

**Project Update  
Cumberland Ranger District  
Daniel Boone National Forest  
January 26, 2016**

**Project title:** Commercial timber harvest in the Beaver Creek Watershed

**Location:** Selected areas Menifee County, Kentucky (See Figure 1)

**Why this update?**

There have been many changes since this project was proposed. They include:

- Cave Run Non-motorized Trails Project decision
- Increased emphasis on collaborative process in decision making and project design
- Changes to endangered species' list
- Changes in District staff
- Changes in adjacent landowners
- Changes in leadership of other stakeholder groups

These changes indicate a need to re-visit this project internally and externally to see if there are additional opportunities or environmental effects that can be addressed now. This document will be used to identify internal changes that should be added to the project or analysis.

**Background**

In 2007 the Cumberland District of the Daniel Boone National Forest invited the public to meet and discuss possible projects that were needed to implement the Daniel Boone Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) in the Beaver Creek Watershed (Watershed) located in Bath and Menifee Counties. Over the course of the year, the Forest Service hosted one open house, one field trip, and two round table discussions. These events were well attended by a diversity of people, agencies, and groups with an interest in the management of the Forest. This process resulted in a list of projects specific to the Beaver Creek Watershed needed to bring the area closer to the desired condition described in the Forest Plan. This proposal represents one of these projects.

An interdisciplinary team was organized and letters were mailed to ninety-nine interested agencies, organizations and individuals on July 2, 2008, informing them of the proposed action and requesting their comments on the proposal. The project description was also posted on the Forest web page. Five letter or e-mail responses were received from this initial scoping. Based upon the comment analysis prepared to document the comments received concerning the proposed project the following potential relevant issue was identified.

- 1. Application of herbicide to reduce sprouting of selected woody species has the potential to affect soil, water, and human health.**

**What is the project?**

The Forest Service is proposing commercial timber harvest in eleven (11) individual areas covering approximately 303 acres.<sup>1</sup> This commercial harvest would require the construction of approximately 0.9 of a mile of system road and one mile of temporary road. No more than 30 acres within the treated areas will be devoted to skid trails and landings. The commercial harvest is designed to accomplish two different results, stand improvement and stand establishment.

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<sup>1</sup> See Table 1 and Figure 1

<b>Table 1: Commercial harvest areas with size and treatment</b>			
<b>Compartment</b>	<b>Stand</b>	<b>Treated Acres</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
1092	29	14	Two-aged Shelterwood
1092	31	26	Thinning
1093	7	35	Two-aged Shelterwood
1095	22	10	Thinning
1095	23	38	Thinning
1095	26	21	Two-aged Shelterwood
1095	30	15	Thinning
1095	40	21	Two-aged Shelterwood
1116	40	40	Two-aged Shelterwood
1116	44	44	Thinning
1116	46	39	Two-aged Shelterwood
	<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	

Based upon the significant issue and other comments provided as a result of the scoping effort the following alternatives to the original proposal were developed:

- **Alternative A (Proposed Action modified to respond to public comment and wildlife needs)**

The original proposed action will be modified in the following ways.

1. Stumps of red maple cut during the commercial harvest will be the only species treated with herbicide.
2. Erosion control of soil exposed by activities with annual cereal grains. This activity was added following review of the comments provided by the public. This change will allow native populations of plants to re-vegetate the area while providing for immediate erosion control by the cereal grains.
3. Plant the following soft mast shrubs in landing areas used in the commercial harvest: native plums, persimmon, dogwood, black cherry, and native hawthorns. This was added following review of public comments.

- **Alternative B (No herbicide)**

The actions proposed in Proposed Action would be implemented with the exception of the application of herbicide to reduce sprouting of selected species. The areas proposed for chemical treatment in the Proposed Action would be treated using manual methods (chainsaw or other cutting tools) to cut the sprouts of red maple until the seedlings and sprouts of other species are tall enough to compete. This may have to be completed up to three times in the first five years following the completion of the harvest. This alternative addresses Significant Issue 1.

- **Alternative C (No action)**

This would be the no action alternative. Neither the proposed action nor the described alternatives would be undertaken. This alternative will provide a baseline for comparison of the effects of other alternatives. It would also respond to the significant issue.

### **What is the purpose of these activities?**

This project is designed to meet the following goals and objectives:

- Goal 1.7: Provide adequate habitat to support populations of Management Indicator Species (MIS)

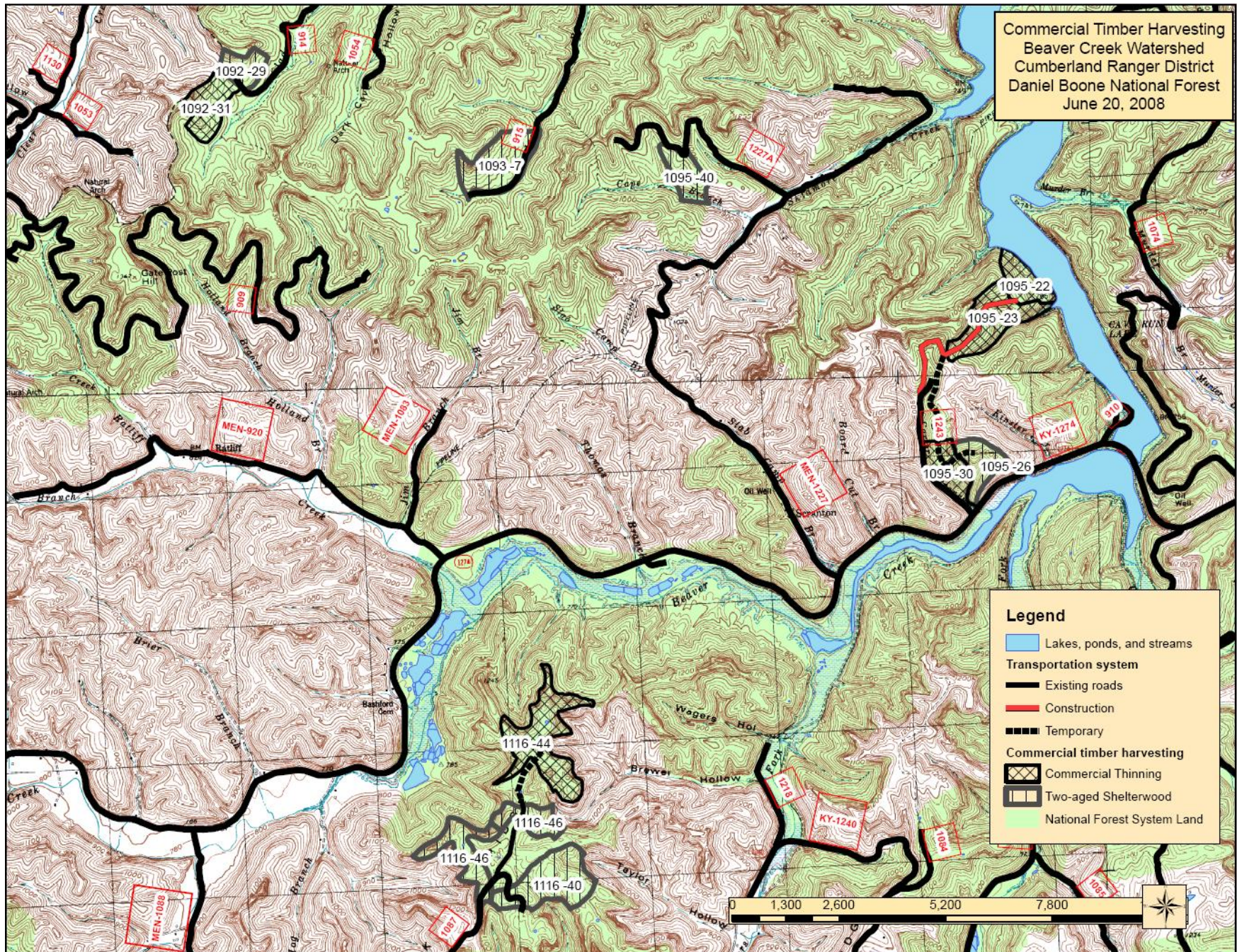


Figure 1: Commercial timber harvest sites in the Beaver Creek watershed

- Objective 2.1A. Within each stand, the relationship of basal area, number of trees, and average tree diameter is below the 80 percent stocking level.
- Objective 2.4.A. Move acres from Fire Regime Condition Classes 3 and 2 and into Classes 2 and 1.
- Goal 8: Provide renewable products on a sustainable basis when such provision is compatible with Desired Future Conditions.
- 1.K-Objective 1.A. Maintain 5 to 6 percent within each 5<sup>th</sup> level watershed in the 0-10 age class.
- 1.K-Objective 1.D. Maintain five percent within each watershed in stands thinned to 60-70 basal area.

### **What has changed in the project area since the initial proposal?**

The following are a couple of changes in the project area that are directly related to the proposed project. What other changes exist?

- As a result of the Cave Run Non-motorized Trail Project, NFSR 914 is not designated as a horse trail and a new trail route has been designated that run through Stand 1092-31 which is currently proposed for a thinning treatment.
- A new road has been constructed on private land near the current route of NFSR 1243. This new route could provide better access to the area than NFSR 1243 and will be in a more sustainable location.
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