



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Superior National Forest
Tofte Ranger District

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File Code: 1950-1

Date: July 5, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

I have decided to implement Alternative 3 with minor changes for the Mid-Temperance Project. The Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and other related documents for the Mid-Temperance Project are available on the Superior National Forest website:

www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/superior/.

In making my decision, I considered the environmental effects of each alternative and how well each alternative would meet the purpose and need and move the area toward desired conditions in the 2004 Forest Plan. While all of the action alternatives would accomplish these, when compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 3 best meets the direction and objectives in the Plan. Minor changes were made for specific units and are provided in the unit cards.

Under Alternative 3, approximately 1,193 acres will be treated by clearcut with reserves and 3.1 miles of temporary roads will be constructed. Other primary treatments, such as shelterwood seed cut and group selection, will occur on approximately 550 acres. Some units will be mechanically piled and burned (469 acres) or site prepped (129 acres) following harvest and will naturally regenerate or be directly seeded or planted. This alternative will improve within-stand diversity on approximately 250 acres and create future bald eagle habitat on 30 acres through underplanting white pine and other conifers.

More detailed rationale for my decision and the specific actions that are covered are in the Decision Notice. I have provided responses to comments received on the Environmental Assessment in Appendix C of the Decision Notice. The comments were used to help refine project design and mitigation measures to lessen impacts and to complete an analysis of significant issues.

There were divergent opinions expressed about this project. I considered all issues and took into account the competing interests and values of the public. Because of divergent interests, it is not possible to select an action that is agreeable to all. I know that harvesting timber results in changes to wildlife habitats and scenery and may alter people's use of an area. I am aware of the interactions between the various resources and the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed actions on different resources and have taken these into consideration in deciding to implement this project.

I appreciate the time and effort you have made to express comments on this project. If you would like more information, please contact Ann Belleman, Project Leader, at (218) 663-8088.

Sincerely,

/s/ John Wytanis
JOHN WYTANIS
District Ranger



