



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Eastern
Region

Hogback - Draft Environmental Assessment

Monongahela National Forest
Cheat Potomac Ranger District

Tucker and Preston Counties
West Virginia

DRAFT of October 11, 2007

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Preface

Over the past couple years, an interdisciplinary team of resource professionals has examined Forest and State records and conducted field reviews of existing resource conditions in the Hogback area. The resource information collected was compared with direction, standards, and guidelines in the 2006 Monongahela National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Hogback project is being proposed to address disparities between existing vegetative conditions and desired future conditions outlined by the Forest Plan (2006).

The Monongahela National Forest (MNF) is preparing this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This EA discloses direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the Hogback proposed action and alternatives. This document is organized into four chapters.

Chapter 1 - Purpose of and Need for Action: This Chapter: 1) summarizes the proposed action; 2) describes the project area; 3) discusses Forest Plan direction related to this project; 4) describes the existing vegetative condition of the area; 5) explains why action is needed (referred to as the “purpose and need for action”); 6) defines the scope of the analysis; 7) identifies the decisions to be made with this project; and 8) lists the applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders related to this project.

Chapter 2 - Alternatives Considered: This chapter details how the Forest Service informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded. It also provides a more detailed description of the agency’s proposed actions as well as alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose. These alternatives were developed based on issues raised by the public and other agencies. A summary table of the proposed projects associated with each alternative is provided.

Chapter 3 - Environmental Effects: This chapter describes the existing conditions and the environmental effects of implementing the proposed actions and other alternatives. This chapter includes discussions on physical, biological, and social resources.

Chapter 4 - Project Preparation and References: This chapter provides a list of preparers who worked on the development of the EA. This chapter also includes lists of references used by specialists in the preparation of their Specialist Reports and the EA. Additional documentation, including detailed analyses of the project area resources, is located in the project planning file at the Cheat Potomac Ranger District office in Petersburg, West Virginia.

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