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**Opportunity to Object
Kootenai National Forest
Montanore Project Final EIS and Draft ROD**

The Kootenai National Forest (KNF) has issued its *Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) and Errata, and Draft Record of Decision (ROD)* for the Montanore Project. The Montanore Project is a proposed copper and silver underground mine located about 18 miles south of Libby near the Cabinet Mountains of northwestern Montana.

The responsible official for this decision is Forest Supervisor Christopher Savage.

The **Final EIS and Draft ROD can be found at the Kootenai National Forest website at:**

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/kootenai/landmanagement/projects>, and copies will be maintained at public libraries in Libby, Thompson Falls, Heron, and Missoula. Notice of document availability will be sent to those who submitted comments on the Draft EIS or Supplemental Draft EIS. Hard copies and compact discs of the Final EIS and Draft ROD documents are available upon request. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the co-lead agency for the project, has not issued its Final EIS at this time.

The KNF and DEQ issued a joint Draft EIS for the Montanore Project in February, 2009, and Supplemental Draft EIS in September, 2011 for public comment. In response to public comment, the agencies revised the agencies' mine alternatives (Alternatives 3 and 4) and transmission line alignments (Alternatives C-R, D-R, and E-R). The agencies' proposed monitoring and mitigation plans (Appendix C) also were revised.

The KNF will use the analysis in the Final EIS to determine whether to issue approvals necessary for construction and operation of the Montanore Project. The KNF's preferred mine alternative is Alternative 3, Agency Mitigated Poorman Impoundment Alternative, and preferred transmission line alternative is Alternative D-R, Miller Creek Transmission Line Alternative. The rationale for selecting these alternatives and approving a Plan of Operations for the Montanore Project is included in the Draft ROD.

In 2013, the Forest Service revised its regulations regarding administrative review of decisions made pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. The proposed project is not authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act; therefore it is subject to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. The Montanore Project was originally scoped under the provisions of 36 CFR 215. Under current regulations, individuals or organizations who submitted specific, written comments in response to scoping conducted under 36 CFR 215, or provided comments to the Draft EIS or Supplemental Draft EIS will be considered to have standing to object under 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B.

Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless the issue is based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities.

The following address should be used for objections sent by regular mail to: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Northern Region, P.O. Box 7669, Missoula, MT 59807. Objections sent by private carrier or hand delivery must go to: Objection Reviewing Officer, USDA Forest Service, Northern Region, 200 East Broadway, Missoula, MT 59807. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm, excluding Federal holidays.

Objections can be faxed to the Objection Reviewing Officer at (406) 329-3411. The fax coversheet needs to include a subject line with "Montanore Project Objection" and should specify the number of pages being submitted.

Electronic objections must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer via email to appeals-northern-regional-office@fs.fed.us, with "Montanore Project Objection" in the subject line. Electronic submissions must be submitted in a format that is readable with optical character recognition software (e.g. Word, PDF, Rich Text) and be searchable. An automated response should confirm your electronic objection has been received.

The objection must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 218.8(d), and include the following information: 1) the objector's name and address, with a telephone number or email address, if available; 2) a signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection); 3) when multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR 218.2 (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request); 4) the name of the project being objected to, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the national forest and ranger district on which the project will be implemented; 5) a description of those aspects of the project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the project and, if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; and supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and 6) a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity for formal comment. With certain exceptions (36 CFR 218.8(b)), all documents referenced in the objection must be included with the objection.

An objection, including attachments, must be filed with the appropriate reviewing officer within 45 calendar days from the publication of this legal notice in the Missoulian, the newspaper of record. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Objectors should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to 36 CFR 218.9. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Responses that do not adhere to these requirements make review of an objection difficult and are conditions under which the reviewing officer may set aside an objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218.10.

For more information or to request a copy of the Final EIS and Draft ROD, please contact Lynn Hagarty, Project Coordinator at the Kootenai National Forest Supervisor's Office at (406) 293-6211 or by e-mail at r1_montanore@fs.fed.us with "Montanore Project" in the subject line. #20397525 April 1, 2015