

Draft
Environmental Impact Statement

Spruce Creek Project

Boise National Forest
Cascade Ranger District
Valley County, Idaho



Lead Agency:
USDA-Forest Service

Responsible Official:
Boise National
Forest Supervisor,
Richard A. Smith



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SPRUCE CREEK PROJECT**

**Cascade Ranger District, Boise National Forest
Valley County, Idaho
2007**

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**Responsible Official: Richard A. Smith
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ABSTRACT: This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) documents the analysis for the Spruce Creek Project. Three action alternatives evaluate activities designed to achieve the project's eight primary objectives. Two significant issues necessitated development of additional action alternatives.

The preferred alternative is Alternative C. In contrast to Alternative B (Proposed Action), Alternative C would maintain the integrity of all modeled flammulated owl home ranges and still meet the identified purpose and need to a high degree. Although Alternative D would also maintain the integrity of all modeled flammulated owl home ranges, given its emphasis to mitigate effects on pileated woodpeckers, considerably fewer acres would be treated and thus the project objectives would not be met to the same degree. Following implementation of Alternative C sufficient habitat would be present to maintain a viable population of pileated woodpeckers in the 5th field HUC and to maintain the current population trend of this species at the Forest and Ecogroup scale. The Final EIS prepared in concert with the Forest Plan suggests that there is currently a sufficient amount of pileated woodpecker habitat distributed across the Boise National Forest to prevent a loss of viability to the population or species. The conclusions in the Forest Plan are further supported by Wisdom et al (2000) which reports an estimated 21 percent increase in source habitat in the Central Idaho Mountains ERU.

Alternative C would not contribute additional sediment in amounts that would prevent the attainment or maintenance of instream objectives, nor would this alternative have a measurable effect on the identified beneficial uses. Alternative C would comply with existing management direction including Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines and the Clean Water Act, and would be consistent with the intent of the TMDL of reducing sediment, the pollutant of concern. Even though this alternative would reflect only a slight improving trend, it does include restorative BMPs to further reduce sediment and the potential for road prism failures in the drainage. Alternative C would have no effect on any listed plant species; no effect on bald eagle; would not likely jeopardize gray wolves, and; may affect but is not likely to adversely affect lynx, northern Idaho ground squirrel, and bull trout.

Substantive comments on this DEIS should be postmarked or received no later than **June 25, 2007** and addressed to the Cascade Ranger District, ATTN: Keith Dimmett, P.O. Box 696, Cascade, ID 83611 or sent electronically to comments-intermtn-boise-cascade@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments must be submitted in plain text or another format compatible with Microsoft Word. Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to comments at one time and to use the information to prepare the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), thus avoiding undue delay in the decision making process. Reviewers have the obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and will alert the agency to reviewers' positions and contentions, **Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC**, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the FEIS, **City of Angoon v. Hodel** (9th circuit, 1986) and **Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris**, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement or merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

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