

Appendix E

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 Cascade Project.

CEQ guidance states that the cumulative effects analysis area should be determined by resources, based on potential effects (*Considering Cumulative Effects*, Council on Environmental Quality, January 1997 pp.15-16). Each resource determined the appropriate cumulative effects analysis area and subsequently 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 is yet to be made.

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 Cascade Project Area were addressed in the following Environmental Assessments (EAs): Behind the Ridge (1998), Red Pine and White Spruce Thinning (2002), East Side Thinning (2005). Completed management actions from these projects have been accounted for in the existing condition; however 655 acres (The Deeryard Timber Sale) from the East Side Thinning EA (2005) have not been

completed. And currently, there are no sales operating within the project area or just outside the boundaries.

- The Non-native Invasive Plant Management EA Project (2006) describes an integrated pest management approach for managing noxious weeds on Forest land and potential environmental effects. Weed treatments will occur within the project boundary.

Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions on Federal Land within Project Boundary

- The Superior NF has proposed a Motorized Travel Management Project in coordination with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Louis, Lake and Cook Counties, 1854 Authority, and Grand Portage Band. This project addresses OHV use and use of unclassified roads. Within the Cascade project area, there are eight unclassified roads. Of these roads, under the Motorized Travel Management Project, three would be upgraded to OML 2 (.53 miles) and allow OHVs; one would be upgraded to OML 2 (.26 miles) and OHV use would not be allowed; and four (1.26 miles) would be decommissioned.
- The southeastern portion of the Cascade Project Area (the private property near Thompson Lake) is part of the Devil Track Wildland Urban Interface which falls under the Cook County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). There are moderate fuel hazards within the project area and fuel reduction treatments are being assessed to see if there is a need to propose any treatments near the private property. There are no other fuel reduction treatments being proposed in the Cascade Project Area from other projects.
- The District is planning to replace culverts on Little Mississippi Creek and Mark Creek crossings on the FR 329 and on Thompson Creek crossing on FR 158.

Past, Ongoing and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions on State and Private Lands within Project Boundary (Note: There is no county land within the Cascade Project Area.)

- State lands encompass approximately 2 percent (4000 acres) of the project area. Based on stand information from the MN DNR's website and discussions with the state resource planners, of those 4000 acres, the State is currently proposing stand examinations to determine harvest potential on approximately 1323 acres and thinning needs on 192 acres within the project boundary through 2015. For the cumulative effects analysis all acres were assumed to be harvested even though actual treatment acres may be less. Based on the DNR's Notice of Annual Plan Additions for FY 2007 No. 3, no additional harvests are planned within the project boundary.
- Private lands encompass approximately 1/2 percent (1,200 acres) within the project boundary. They are scattered throughout the project and many of the parcels would be considered undeveloped land. The National Forest anticipates minimal to no harvesting on private lands within the project boundary.

Management Actions Outside 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 dependent on the resource.

- Clara Lake Project: This area is to the west of the Cascade project area and includes 25,161 acres of the MBA LE. No actions have been proposed yet in the Clara Project yet; therefore no effects could be predicted from this project. The Cascade IDT members have shared information with Clara IDT members about resources that overlap the two project areas.
- Table E-1 shows past, present and proposed actions in the Mesic Birch-Aspen-Spruce-Fir Landscape Ecosystem across the forest. The LE and MIH cumulative effects analyses included any of the projects where actions have occurred, are decided or have been proposed.

*Table E-1 Projects under the 2004 Forest Plan that contain the Mesic Birch-Aspen-Spruce-Fir Landscape Ecosystem**

Project	District	MBA LE Acres	% of Entire LE**
Devil Trout	Gunflint	25,162	8%
Dunka	Kawishiwi	1,084	0.4%
Inga South	Tofte	2,232	0.8%
Mid-Temperance	Tofte	23,127	7.8%
Upper Caribou	Tofte	2,132	0.7%
Virginia	Laurentian	10,657	4%
Whyte	Kawishiwi	32,349	11%
Clara***	Tofte	25,161	8%
Border***	Lacroix	50	.02%
Kadunce	Gunflint	1,392	.5%
Ham Lake	Gunflint	1,095	.4%
Cascade	Gunflint	14,485	4.9%
	TOTAL	138,926	47%
*Total MBA LE across the Forest is 296,824 acres.			
**Summarized from Amount of MBA LE in Project Areas across the Forest Map in Project Record.			
*** No actions have been proposed			