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News Release

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For Immediate Release
March 10, 2015



Westside Fire Recovery Project Documents Available to Public and Comment Period Opens

Yreka, CA — The Klamath National Forest's draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Westside Fire Recovery Project is now available for public review.

The Westside Fire Recovery Project encompasses areas that burned in 2014 within the KNF Beaver Fire, Happy Camp Complex, and Whites Fire (a portion of the July Complex) perimeters in the Happy Camp/Oak Knoll and Salmon/Scott River Ranger Districts. The project proposes to treat burned areas to reduce safety hazards to the public, Forest workers, private lands and infrastructure; obtain maximum economic commodity value from burned trees; and increase the likelihood and speed by which burned forested areas regenerate.

The purpose of the draft EIS is to gather comments from the public to improve the quality of the final EIS and inform the final project decision, which is anticipated as early as the first part of June. The EIS covers the environmental consequences of the no action alternative, the proposed action, and three action alternatives developed in response to initial public comments.

The proposed action for the project identifies 11,700 acres of salvage harvest units where fire-killed trees (snags) would be removed to reduce future fire risk and severity, providing for public and forest worker safety. The treatment of 650 miles of roadside hazards along National Forest roads, State highways, and County roadways are proposed as well. Over 22,000 acres of hazardous fuels treatments, including strategic fuel breaks and treatments within 1.4 miles of private property structures and other infrastructure are also included. The plan proposes 7,900 acres of reforestation where site preparation, planting, and release activities will accelerate the restoration of forest habitat are planned.

“I appreciate all the comments we’ve received so far from the public, different agencies and organizations for this project,” commented Klamath Forest Supervisor Patty Grantham. “That feedback has helped us propose a great project and allowed us to build alternatives around specific concerns. I ask that interested folks now take a look at the draft EIS or attend a public meeting or field trip and provide their ideas and concerns so we can improve the project moving forward to a decision. The ambitious timeline for this project can only be met if we hear from the people who care about this area and the project.”

The comment period on the draft EIS will close April 13, 2015. Public meetings and field trips for the project will be announced in the next week. The draft EIS may be viewed on the project webpage at <http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepaprojectexp.php?project=45579>. Comments may be submitted in writing or by fax to:

Patricia Grantham, Forest Supervisor
Klamath National Forest
1711 South Main Street
Yreka, CA 96097
Attn.: Westside Fire Recovery Project

Fax: (530) 841-4571

To submit comments electronically, select the "Comment on Project" link under the "Get Connected" group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Include your group or individual contact information and if citing literature in your comment, provide the cited article as an attachment in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtt), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf) its relevancy to the project included in submitted comments.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

For more information on the Klamath National Forest go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/klamath/>.

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