
Appendix I

Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

APPENDIX I

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On November 21, 2005, the Project interdisciplinary team constructed the following list of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions within the Project Area on all ownerships. This list was updated periodically through the analysis and completed in January 2006 for the Draft EIS and updated again for the Final EIS in October 2006. This list was developed for consideration by the IDT members when they analyzed for cumulative effects (the combination of direct and indirect effects with the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions). The effects of past, present and potential future vegetation management were considered in the existing and future conditions for age class distribution, species composition, wildlife habitat, and other resources. The specific items in this list that were used in each cumulative effects analysis in the EIS are either identified in that section of the EIS or listed in the Project file.

Past Actions and Present Actions

- The following timber sales occurred in the Project Area within the last approximately 20 years. Records for specific sales beyond about 20 years are not available. However, the stand data reflects the existing conditions resulting from all past harvest activities.

LaCroix Ranger District			Kawishiwi Ranger District		
Aardvark	Echo Rapids II	Marvins Creek	Agabig	CCC	Picklow
Alces Maximus	Echo River	Moose River	Agassa	Four Corners	Pine Cone II
Broken Quaking	Finstad	Mystic Pulp	Agassa II	High Fen	Pine Rapids
Buckshot	Found Jack II	New Nekoosa	Bald Pate	High Fen II	Range Line
Camp 86	Hilda Crk. II	New Picket	Bear Trap	Minnie Twin	Rightangle
Camp 97	Jumbled	Nocked Over	Big Baldy	North Grassy	South Third
Cold Springs I&II	Krushed	Norway I & II	Big Windy	North Range	South 29
Color	Lake Alf I & II	Pecore Spgs II	Black Pine	Old Picklow	Top Hutch
Cracked	Limpy	Penta Pine	Bright	Picket	Tubfull
Down Drags	Little Alfie	S. Echo II	Camp Bright	Picket II	
Duck Creek	Maude	Tiny Tubful			
Echo Grouse I&II	Found Jack II				

- The Plantation Timber Sale Project Area, encompassing 62,741 acres, is an environmental analysis area located within the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project boundary. The purpose of the Plantation Timber Sale Project is to provide wood fiber, reduce fire risk, and accelerate tree growth. The Decision Notice and FONSI were signed on May 30, 2002. The implementation of the Plantation Timber Sale Project includes the commercial thinning of 939 acres of pine plantations, creating and maintaining 58 acres of fuel breaks, reducing fuels in a 34 acre unit, constructing 0.4 miles of winter system roads, reopening 3.5 miles of existing system road, physically closing constructed and reopened roads once activities are complete, and decommissioning 1.8 miles of unclassified roads. Plantation EA has resulted in three thinning sales (Penta Pine which has been harvested and two sales, Gips Thin and Thin Moose, planned to be offered in 2006 and 2007).

Past Actions and Present Actions (continued)

- Planned and proposed data and information from the following vegetation projects were included in the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project analysis: Holmes Chipmunk EIS, Inga-South Environmental Assessment (EA), Kadunce 2 EA, Tomahawk EA, Virginia EIS, Upper Caribou Categorical Exclusion (CE), Devil Trout EA, Dunka EA, Gyppo EA, Junction EA, Reservoir EA, and the Whyte proposal.
- Vegetation management has occurred on State, county, and timber industry owned land. Other landowners were contacted to obtain management action plans. St. Louis County and Potlatch provided information on proposed harvest in the next 10 years. Information from the State of Minnesota Border Lakes Subsection Plan was used in the cumulative effects analysis.
- From 1982 to 2003, 142 wildfires burned 336 acres. Sixty-nine percent of those fires were human-caused and 31 percent were lightning fires. The human-caused fires were primarily started by campfires.
- Prescribed fires have been conducted on approximately 400 acres in the past 10 to 15 years.
- A prescribed fire was conducted in the Trout Lake BWCAW unit in 2005.
- A portion of section 31, T 53 N, R 15 W (285 acres in the south portion of the Project Area) in the Project Area was treated for gypsy moth in the summer of 2005.
- Potlatch and US Steel have sold land to private individuals. Additional private development may create more structures, roads, gravel use, and special use access permits.
- Special use road authorizations for access to non-federal land: about 7 miles of road and 9 miles of trail on NFS land permitted for non-federal use and about 4 miles on non-federal land of road associated with the special use permits. This data is part of the road inventory used in the analyses.
- South Kessanen Gravel Pit Expansion Project EA was approved in 2004.
- The Echo Trail (County Road 116) was realigned for a small section just outside of Ely in 2005.
- Currently, one other EIS is being prepared near the Project Area. The Three Bays on Lake Vermilion Project, encompassing 1399.48 acres, is an environmental impact statement administered by St. Louis County, Minnesota. A Public Open House was held on November 22, 2005. The Three Bays on Vermilion Project Area is located about 2 ½ miles south of the Echo Trail Project Area's southern boundary, on the east end of Lake Vermilion in Breitung Township. The Three Bays on Lake Vermilion is a proposed single family residential development on Lake Vermilion. The environmental impact statement will analyze the effects of a 138 single family residential planned unit development (PUD) on Lake Vermilion's natural and social resources. St. Louis County's EIS Scoping Decision outlines the need to evaluate recreation impacts on the existing recreation trail system, adjacent State park and Taconite Trail and of increased use of the lake by jet skis, snowmobiles, and other lake users, including noise (St. Louis County, 2005).
- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) is undertaking a large OHV planning effort within the State Forests to designate forest roads open and closed to ATV riding. The OHV planning effort for the Lake Jeanette and Burntside State Forests, both located within the Project Area, is scheduled to begin in 2007. The Forest Service and St. Louis County will both plan cooperatively with the MnDNR on this project. Depending on future decisions, some projects could add "miles of road open to OHV use", and some could lessen miles open to motorized recreation use if decommissioned. Impacts are not quantifiable because there are no proposals at this time.

- The Forest has implemented Forest Plan ATV regulations through issuance of the 2005 and 2006 ATV Travel Plan (ATV Roads/Trail Map).
- Trout Lake portage (about 0.5 miles) was reconstructed in 2005.
- St. Louis County is working on a management plan for Lake Vermilion with input from a citizen's committee.

Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

- About 2,100 acres of State managed land, 100 acres of Potlatch land and 50 acres of St. Louis county managed land are being considered for harvest in the next 10 years.
- Additional developments on private land may result in additional special use permits and increased use of the Project Area. Any future rights-of-way requests that involve federal land within the Project Area would be analyzed in a separate process. The authorized officer would screen the proposal to insure that it meets minimum special use requirements [CFR 254.54(e)].
- St. Louis County will continue to maintain the Echo Trail (county road 116) using gravel primarily from the Kesanen pit.
- Use of gravel would continue on the existing 36 pits in the Project Area.
- Additional development on private land has increased concerns about the wild land/urban interface, especially as it relates to the risk of wildfire. Planning for a community wildfire protection plan for the Burntside Lake area will likely begin in 2007. Approximately 800 acres may be treated in this proposal. Sites for treatment have not been identified at this time.
- Prescribed burns within the BWCAW near the Project Area are proposed as follows: 4-Mile (about 955 acres) in October 2006, Crab Lake (about 2,400 acres) in May 2007, and Merritt (about 2,650 acres) in October 2007.
- 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.
- A high number of gypsy moths were found during last season's monitoring in Cook County. In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the Superior National Forest worked with other State, local and federal agencies to determine appropriate actions to slow the spread of the moth in Minnesota. On June 14, 2006 Jim Sanders, Superior National Forest Supervisor, signed a decision to implement measures to slow the spread of Gypsy Moths in Cook county.
- On April 27, 2006 Jim Sanders, Superior National Forest Supervisor signed a decision to implement the Non-native Invasive Plant Management Project which provides for treatments of NNIS (Non-native Invasive Plant Species) across the Forest, including the Echo Trail Project Area. The Environmental Assessment for that Project describes an integrated approach to managing noxious weeds on the Forest and the effects of such management.

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