



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Mt. Hood National Forest

Clackamas River Ranger District
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File Code: 1950
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Dear Interested Party:

The Mt. Hood National Forest is in the beginning planning stages of the Lemiti Salvage Project on the Clackamas River Ranger District. This a preliminary scoping letter identifying the project area early enough to allow interested parties to visit the site before adverse weather makes it difficult to access the Lemiti Salvage Project Area. A subsequent scoping letter will be sent out identifying the purpose and need of the project and at that time we will be seeking additional public input on this project.

Over the past decade, Central Oregon and the Inland West have experienced large wildfires that have put many assets at risk, including sensitive or protected fish and wildlife habitat, culturally and Tribal significant resources, critical infrastructure, soil productivity, aesthetics, clean air and other valued components of forests and communities. In recent years federal land management agencies have been focusing efforts on treating hazardous fuels and restoring the health of forests to minimize the potential impacts of large scale wildfires.

Currently there is an ongoing mountain pine beetle infestation in the Lemiti Butte area resulting in large volumes of dead and down material creating a significant build up of hazardous fuels. There is the potential for lightning or human caused fires to grow large threatening both federal and Tribal assets. The proximity of these hazardous fuels to Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs land is one particular concern.

This project would aim to reduce hazardous fuels, remove dead mountain pine beetle killed trees, and improve forest health in the Lemiti project area, located on the Clackamas River Ranger District. The planning area covers approximately 3,139 acres of National Forest System lands.

The principal goals of this project would be to restore forest health and to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, particularly in areas at risk of spreading wildfire into the adjacent Sisi Wilderness and Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation. Components of forest health restoration and wildfire protection include management of vegetation, fuels, wildlife habitat, watershed conditions and recreational quality.

If a salvage is not implemented, a large scale wildfire could impact Tribal archaeological sites, first foods, medicinal plants and other resources as well as the preservation of the adjacent wilderness character. A large scale wildfire could impact scenery, recreation opportunities, forest ecosystems, watersheds, fish and wildlife habitat.



Timber sales, stewardship contracts, and service contracts may be the management tools used to implement the Lemiti Salvage. In addition to salvaging mountain pine beetle killed trees, the project would involve hazardous fuels treatments and planting.

Maps of the project area are available on the Forest's web site at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/mthood/landmanagement/projects>

Questions or comments may be directed to:

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I am requesting your comments concerning this project. If you have any site-specific knowledge or concerns about the area in question, please bring them to our attention. Your input will help us improve the planning and design of the project, and to identify potential issues of concern at the earliest possible stage.

Thank you for your time and interest in the management of the Mount Hood National Forest.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL CHAVEAS
District Ranger