



News Release Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

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Long Rail Project to Improve Forest Vegetation and Transportation System

Park Falls and Rhinelander, Wis. May 18, 2006. Forest managers on the Eagle River-Florence Ranger District recently completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Long Rail Vegetation and Transportation Management Project. This project proposes activities designed to maintain or restore upland forest communities and openings to their desired conditions and to provide a safe, efficient, and effective road system that meets the long-term needs in the project area.

The project area encompasses approximately 54,297 acres of National Forest System land, and is located about 17 miles west of Florence, Wisconsin in the northeast portion of the District, within Florence and Forest Counties, Wisconsin.

The EIS discloses and evaluates the impacts, both positive and negative, of the project. Four alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, were analyzed to address forest vegetation and transportation system needs.

The Responsible Official is considering choosing *Alternative 2*, which proposes 8,481 acres of timber harvesting, 34 acres of prescribed burning, 124 acres of mechanical site preparation, 22 acres of full planting, 58 acres of underplanting, 549 acres of permanent opening maintenance, 3 miles of new road construction, 44 miles of road reconstruction, and 47 miles of road decommissioning.

Analysis of the environmental consequences showed minimal adverse effects to the physical, biological, social, and economic environment under all alternatives. The DEIS is available for review at the Eagle River or Florence District offices, or on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/natres/index.html>. Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from Christine Brunner, 715-479-2827, extension 21.