

### **3.10 FOREST PLAN INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREAS**

#### **3.10.1 Summary**

Alternatives 1 and 4 would have no timber harvest and road construction within the inventoried roadless areas considered in the 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Forest Plan. Alternatives 1 and 4 would have no direct or indirect effects to the criteria listed in Table 3.10-2 qualifying areas as inventoried roadless.

Alternative 2 would include harvest in 4 Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas (Agassa Lake, Beaver Stream, Picket Lake, and Urho Creek) and Alternative 3 Modified would include harvest in 2 (Picket Lake and Urho Creek). The Echo Trail Area Project does not propose constructing any improved roads or the decommissioning of any improved roads within the inventoried roadless areas. Only temporary roads are proposed for construction and only unclassified roads would be decommissioned. Alternative 2 would include substantially more timber harvest than Alternative 3 Modified within the inventoried roadless areas. Alternative 2 would include timber harvest in the Agassa and Beaver Stream areas and about twice as many acres of harvesting as Alternative 3 Modified in the Picket Lake area. Alternative 2 would also exceed the roadless area inventory criteria (used during Forest Plan Revision) of 20% area harvested within the next 10 years in the Picket Lake Area. Since the Picket Lake area would have greater than 20% of its area harvested in Alternative 2, it would not qualify as roadless if a re-inventory were done within 10 years of the project decision. The Picket Lake area is the only inventoried roadless area considered in the analysis that would have greater than 20% of its area harvested as proposed in Alternative 2. All other inventoried roadless areas considered in this analysis, would continue to qualify as roadless as evaluated in the FPR (Forest Plan Revision) FEIS in any of the alternatives considered in detail.

Although Alternative 2 would harvest more than 20 percent of the Picket Lake inventoried roadless area, the Record of Decision for the Forest Plan Revision FEIS allocated the Picket Lake area to management other than wilderness study.

Only unclassified roads would be decommissioned. Table 3.10-3 shows the miles of decommissioning in the inventoried roadless areas for the Echo Trail Area Project.

#### **3.10.2 Introduction**

This section includes some background clarification information on past roadless inventories and current direction for analysis of effects within Forest Plan Inventoried Roadless Areas.

##### *2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule and 2005 State Petitioning Rule*

The 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (RACR) Final EIS was published in November 2000, and the Final Rule was published in the Federal Register on January 12, 2001. The 13 areas on the Superior National Forest that were included in the RACR FEIS were the roadless areas analyzed during the 1986 Forest Plan analysis. See Appendix C of the 2004 Forest Plan Revision FEIS for detailed information on the RACR.

In May 2005, the US Department of Agriculture announced the *Special Areas; State Petitions for Inventoried Roadless Area Management; Roadless Area Conservation National Advisory Committee; Final Rule and Notice*. This 2005 State Petitioning Rule replaced the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule described above. The 2005 State Petitioning Rule applied to 30 areas on the Superior National Forest which were inventoried as roadless areas during the Forest Plan revision. Minnesota Governor Pawlenty did not file a petition under this rule which means that the Secretary of

Agriculture is not re-evaluating the Management Area designations assigned to Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas as a result of the 2004 Forest Plan Revision FEIS and Record of Decision. (See below for more information on Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas.)

In late September 2006, a court ruling in California overturned the 2005 State Petitioning Rule and re-instated the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. This recent court ruling does not impact this analysis because there are no vegetation management or road construction activities planned within a RACR area. The 0.2 miles of road decommissioning within the Moose Portage III area is not prohibited under the RACR. If further interpretation of this recent court ruling indicates that it applies to this project, the Responsible Officials will determine if further analysis is necessary.

### *Forest Plan Inventoried Roadless Areas*

Forest Plan Inventoried Roadless Areas are lands in a National Forest that met specific criteria identified in Table 3.10-2. These criteria used in the Forest Plan Revision FEIS directly relate to those listed in FSH (Forest Service Handbook) 1909.12, 71.12 that qualify areas for inventory as lands that may have potential for wilderness recommendation. This section of the FSH states: “*National Forest lands in the eastern United States (east of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian) have been acquired over time from private ownership. Criteria for inventorying those lands that may have potential for wilderness recommendation recognize that much, if not all the land, shows some signs of human activity and modification even though they have shown high recuperative capabilities.*”

The Forest Plan revision process, completed in 2004, required an up-to-date inventory to address roadless area management issues. At the time of the Superior National Forest plan revision, all national forests were required to evaluate those previously inventoried roadless areas (Roadless Area Conservation Rule), and other lands, which remain essentially roadless and undeveloped, and had not been designated for wilderness. Areas that met the FSH inventory criteria were evaluated and considered for wilderness study recommendation (FSH 1909.12). The Forest Plan Revision Record of Decision (pages 17 and 18) described why the areas were not recommended for wilderness study and consequently all the inventoried areas were allocated to other Management Areas.

Since the ROD for the Forest Plan was signed in July 2004, any proposed site-specific project within a Forest Plan inventoried area requires an environmental analysis that considers effects of the project proposal on the roadless characteristics in the area. The effects analysis considers the entire inventoried area, not just the project area.

This analysis of inventoried roadless areas is important because of the relatively high level of interest expressed by the public about potential effects to roadless areas from proposed road and timber harvest activities. Table 3.10-1 lists the Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas associated with the Echo Trail Area Project and their corresponding MA allocation. The Forest Plan Revision FEIS analysis is in the section 3.7 Special Designations, pages 3.7-1 – 3.7-13. Appendix C of the FPR FEIS, displays the Forest Roadless Area Inventory and Evaluation for the Forest Plan Revision.

Proposed timber and road activities for the Echo Trail Area Project would affect four to five inventoried roadless areas depending on the action alternative. They are identified in bold with an asterisk (\*) in Table 3.10-1. Timber harvest and unclassified road decommissioning are proposed in the Agassa Lake, Beaver Stream, Picket Lake and Urho Creek inventoried roadless areas, and special use access (temporary roads) are proposed for timber management on State of Minnesota lands in the Agassa Lake and Big Lake areas.

<b>Table 3.10-1. Forest Plan Management Area Designation for each Inventoried Roadless Area</b>				
<b>Area Name<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Total Acres<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>National Forest Acres</b>	<b>Percent National Forest</b>	<b>Forest Plan Management Area</b>
<b>Agassa Lake*</b>	2,871	2,641	92%	General Forest – Longer Rotation Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation
Baldpate Lake	485	485	100%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
<b>Beaver Stream*</b>	1,317	1,277	97%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
<b>Big Lake*</b>	1,194	1,079	90%	Semi-primitive Non-motorized Recreation
Echo River	1,900	1,900	100%	General Forest – Longer Rotation, Recreation Use in a Scenic Landscape
Lake Jeanette	1,793	1,793	100%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
Little Indian Sioux	995	995	100%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
Meander Lake	753	753	100%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
North Arm Burntside Lake	2,743	2,285	83%	Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation
<b>Picket Lake*</b>	4,480	4,097	91%	Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation
<b>Urho Creek*</b>	3,613	3,573	99%	General Forest – Longer Rotation
Wolf Lake	2,840	2,661	94%	General Forest – Longer Rotation

<sup>1</sup>Areas in **bold** with an asterisk (\*) contain activities proposed for the Echo Trail Area Project in one or more alternatives, including timber management, unclassified road decommissioning, or special use access.

<sup>2</sup>Total acres include acres of National Forest System lands, non-federal lands, and water.

### **3.10.3 Analysis Methods**

As described in section 1.12 Significant Issues, the interdisciplinary team treated effects to Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas as a significant issue. The issue is that harvest and road management activities would affect Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas, which could adversely affect the long-term roadless characteristics of the areas, effects that would be evident beyond the time when the actions are taking place. People commenting on this subject, for the most part, did not want to see any actions proposed within the Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas.

Indicators for this inventoried roadless area analysis relate to the roadless inventory criteria used in the FPR FEIS. These indicators consider potential effects that would be noticeable over time. The FPR analysis used these indicators to discuss general effects to vegetation, setting/solitude, ownership, roads, and shape. Table 3.10-2 shows how and why the inventoried roadless area analysis for this project considered these criteria as effects indicators.

<b>Table 3.10-2. Inventoried Roadless Area Indicators</b>			
<b>Criteria Focus</b>	<b>Criteria Description</b>	<b>Used in this Analysis</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b><i>Criteria for Roadless Areas (Used in Forest Plan Revision FEIS)</i></b>			
Vegetation	No more than 20 percent of the area harvested in the past 10 years.	Yes	Indicates prior activities within the area prior to and including this project.
Setting/Solitude	At least about 2,500 <sup>1</sup> acres of semi-primitive area if not adjacent to existing wilderness (regional guideline). No acre limit adjacent to existing wilderness.	No	No actions are proposed that would change the size of the inventoried roadless areas.
Ownership	At least 70 percent federal ownership. No future non-federal land access needs.	No	No land ownership changes are a part of this project.
Roads	No more than ½ mile of improved roads per 1,000 acres. No roads not under Forest Service jurisdiction.	No	No improved roads would be constructed or decommissioned in the inventoried roadless areas.
Shape	A manageable area without narrow, elongated, or gerrymandered boundaries.	No	No actions are proposed that would change the shape of inventoried roadless areas.
<b><i>Indicators for Echo Trail Area Project's Proposed Vegetation Management Activities</i></b>			
Vegetation	Acres (%) proposed for harvest within the inventoried roadless areas.	Yes	Displays potential effects of the Alternatives on vegetation within inventoried roadless areas, and highlights differences between alternatives.
Road Decommissioning	Miles of unclassified road decommissioned within the inventoried roadless areas per 1,000 acres of inventoried roadless area.	Yes	Displays effects of the Alternatives on the amount of potential motorized use within inventoried roadless areas.

<sup>1</sup>This acreage, 2,500 acres, is a guideline in the evaluation process rather than strict criteria.

The miles of unclassified roads that are to be decommissioned and acres/percentage harvested within the inventoried roadless areas are criteria that help disclose effects and define differences between the alternatives. Since all temporary roads developed for this project would be decommissioned following the proposed management activities, the amount of temporary roads would not indicate differences between alternatives and would not have substantial effects to the criteria qualifying inventoried roadless areas.

These indicators do a good job of showing the effects and differences in effects among the alternatives because the alternatives incorporate different amounts of proposed activities. The harvest activities affect roadless areas in terms of the percentage of the area harvested in the past 10 years and the amount of potential motorized use in the inventoried roadless areas.

Sections 3.9 Recreation and 3.11 Scenery contain analyses relating to potential effects to recreation and scenery characteristics within inventoried roadless areas as well as other areas affected by the activities proposed for the Echo Trail Area Project.

### **3.10.4 Analysis Area**

The geographic areas for analysis of the effects indicators are the inventoried roadless areas that are completely or partially within the Project Area. These are the analysis boundaries for direct, indirect, and cumulative effects for the Echo Trail Area Project because they are consistent with the criteria used in the FPR FEIS analysis for inventoried roadless areas and their potential to be studied for wilderness designation (Forest Plan Revision FEIS, Appendix C, page C-13). The FPR FEIS states that any proposed site-specific projects within an inventoried area will require an environmental analysis that considers effects of the project proposal on the roadless characteristics in the area. The effects analysis considers the entire inventoried area within any part of the Project Area, not just the inventoried roadless area within the Project Area. Table 3.10-1 identifies the inventoried roadless areas considered in this analysis. Maps 2, 3, and 4 in the accompanying map packet for the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project DEIS display the inventoried roadless areas that would potentially have timber harvested in this project for each alternative. Maps of all the inventoried roadless areas on the Superior National Forest are in the Forest Plan Revision FEIS, Appendix C, pages C-95 – C-110.

Direct and indirect timber harvest effects for this analysis include timber harvest on National Forest System lands proposed in each of the alternatives. Cumulative effects analysis for the proposed timber harvest includes harvest done in the past 10 years and reasonably foreseeable harvest through the first decade of implementing the 2004 Forest Plan in the year 2014. NFMA (National Forest Management Act) states that Forest Plans should be revised every 10-15 years. When the next Forest Plan revision effort revisits the roadless inventory, it is likely that the project would be over 10 years old.

Cumulative effects to inventoried roadless areas consider the prior 10-year period in order to be consistent with the FPR roadless inventory criteria regarding harvest in the last ten years. The cumulative effects analysis considers reasonably foreseeable harvest through 2014, since that is when the inventoried roadless areas would potentially be re-evaluated for their roadless values. The year 2014 is a potential start of another Forest planning cycle. The Echo Trail Area Project is the only project expected to include timber harvest on National Forest System lands in this analysis area through 2014.

### **3.10.5 Affected Environment**

The Forest Plan Revision FEIS, (Appendix C. Forest Roadless Area Inventory and Evaluation, pages C-24 – C-90) describes the inventoried roadless areas listed in Table 3.10-1 in extensive detail. Descriptions include information on each area in terms of acreage, location and access, geography and topography, vegetation, current uses of the area, appearance and surroundings, and key attractions. The FEIS also describes the areas in terms of Wilderness capability, availability for Wilderness, Wilderness evaluation, and environmental consequences. See Map 7 for locations of the Forest Plan inventoried roadless areas. The Agassa Lake, Beaver Stream, Big Lake, Picket Lake, and Urho Creek inventoried roadless areas contain activities proposed in the action alternatives for this project. These roadless areas have had extensive timber harvest in the early to mid-1900s. They also contain improved, unimproved, and unclassified roads that provided access for the timber harvest. Although extensive harvest occurred in these areas, they met roadless criteria for the Forest Plan revision since most of the harvesting took place more than 10 years prior to evaluation in the Forest Plan revision.

#### **Agassa Lake**

Approximately one-third of the area is lowland and it is in the Jack Pine-Black Spruce landscape ecosystem type. Uses of the area include viewing scenery, hunting, canoeing, and recreational cabin use. Agassa Lake is the key attraction of the area.

### **Beaver Stream**

This inventoried roadless area is in the Dry-Mesic White Pine-Red Pine landscape ecosystem type. Uses of the area include deer, moose, and partridge hunting; berry picking, leech collection, and trapping. The key attractions of the area are the hunting and berry picking.

### **Big Lake**

The entire area is within the Dry-Mesic White Pine-Red Pine landscape ecosystem type. This area receives very little use because of its location between the Portage River and the BWCAW boundary on the south. It is likely that visitors have a semi-primitive to primitive experience.

### **Picket Lake**

This area is within the Jack Pine-Black Spruce landscape ecosystem type. Uses of the area are primarily fishing on Picket Lake, camping, hunting, trapping, and use of the area by ATV riders on old winter routes (unclassified roads). Key attractions for this area include fishing on Picket Lake and the first half-mile of Picket River, remote camping opportunities, and big and small game hunting.

### **Urho Creek**

This area is within the Jack Pine-Black Spruce landscape ecosystem type. Uses include hunting, berry picking, and hunting. The key attraction is the Norway hiking trail.

The FEIS considers the effects to the inventoried roadless areas in terms of the analysis criteria through July 2004. No road construction or decommissioning projects have occurred in the areas and a total 326 acres of timber harvest have taken place since 1997. No further timber harvest or road construction beyond this project is reasonably foreseeable in the inventoried roadless areas within the Project Area.

## **3.10.6 Environmental Consequences**

### **3.10.6.1 Direct and Indirect Effects**

#### **Alternative 1 (No-action)**

No Forest Service management activities affecting the vegetation, setting/solitude, ownership, roads or shape of the inventoried roadless areas would occur. No effects to the roadless character would occur to the inventoried roadless areas under the No Action alternative. No new timber harvest or road activities would take place within any of the inventoried roadless areas listed in Table 3.10-1.

#### **Direct and Indirect Effects Common to All Action Alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3 Modified, and 4)**

##### **Unclassified Road Decommissioning**

The same amount of unclassified road decommissioning in the inventoried roadless areas would occur in all of the action alternatives, Alternatives 2 – 4. Only unclassified roads would be decommissioned. Table 3.10-3 shows the miles of decommissioning in the inventoried roadless areas for the Echo Trail Area Project.

Although there would be no reduction in miles of *improved* road, which are used as part of the criteria determining roadless qualities (Table 3.10-2), decommissioning *unclassified* roads would reduce potential motorized use in these inventoried roadless areas. The Forest Plan, Appendix C, page C-6, defines improved roads as: “*Any constructed or existing feature or facility created on the land for the purpose of travel by passenger vehicles (four wheeled, two wheel drive) which are legally allowed to*

*operate on forest roads or public roads and highways, and vehicles are greater than 50 inches in width. Said facility will have an area for vehicles to travel on and will incorporate some manner for the disposal of surface runoff.”* Unclassified roads are defined in Forest Plan Glossary, page Glossary-29, “*Roads on National Forest System land that are not managed as part of the forest transportation system, such as unplanned roads, abandoned travelways, and off-road vehicle tracks that have not been designated and managed as a trail: and those roads that were once under permit or other authorization and were not decommissioned upon the termination of the authorization.”*

Motorized vehicles, such as ATVs, are currently using unclassified roads proposed to be decommissioned. Alternatives 2-4 propose decommissioning roads in the Agassa Lake, Beaver Stream, Picket Lake, and Urho Creek inventoried roadless areas. For each of these inventoried roadless areas, Table 3.10-3 shows the amounts of unclassified roads that would be decommissioned. Table 3.10-3 illustrates the relative amount of decommissioning for each area in terms of unclassified roads decommissioned per 1,000 acres of an inventoried roadless area. No road decommissioning would occur in any of the other inventoried roadless areas listed in Table 3.10-1.

<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Miles of Unclassified Road Decommissioning</b>	<b>Miles of Unclassified Roads Decommissioned per 1,000 Acres of Inventoried Roadless Area</b>
Agassa Lake	2,871	1.1	0.4
Beaver Stream	1,317	0.2	0.2
Picket Lake	4,480	1.0	0.2
Urho Creek	3,613	0.5	0.1

**Temporary Roads**

Temporary road construction for vegetation management activities (harvest and reforestation) would occur in all of the action alternatives. These roads would not provide permanent motorized access to the inventoried roadless areas, since their use would only be for the duration of the proposed management activities. Methods for decommission temporary roads are discussed in Section 1.7 Modified Proposed Action, Section 3.25 Transportation System, and Appendix A, Section L.

Temporary road construction in all of the action alternatives for special uses, providing the State of Minnesota access for managing State lands within the Agassa and Big Lake inventoried roadless areas, would be the same for all of the action alternatives.

**Improved Roads**

Since this project does not propose any activities to build or decommission improved roads in the inventoried roadless areas, there would be no change to improved roads in any of the alternatives from the Echo Trail Area Project.

**Alternative 2**

**Timber Harvest**

Two harvest prescriptions are proposed in the inventoried roadless areas, clear cutting with reserves partial cutting (PC-30) in the Agassa Lake, Beaver Stream, Urho Creek, and Picket Lake areas. The glossary in Chapter 4 has definitions of timber harvest treatments.

As shown in Table 3.10-4, Alternative 2 would include timber harvest in four inventoried roadless areas. This alternative would harvest 34% of the Picket Lake area. Since the Picket Lake area would have greater than 20% of its area harvested, it would not qualify as roadless if a re-inventory were done within 10 years of accomplishing the proposed harvesting. The Agassa, Beaver Stream, and Urho Creek areas would continue to qualify as roadless as evaluated in the FPR FEIS. No other timber harvest on National Forest System lands would occur in any of the other inventoried roadless areas in this alternative.

Agassa, Beaver Stream, and Urho Creek would all result in less than 20% of the area harvested. No other timber harvest from this project would occur in any of the other inventoried roadless areas listed in Table 3.10-1.

<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Harvest Acres</b>	<b>Percentage of Area Proposed for Harvest</b>
Agassa Lake	2,871	11	<1%
Beaver Stream	1,317	177	13%
Picket Lake	4,480	1,543	34%
Urho Creek	3,613	446	12%

**Alternative 3 Modified**

**Timber Harvest**

Two harvest prescriptions are proposed in the inventoried roadless areas, clear cutting with reserves and partial cutting (PC-30) in the Urho Creek and Picket Lake areas. The glossary in chapter 4 has definitions of timber harvest treatments.

As shown in Table 3.10-5, Alternative 3 Modified would include timber harvest in 2 inventoried roadless areas. The Picket Lake and Urho Creek areas would continue to qualify as roadless as evaluated in the FPR FEIS since less than 20% of each area would be harvested in this alternative. No other timber harvest on National Forest System lands would occur in any of the other inventoried roadless areas in this alternative.

<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Harvest Acres</b>	<b>Percentage of Area Proposed for Harvest</b>
Picket Lake	4,480	757	17%
Urho Creek	3,613	383	11%

**Alternative 4**

No further effects to the roadless character would occur to the inventoried roadless areas under this alternative. No new management activities affecting the vegetation, setting/solitude, ownership, roads or shape of the inventoried roadless areas would occur on National Forest System lands. Timber harvest activities would not take place within any of the inventoried roadless areas on National Forest System land.

**Conclusion – Direct and Indirect Effects**

Alternatives 1 and 4 would have no new timber harvest and road construction within the inventoried roadless areas considered in the 2004 FEIS for the Forest Plan. Alternatives 1 and 4 would have no direct or indirect effects to the criteria listed in Table 3.10-2 qualifying areas as inventoried roadless. Table 3.10-6 displays the amounts of inventoried roadless areas proposed for timber harvest in the Echo Trail Area Project by alternative.

Alternative 2 would include substantially more timber harvest than Alternative 3 Modified within the inventoried roadless areas. Although Alternatives 2 and 3 Modified would each harvest about 12% and 11% respectively of the Urho Creek area, Alternative 2 would include timber harvest in the Agassa and Beaver Stream areas and about twice as many acres of harvesting as Alternative 3 Modified in the Picket Lake area. Alternative 2 would also exceed the roadless area criteria of 20% area harvested within the next 10 years in the Picket Lake Area. Since the Picket Lake area would have greater than 20% of its area harvested in Alternative 2, it would not qualify as roadless if a re-inventory were done within 10 years of accomplishing the proposed harvesting. The Picket Lake area is the only inventoried roadless area considered in the analysis that would have greater than 20% of its area harvested as proposed in Alternative 2. All other inventoried roadless areas considered in this analysis, would continue to qualify as roadless as evaluated in the FPR (Forest Plan Revision) FEIS in any of the alternatives considered in detail.

Although Alternative 2 would harvest more than 20 percent of the Picket Lake inventoried roadless area, the 2004 ROD (Record of Decision) for the Forest Plan allocated all of the inventoried roadless areas considered in the FPR (Forest Plan Revision) FEIS to MAs (Management Areas) for management other than for wilderness study. None of the inventoried roadless areas were allocated to the Wilderness Study Area MA (ROD, pages 39-40).

**Table 3.10-6. Acres and Percentage of Inventoried Roadless Areas Proposed for Timber Harvest**

Inventoried Roadless Area	Total Acres	Alt. 1		Alt. 2		Alt. 3 Modified		Alt. 4	
		Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Agassa Lake	2,871	0	0	11	<1%	0	0	0	0
Beaver Stream	1,317	0	0	177	13%	0	0	0	0
Picket Lake	4,480	0	0	1,543	34%	757	17%	0	0
Urho Creek	3,613	0	0	446	12%	383	11%	0	0

**Semi-Primitive Motorized Recreation Management Area**

The Picket Lake inventoried roadless area is located within the Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation Management Area. Chapter 1, Section 1.5 Purpose and Need contains discussion relating to the objectives of the timber harvest proposed in the Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation Management Area. Effects on the recreation and scenic resources relating to Semi-primitive Motorized Recreation, as well as for other Management Areas, are located in Sections 3.9 Recreation and 3.11 Scenery Resources.

**3.10.6.2 Cumulative Effects**

**Timber Harvest**

Past timber harvest activities considered in this cumulative effects analysis are displayed in Table 3.10-7. Harvest shown in Table 3.10-7 reflects timber sales identified in Appendix I Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (Cold Springs II and New Picket). Present harvest activities would include the timber harvest for each alternative for the Echo Trail Area Project, shown in Table 3.10-6. Reasonably foreseeable harvest includes potential harvest on State of Minnesota lands within the Agassa Lake and Big Lake inventoried roadless areas, about 75 and 38 acres respectively. These are the only two inventoried roadless areas where the State of Minnesota is proposing activities as well as the Forest Service. The Echo Trail Area Project proposed harvest in the Agassa Lake area as well as special use temporary road access for the State of Minnesota timber management. The special use temporary roads would be decommissioned following management activities.

Within the last 10 years timber harvest has occurred within the Jeanette Lake and Picket Lake inventoried roadless areas. No timber harvest or road construction is proposed in the Jeanette Lake area in the Echo Trail Area Project.

<b>Table 3.10-7. Timber Harvest in the Past 10 Years within Inventoried Roadless Areas located in the Project Area</b>		
<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Timber Harvest Activity</b>	<b>Total Acres Harvested</b>
Lake Jeanette	Clearcut	194
Picket Lake	Clearcut	132

No other Forest Service timber harvest proposals are reasonably foreseeable within the next 10 years in the Project Area.

Of the four inventoried roadless areas with timber harvest proposed in this project, only the Beaver Stream and Picket Lake areas have had timber harvesting within the last 10 years. No other harvesting has occurred and no other harvesting is reasonably foreseeable in the Agassa and Urho Creek areas. Table 3.10-8 displays the total estimated acres and percentage of area harvested considering cumulative harvesting for each alternative for the Echo Trail Area Project.

<b>Table 3.10-8. Cumulative Timber Harvesting in Inventoried Roadless Areas for the Echo Trail Area Project<sup>1</sup></b>									
<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Alt. 1</b>		<b>Alt. 2</b>		<b>Alt. 3 Modified</b>		<b>Alt. 4</b>	
		<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>
Agassa Lake <sup>2</sup>	2,871	0	0	86	3%	75	3%	75	3%
Beaver Stream	1,317	0	0	177	13%	0	0%	0	0
Big Lake <sup>2</sup>	1,194	0	0	38	3%	38	3%	38	3%
Picket Lake	4,480	0	0	1,685	38%	889	20%	0	0
Urho Creek	3,613	0	0	446	12%	383	11%	0	0

<sup>1</sup>Past 10 years, Echo Trail Area Project Proposals, All Other Ownerships, and Reasonably Foreseeable Harvest.

<sup>2</sup>No harvest would occur on State of Minnesota lands in the No Action; the No Action alternative does not include special use temporary road access for timber management on State on Minnesota lands.

Since no other timber harvest on National Forest lands is reasonably foreseeable in the next 10 years, Table 3.10-8 represents the highest number of acres and percentage of inventoried roadless areas harvested.

By the year 2014, all of the past timber harvest within the inventoried roadless areas shown in Table 3.10-8 will be greater than 10 years old, the acres and percentages of timber harvest at that date would be the same as shown in Table 3.10-6, and no longer factor into the criteria for inventoried roadless area evaluation.

Alternatives 1 and 4 would have no cumulative effects to the criteria listed in Table 3.10-2 qualifying areas as inventoried roadless. In terms of cumulative effects of timber harvest for Alternatives 2 and 3 Modified, these alternatives would result in timber harvest on about 38% and 20% cumulative harvest respectively, in the Picket Lake area. Since the Picket Lake area would have greater than 20% of its area harvested in Alternative 2, it would not qualify as roadless if a re-inventory were done within 10 years of accomplishing the proposed harvesting.

**Decommissioning Unclassified Roads**

In addition to the miles of unclassified roads proposed to be actively decommissioned in all of the action alternatives (Table 3.10-3), the amount of unclassified roads that would potentially be utilized by motorized vehicles has decreased through decommissioning accomplished through natural re-vegetation in the last 10 years are shown in Table 3.10-9. The re-vegetation on unclassified roads further reduces the potential for motorized use in the inventoried roadless areas.

**Table 3.10-9. Miles of Active Unclassified Road Decommissioning in Alternatives 2, 3 Modified, and 4, and Decommissioning Through Natural Re-Vegetation**

<b>Inventoried Roadless Area</b>	<b>Acres of National Forest</b>	<b>Miles of Natural Re-vegetation Decommissioning of Unclassified Road in the Last 10 Years</b>	<b>Proposed Miles of Active Unclassified Road Decommissioning</b>	<b>Total Miles of Unclassified Roads Decommissioned per 1,000 Acres of Inventoried Roadless Area</b>
Agassa Lake	2,641	3.1	1.1	1.6
Bald Pate	485	2.6	0	5.3
Beaver Stream	1,277	2.2	0.2	1.9
Big Lake	1,079	0.6	0	0.6
Lake Jeanette	1,793	6.5	0	3.6
Little Indian Sioux	995	1.1	0	1.1
Picket Lake	4,097	0.3	1.0	0.3
Urho Creek	3,573	0.1	0.5	0.2

**Improved Roads**

No improved road construction or decommissioning has occurred within the inventoried roadless areas since the evaluation and analysis in the FPR FEIS. This project does not propose improved road construction in the inventoried roadless areas and none is reasonably foreseeable through the year 2014. There are no cumulative effects in terms of improved roads from the Echo Trail Area Project.