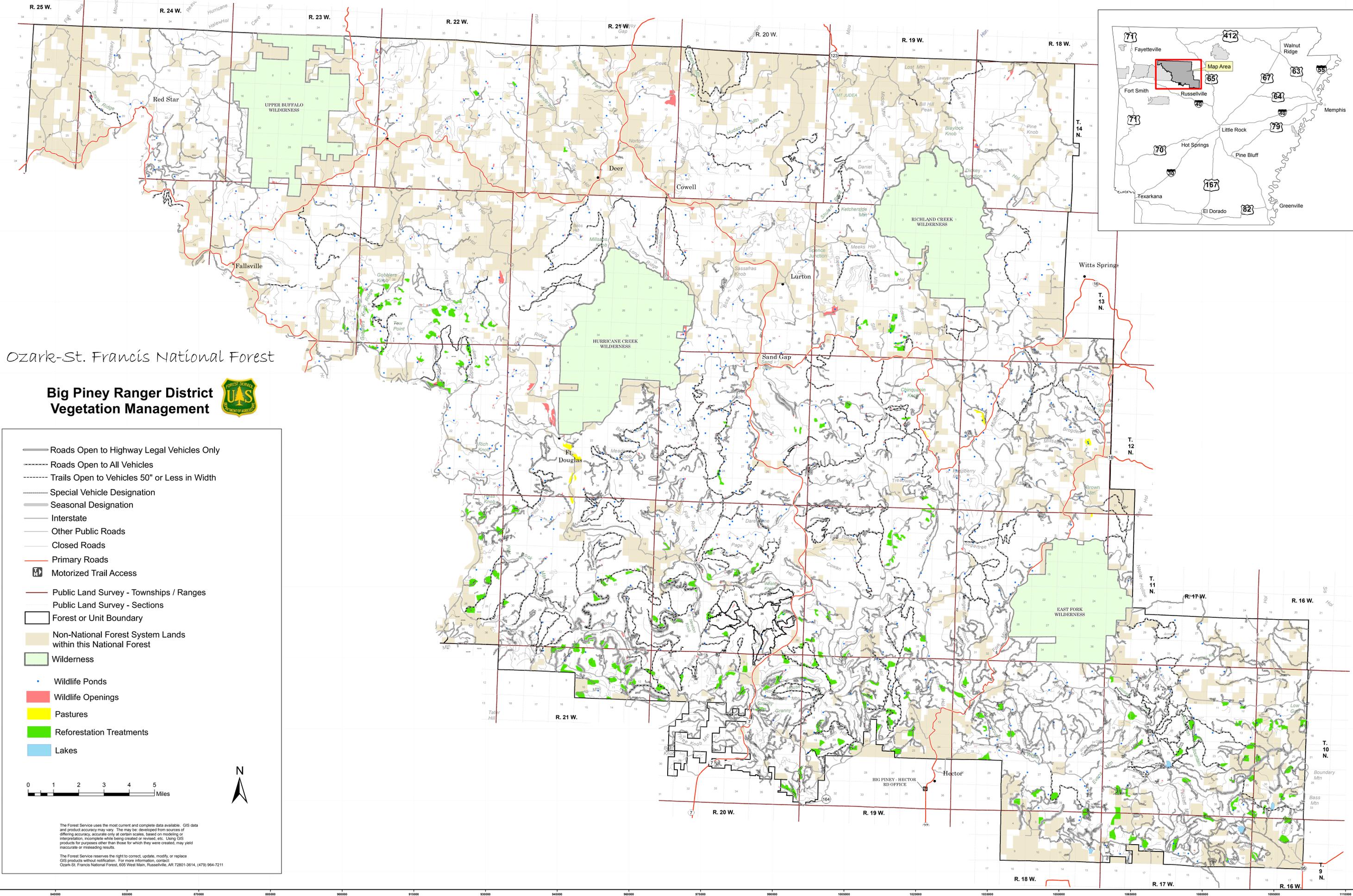
This letter provides an opportunity for the public to provide early and meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made. I would appreciate your comments on these proposals by February 6, 2009. Mail your comment(s) to Lew W. Purcell, Jr., Big Piney Ranger District, 12000 SR 27, Hector, AR 72843. Verbal or hand-delivered written comments must be received during our normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon-Fri. Comments may be mailed electronically to our office, in a common digital format, at: [comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bayou@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bayou@fs.fed.us). By responding to this, letter you will ensure that you will receive further notices during the environmental assessment process.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Roger Gunter at the District Ranger's office in Hector, AR (phone#: 479-284-3150 x3159, email: [rgunter@fs.fed.us](mailto:rgunter@fs.fed.us)).

Sincerely,

/s/ Lew W. Purcell, JR.

LEW W. PURCELL, JR.  
District Ranger



Ozark-St. Francis National Forest

**Big Piney Ranger District  
Vegetation Management**



- Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only
- Roads Open to All Vehicles
- Trails Open to Vehicles 50" or Less in Width
- Special Vehicle Designation
- Seasonal Designation
- Interstate
- Other Public Roads
- Closed Roads
- Primary Roads
- Motorized Trail Access
- Public Land Survey - Townships / Ranges
- Public Land Survey - Sections
- Forest or Unit Boundary
- Non-National Forest System Lands within this National Forest
- Wilderness
- Wildlife Ponds
- Wildlife Openings
- Pastures
- Reforestation Treatments
- Lakes

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The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. The map has been developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete when being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results.

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