

Forest Service, USDA

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District Rangers' Offices when National Forest proposals are involved; in the Regional Office and Forest Supervisors' Offices when regional proposals are involved; and in Regional Offices and National Headquarters when national proposals are involved. When Manual directives involve Forest Service Research or State and Private Forestry programs, review copies shall be available at comparable administrative offices.

PART 218—PREDECISIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESSES

Subpart A—Predecisional Administrative Review Process for Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects Authorized by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003

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Subpart B [Reserved]

AUTHORITY: Pub. L. 108-148, 117 Stat 1887 (Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003).

SOURCE: 69 FR 1533, Jan. 9, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

§218.1 Purpose and scope.

This subpart establishes a predecisional administrative review (hereinafter referred to as "objection") process for proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects as defined in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA). The objection process is the sole means by which administrative review of a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction

project on National Forest System land may be sought. This subpart identifies who may file objections to those proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects, the responsibilities of the participants in an objection, and the procedures that apply for review of the objection.

§218.2 Definitions.

Address—An individual's or organization's current physical mailing address. An e-mail address is not sufficient.

Authorized hazardous fuel reduction project—A hazardous fuel reduction project authorized by the HFRA.

Comments—Specific written comments related to a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project pursuant to the HFRA.

Decision Notice (DN)—A concise written record of a Responsible Official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) (40 CFR 1508.13; FSH 1909.15, Chapter 40).

Environmental Assessment (EA)—A public document that provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) or a finding of no significant impact, aids an agency's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when no EIS is necessary, and facilitates preparation of a statement when one is necessary (40 CFR 1508.9; FSH 1909.15, Chapter 40).

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)—A detailed written statement as required by section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (40 CFR 1508.11; FSH 1909.15, Chapter 20).

Forest Service line officer—A Forest Service official who serves in a direct line of command from the Chief and who has the delegated authority to make and execute decisions approving hazardous fuel reduction projects subject to this subpart.

Lead objector—For objections submitted with multiple individuals and/or organizations listed, the individual or organization identified to represent all other objectors for the purposes of communication, written or otherwise, regarding the objection.

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Name—The first and last name of an individual or the name of an organization. An electronic username is insufficient for identification of an individual or organization.

National Forest System land—All lands, water, or interests therein administered by the Forest Service (§251.51).

Newspaper(s) of record—Those principal newspapers of general circulation annually identified in a list and published in the FEDERAL REGISTER by each Regional Forester to be used for publishing notices of projects and activities implementing land and resource management plans.

Objection—The written document filed with a Reviewing Officer by an individual or organization seeking predecisional administrative review of a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project as defined in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

Objection period—The 30-calendar-day period following publication of the legal notice in the newspaper of record of an environmental assessment or final environmental impact statement for a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project during which an objection may be filed with the Reviewing Officer.

Objection process—Those procedures established for predecisional administrative review of proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects subject to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

Objector—An individual or organization filing an objection who submitted comments specific to the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project during scoping or other opportunity for public comment as described in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The use of the term “objector” applies to all persons that meet eligibility requirements associated with the filed objection.

Record of Decision (ROD)—A document signed by a Responsible Official recording a decision that was preceded by preparation of an environmental impact statement (40 CFR 1505.2; FSH 1909.15, Chapter 20).

Responsible Official—The Forest Service employee who has the delegated au-

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thority to make and implement a decision approving proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects subject to this subpart.

Reviewing Officer—The USDA or Forest Service official having the delegated authority and responsibility to review an objection filed under this subpart. The Reviewing Officer is the next higher level supervisor of the Responsible Official.

§218.3 Authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects subject to the objection process.

Only authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects as defined by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, section 101(2), occurring on National Forest System lands that have been analyzed in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement are subject to this subpart. Authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects processed under the provisions of the HFRA are not subject to the notice, comment, and appeal provisions set forth in part 215 of this chapter.

§218.4 Legal notice of objection process for proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects.

(a) The Responsible Official shall promptly mail the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) or the environmental assessment (EA) to those who have previously requested to be included on the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project mailing list or are known to have submitted specific written comments related to the proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project during the opportunity for public comment provided during preparation of the environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

(b) Upon completion and mailing of the FEIS or EA, legal notice of the opportunity to object to a proposed authorized hazardous fuel reduction project shall be published in the applicable newspaper of record identified in paragraph (c) of this section for each National Forest System unit. When the Chief is the Responsible Official, notice shall also be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The legal notice shall: