



**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** June 26, 2009

Dear Reader,

The Pleasant Hill Ranger District of the Ozark National Forest is proposing activities in the **Lynn Hollow Project** area to improve/maintain ecosystem health by accomplishing vegetative management and associated road work, wildlife habitat improvement/maintenance, hazardous fuel reduction, and watershed/riparian maintenance. The Lynn Hollow Project is located in T13N, R24W Sections 2, 3, 10, 11, 14-18, 19-22, and 27-30 in Johnson, Madison, and Newton Counties approximately 4 miles west of Fallsville, Arkansas. This Project Area contains approximately 5,880 acres of National Forest Land.

The following are the proposed actions in the Lynn Hollow Project area:

- **Hardwood Thinning:** 29 hardwood stands (approximately 1247 acres) that are overly dense throughout the entire stand or in patches would be commercially thinned (target basal area of 70 ft<sup>2</sup>). This treatment is to increase forest health, reduce susceptibility to insects and disease, increase growth of residual trees, and improve habitat for wildlife.
- **Hardwood Shelterwood:** 23 mature hardwood stands (approximately 891 acres) would be harvested using the shelterwood method (target basal area of 20-40 ft<sup>2</sup>). These stands are reaching the end of their rotation age and growth has slowed down and mortality is occurring. A shelterwood harvest would create a new vigorous stand through natural seeding from hardwood trees left in the stand after harvest. This treatment is to sustain long term forest health, provide for the succession of early seral habitat, and to providing a sustainable forest.

**Connected Treatments for Hardwood Shelterwood Stands:**

**Site Preparation-** Prescribed fire, handtools and/or herbicide for natural hardwood regeneration may be needed to ensure adequate oak regeneration for all shelterwood stands (891 acres).

**Release-** handtools or herbicide would be used, if necessary, to reduce competing vegetation and release desirable hardwood species after the new stand has been established for all shelterwood stands(891 acres).

*-If natural seeding fails in Hardwood Shelterwood stands, the following treatment may be required to establish the new stand:*

**Planting-** oaks would be planted to establish the new stand following site prep burning and herbicides (891 acres).

- **Oak Woodland Restoration:** 2 hardwood stands (approximately 66 acres) would be commercially thinned with the purpose of reducing trees per acre to levels common in oak woodlands (target basal area of 40 ft<sup>2</sup>) during pre-European times. These areas would have less trees per acre than a regular thinning but more than a shelterwood. Oak Woodland restoration would allow more sunlight to reach the forest floor (thereby increasing herbaceous species diversity) and promote more mast (nut & fruit) production from the remaining trees. Oak woodland restoration would benefit a variety of game and non-game wildlife species.
- **Pine Thinning:** 4 pine stands (approximately 96 acres) that are overly dense throughout the entire stand or in patches would be thinned (target basal area of 70 ft<sup>2</sup>). The purpose and need of this treatment is to increase forest health, reduce susceptibility to insects and disease, increase growth of residual trees, and improve habitat for wildlife.



- Pine Woodland Restoration: 1 pine stand (approximately 24 acres) would be commercially thinned (target basal area of 40-50 ft<sup>2</sup>) with the purpose of reducing trees per acre to levels common in pine woodlands in pre-European times.
- Timber Stand Improvement (TSI): TSI will be accomplished on 29 hardwood stands (approximately 785 acres) by the use of handtools and/or herbicides to reduce small and/or unmerchantable trees competing with desired hardwood species. This would allow species such as oaks to be free of competition and become more prominent in the stand.
- Wildlife Stand Improvement (WSI) Woodland Restoration: 10 hardwood stands (approximately 381 acres) would receive this non-commercial treatment. This treatment would occur through the use of chainsaw felling, use of a tree shear, use of girdling and herbicide application and foliar application of herbicide to treat stems less than 3 feet in height. Cut trees would be left in place on site, or would be utilized as fire wood. Currently the areas designated for woodland restoration are characterized as low quality hardwood on dry sites that were historically maintained as open woodland by large fires. Woodland restoration would allow more sunlight to reach the forest floor (thereby increasing herbaceous species diversity) and promote more mast (nut & fruit) production from the remaining trees. WSI woodland restoration would benefit a variety of game and non-game wildlife species.
- Road Work: The following road work would be done:

Road Treatment	Miles	# of Roads	Remarks
Construction	2.3	4	To access timber stands
Reconstruction	0.6	2	To fix washed out drains/culverts
Decommission	2.9	6	Watershed improvement
Maintenance	23.6	14	Maintain existing roads
Maintenance/Closure	10.6	12	Maintain roads during timber sale and then close after sale is finished
Temporary Roads	4	N/A	Constructed to access timber stands and closed when timber sale is done

- Gate installation: 9 gates would be constructed under this proposal. Gates would potentially improve watershed conditions and wildlife habitat by reducing disturbance from vehicles and provide recreational experiences to Forest users by limiting areas to walk-in hunting/wildlife viewing only.
- Non-native invasive Species (NNIS): If NNIS are found during project implementation they will be controlled using the appropriate herbicide.
- Wildlife Openings: 6 wildlife openings each 2 acres in size would be constructed using a dozer and would be maintained by mowing and herbicides. Many animals need forest openings to fulfill all or some of their habitat requirements during their life cycle.
- Wildlife Opening Reconstruction: 1 existing wildlife opening (2 acres) would be reconstructed using a dozer and then maintained by mowing and herbicides. Many animals need forest openings to fulfill all or some of their habitat requirements during their life cycle.
- Recreational Fish Ponds: 2 recreational fish ponds would be constructed (Comp 304 Stand 3 = 1-3 acres, and Comp 305 Stand 14 = 2-4 acres) using a dozer. This would supply a water source for wildlife as well as provide recreational opportunities.
- Prescribed Burning: 5,880 acres (all of the Forest Service land within the project area) would receive low to moderate intensity prescribed burns to reduce hazardous fuels and wildfire risk. Prescribed burning may be done on a 3-7 year rotation throughout the Lynn Hollow Project area. Prescribed burning would provide associated benefits to wildlife through improvement in forest floor vegetation abundance and diversity. Fire would also benefit wildlife by improving hard-mast producing species (oak/hickory) in the seedling and sapling stage by reducing competition from fire intolerant species.

- Culvert Trash Cleanup: A pile of old, used culverts on the ground next to road 94304B would be cleaned up and hauled off.
- Ozark Highlands Trail: Along the Ozark Highlands Trail within this project area, hazard trees may be removed to provide for public safety.

**No work will occur on privately-owned land** other than potential prescribed burning on private lands with the landowners consent. Implementation of this project is proposed to begin in 2010 with road work possibly starting in 2009. The enclosed map is provided to assist you in evaluating this proposal.

This solicitation for public comment serves two purposes. First, it helps serve the purpose of “scoping” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508). Scoping is a public involvement process used to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and identify issues related to a proposed action.

Second, it provides those interested in or affected by this proposal an opportunity to make their comments and concerns known before a decision is made by the Responsible Official, Pleasant Hill District Ranger, Patricia Kowalewycz. Each individual or representative from each organization that provides comment or otherwise expresses an interest in the project must either sign the comments or otherwise verify identity in order to attain appeal eligibility.

Comments received in response to this request will be available for public inspection and will be released in their entirety if requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

We are combining our scoping effort required by FSH 1909.15 and the Notice and Comment stipulation required by 35 CFR 215 with this letter. Comments should be received within 30 days of the date of publication in the *Johnson County Graphic*. If you can provide additional information that will help us make the best decision on the proposed project, contact Trevor Ozier or me at (479) 754-2864; or mail to: District Ranger, Pleasant Hill Ranger District, 2591 Hwy 21, Clarksville, Arkansas, 72830. Our e-mail address is: [comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-pleasanthill@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-pleasanthill@fs.fed.us)

Sincerely,



PATRICIA KOWALEWYCZ  
District Ranger

enclosures:  
- Project Area Map

