

Synopsis of Twin Mountain Timber Sale Unit Refinement

The Prince of Wales Landscape Level Analysis (POW LLA) Project Implementation Plan incorporates public participation. The Forest Service held the first spring public workshop for POW LLA on April 6, 2019. A Draft Out-year Plan, including draft unit cards for the Twin Mountain Timber Sale (TMTS), was out for public comment from April 13, 2019 through May 13, 2019. Input was requested on activity locations, activity design components, methods, unit and road cards, mitigation measures, integration opportunities, potential changes in the implementation process, monitoring results, priority sequences of activities, and on prior-year management of activities.

The Forest received approximately 195 written and verbal comments on the Draft Out-year Plan during both the spring workshop and the 30 day comment period, many of which related to the proposed FY2019 timber sale (the TMTS). Most of these comments reflected concerns about the Forest Plan direction or about POWLLA as a whole, which had already been considered and addressed during the agency decision-making process that led to the POW LLA ROD. However, a few related more specifically to the units and areas proposed for the TMTS. In summary, the topics raised in these comments included concerns about (1) the economic viability of units, (2) having units focused in only a few watersheds instead of spreading them out, (3) retaining critical wildlife habitat and corridors, (4) units in certain parts of the project area (e.g. near Staney Creek, on the north end of the island near Pt Baker and Port Protection, and in beach buffers), and (5) slash remaining following thinning or harvest, as well as road access for hunting and firewood gathering.

Taking into consideration these comments, as well as information from continuing field surveys, the April 2019 draft TMTS unit cards were refined further and shared on the POW LLA Project webpage in July 2019. This included the addition of some units and deletion of others. The Forest Service deleted units from the TMTS to address concerns about the economic viability of units, having units focused in only a few watersheds instead of spreading them out, retaining critical wildlife habitat and corridors, and units in certain parts of the project area. The unit changes were also responsive to on-the-ground conditions observed during field surveys, including identified goshawk nests, new streams, and karst, as well as adjustments for unsuitable soils. Field surveys continued after the posting of the July 2019 Refined Draft Unit Cards, which resulted in additional changes to the timber sale units in response to on-the-ground resource considerations. The specific units selected to be added to the Twin Mountain Timber Sale from within the POW LLA harvest polygons were chosen based on economic considerations and because they met all ecological resource constraints.