



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

October 2004



# Draft Environmental Impact Statement

## Cottonwood II Vegetation Management Project

Big Piney Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Wyoming

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**Cottonwood II Vegetation Management Project  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Sublette County, Wyoming**

**Lead Agency:** USDA Forest Service

**Cooperating Agencies:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Responsible Official:** Carole “Kniffy” Hamilton  
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**Abstract:** This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared to evaluate and disclose the environmental impacts of alternative vegetation management strategies to manage vegetation resources in the North and South Cottonwood Creeks drainages on the Big Piney Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest (B-TNF). The Big Piney Ranger District is proposing to implement vegetation management in the North and South Cottonwood Creeks drainages over the next 5 to 10 years. Management opportunities, practices, standards and guidelines, and mitigation have been developed to help achieve desired resource conditions. These are the basis for this proposal and for further site-specific analysis of effects.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the Draft EIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the Final EIS, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision-making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewers' position 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 EIS stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the Final EIS (*City of Angoon v. Hodel* [9<sup>th</sup> Circuit, 1986] and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc., v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 [E.D. Wis. 1980]). Comments on the Draft EIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

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**Date Comments Must Be Received:** (Estimate) November 22, 2004