

Legal Notice of Decision for the Cowlitz Thin Timber Sale Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Cowlitz Valley Ranger District

Kristie Miller, District Ranger for the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District, has made the decision to implement the Cowlitz Thin Timber Sale. Alternative 3, the modified proposed action, was selected from a range of alternatives analyzed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the proposal. The selected alternative will commercially thin and harvest approximately 4.5 million board feet of timber from 760 acres in the Upper Cowlitz River Watershed. The purposes of the project are to thin and harvest wood fiber from approximately 760 acres, thin and harvest of riparian reserves, enhance growth and vigor of managed stands, thin, enhance, restore and protect 92 acres Riparian Reserves, and retain and enhance key structural elements of suitable and potential Northern spotted owl habitat within plantations and naturally regenerated stands. The project is located north and northwest of Packwood in Sections 25, 26, 35, 36, T 14 N, R 9 E; Sections 2, 4, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20 T 13 N, R 9 E; and Sections 3, 11, 12, 13 T 13 N, R 8 E; Willamette Meridian, Lewis County, Washington.

Copies of the Cowlitz Thin Timber Sale Decision Notice or further information about this decision can be obtained from Karen Thompson, project leader, during normal office hours (weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District Office located at 10024 Highway 12, P.O. Box 670, Randle, WA 98377; Phone: (360) 497-1136; Fax: (360) 497-1102; Email: karenmthompson@fs.fed.us.

Additional information about this decision, as well as copies of the Decision Notice, may be downloaded from the Gifford Pinchot National Forest website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/04projects/pinchotprojects/>.

The Decision Notice is also available on compact disk, and a very limited number of printed copies can be obtained from the District office. These alternate formats are available upon request at the address listed above. The EA for this project was available for a 30 day public comment period from June 20 to July 20, 2006. This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215 (revised, June 2004). Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14. Only individuals or organizations who submitted comments or otherwise expressed interest in the project during the comment period may appeal. Appeals, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in *The Chronicle*, the newspaper of record. Incorporation of documents by reference is not allowed. Attachments received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in *The Chronicle*, newspaper of record, is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

The Appeal Deciding Officer is Claire Lavendel, Gifford Pinchot Forest Supervisor. Appeals must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Appeal Deciding Officer at: Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Appeal Deciding Officer, 10600 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver, WA 98682; FAX (360) 891-5045; Email: appeals-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot@fs.fed.us.

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic appeals must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc) or portable document format (.pdf). In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification. E-mails submitted to email addresses other than the one listed above, or in formats other than those listed or containing viruses, will be rejected. It is the responsibility of the appellant to confirm receipt of appeals submitted by electronic mail.

If no appeals are received, this decision may be implemented no sooner than five days following the close of the appeal period. If an appeal is received, implementation may begin 15 days following the disposition of all appeals.

