



File Code: 1950

Date: July 13, 2001

Dear Concerned Citizen:

This letter is to update you on the status of the Myrtle-Cascade Project. The decision was appealed and subsequently affirmed by the Regional Forester. However, July 10, 2001, the Chief of the Forest Service announced in the Federal Register, the Department of Agriculture is seeking additional public input on the long-term protection and management of inventoried roadless areas. The opportunity to provide additional comment is a response to questions raised by the public about inventoried roadless area protection and management and a court ruling finding the original comment period was inadequate.

The Myrtle-Cascade project plans beneficial results to water, wildlife and other forest resources. However, in light of court action and the renewed public involvement process, it is imprudent to undertake the planned activities in the Selkirk Mountain Roadless Area until the roadless rule is reexamined. Therefore, I am deferring the implementation of the planned activities in the inventoried roadless area that is part of the Myrtle-Cascade Project until the roadless rule can be reexamined.

The portions of the project to be deferred are the inventoried roadless components of:

Units MC 23 and MC 24. The purpose of vegetative treatments in these areas is to improve habitat for late-winter and early-winter spruce-fir habitat for woodland caribou. Only lodgepole pine will be removed in these units. Removing lodgepole pine would trend unsuitable caribou habitat more rapidly toward late successional, subalpine fir and spruce stands suitable for caribou. Currently the lodgepole pine is susceptible to mountain pine beetle infestation and subsequent fire risk.

Unit M 02. The purpose of vegetative treatments in this unit is to improve Lynx habitat. The Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU) containing the project is short of pre-forage habitat and has more than double the required amount of denning habitat. Creating pre-forage habitat would help sustain foraging habitat in this LAU over time. The use of a shelterwood harvest in this case will trend the stand toward a larger component of desired larch and white pine.

Unit MC 10. The purpose of vegetative treatments in this unit is to sustain large ponderosa pine and western larch on dry forest types. Small diameter Douglas-fir and grand fir encroaching on the larger trees are planned for removal. Any small openings created would be planted with white pine and larch. The resulting stands would more closely resemble historic stand conditions.



I will notify you when the status of the deferred portions of the project changes. Thank you for your involvement.

Sincerely,

RANOTTA K. MCNAIR
Forest Supervisor