

Appendix F

Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

The following list includes past, present, and expected future management actions that may contribute to cumulative effects. This list is not a cumulative effects analysis. This list is used by resource specialists to determine what actions may create effects in addition to the direct or indirect effects from the Devil Trout Project.

CEQ guidance states the cumulative effects analysis area should be determined by resource based on potential effects (January 1997, pp.15-16). Each resource determined the appropriate cumulative effects analysis area and therefore which of the actions listed are relevant.

Past actions have been completed and their effects taken into account in the existing condition. Present actions are those where the activity, such as a timber contract, is still operating or a decision has been made to implement an action. Future actions are those where an activity is being planned but not started or a decision made yet.

To assess effects of past actions, CEQ states *“Agencies are not required to list or analyze the effects of individual past actions unless such information is necessary to describe the cumulative effect of all past actions combined. Agencies retain substantial discretion as to the extent of such inquiry and the appropriate level of explanation. Marsh v. Oregon Natural Resources Council, 490 U.S. 360, 376-77 (1989). Generally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historical details of individual past actions.”*

“With respect to past actions, during the scoping process and subsequent preparation of the analysis, the agency must determine what information regarding past actions is useful and relevant to the required analysis of cumulative effects. Cataloging past actions and specific information about the direct and indirect effects of their design and implementation could in some contexts be useful to predict the cumulative effects of the proposal. The CEQ regulations, however, do not require agencies to catalogue or exhaustively list and analyze all individual past actions. Simply because information about past actions may be available or obtained with reasonable effort does not mean that it is relevant and necessary to inform decision making.”

Federal Past and On-going Actions within Project Boundary

- The effects of vegetation management projects on National Forest (NF) land within the Devil Trout Project Area were addressed in the Behind the Ridge (1998), Northern Lights (1999), Red Pine and White Spruce Thinning (2002), Kadunce Hunter Walking Trail (2004) and East Side Thinning (2004) Environmental Assessments (EAs). Completed management actions from these projects have been accounted for in the existing condition. On-going timber sales that have been sold but not harvested include 21 acres of pine thinning (from Red Pine and White Spruce Thinning EA) and 213 acres of clearcut harvest from the Kadunce Hunter Walking Trail and Behind the Ridge EA's.

- Past wild and prescribed fires are reflected in the existing condition. There is one prescribed burn project of 31 acres from the Pit Sale of the Northern Lights EA within the Devil Trout project area.
- Release of white pine trees along the Gunflint Trail.

Federal Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions within Project Boundary

- Underplanting of 692 acres of white pine and white spruce, mostly in riparian areas. Seedlings will be planted under existing forest canopy to increase the stand's conifer component, improve tree species diversity, stand structure and wildlife habitat.
- Approximately 4 culvert replacements on Kadunce and Nester creeks.
- Currently potential ATV trails in Cook County are being evaluated. There are not proposals at this time.
- The Cook County Wildfire Protection Plan was approved in 2005. The Plan addresses long-term fuels and fire-related management actions within the Wildland Urban Interface and not site-specific management actions, such as those in the Devil Trout Project.
- We anticipate issuing 3 special use permits for access on existing roads and to private land parcels. Additional permit requests are possible. A special use permit is expected for access to private land south of Pickerel Lake and is expected to be 1900 linear feet long.
- In early 2006, the Superior NF plans to provide a Non-Native Plant Management (EA) for public review and comment. This EA would describe a proposed integrated pest management approach to managing noxious weeds on Forest lands along with potential environmental effects.
- Re-route of snowmobile trail by the Cascade River.
- Expanded parking area by Kimball Lake boat landing.

State, County and Private Past, Ongoing and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions within Project Boundary

- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) land encompasses 15.9 percent (7,800 acres) of the project area. Based on a data base query of State land in the project area, approximately 368 acres are young (0-9 years old for upland hardwoods and 0-9 years old for lowland forest). The State is currently proposing to harvest approximately 1359 acres total in 57 stands within the Devil Trout project area. The DNR's Border Lakes and North Shore Management Plans are currently under revision and therefore, additional future state actions within the project boundary are unknown at this time.
- Cook County land encompasses 0.6 percent (289 acres) of the project area.
- Other private land, which is predominately residential or seasonal recreational residential, comprises 8.4 percent (approximately 4,176 acres) of the project area. Based on the small amount of known potential harvest on other private land and because of a land use focus on recreation, timber harvest levels are expected to be low.
- Private development of housing tracts along Pine Mountain, Devil Track Road and South Shore Devil Track Lake Road.

Management Actions Outside the Project Boundary

CEQ states "Proximity of other actions to the proposed actions is not the decisive factor for including these actions in an analysis; these actions must have some influence on the resource affected by the proposed action. In other words, these other actions should be included in

analysis when their impact zones overlap area occupied by resources affected by the proposed action.” Whether the following actions are included is dependant on the resource.

- East Side Thinning (2005) Environmental Assessment: This project was decided in 2005 and has units surrounding the Devil Trout Project Area. Both projects include actions in the Mesic Aspen Birch Spruce Fir Landscape Ecosystems (LE). The LE and MIH information is accounted for in respective cumulative effects analyses. Some contiguous roads/trails traverse both project areas and this information will be used for some TES species and NNIS analyses.
- Two Island Project: This project will be started later 2006 and is located northwest side of Devil Trout Project Area. This project would include actions in the Mesic Aspen Birch Spruce Fir Landscape Ecosystems (LE). LAU #39 and # 40 overlap both project areas as do some contiguous roads/trails and this information will be used for some TES species and NNIS analyses.
- Mid-Temperance Forest Management Project: This project is currently being designed and mid-level analyses will begin spring of 2006. The project area does not have any overlapping LAUs, watersheds, or roads with the Devil Trout Project and project areas do not adjoin. This project would include actions in the Mesic Aspen Birch Spruce Fir Landscape Ecosystems (LE).
- Devil Track Road reconstruction by the County if funding becomes available. Its effects are considered in the lynx, NNIS, and visual analyses.
- Laurentian Biomass Project. The Laurentian Energy Authority (LEA) is re-powering existing power facilities in Virginia and Hibbing Minnesota to burn woody biomass from the surrounding region. The renovation is expected in 2007, and utilization of biomass material should take place shortly thereafter.
- Spring, 2006, Cook County Gypsy Moth Project EA involving Federal, State, and County. Federal, State and affected county governments as well as several FS entomologists/other scientists involved in the gypsy moth Slow the Spread (STS) program will help prepare the EA.