



NEWS RELEASE

Lolo National Forest

United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Lolo National Forest
Building 24, Fort Missoula
Missoula, Montana 59804

www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo

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Jocko Lakes Fire Salvage Scoping Letter Released

Missoula, MT. – A public scoping period for the Jocko Lakes Fire Salvage project will begin this week, giving the public the opportunity to comment on the proposed action for the project. Public comment during scoping is often used to refine and shape a proposed action.

The Jocko Lakes Fire salvage area is on the Seeley Lake Ranger District and is approximately three miles southwest of the community of Seeley Lake. The project would capture the economic value of burned timber over approximately 1,930 acres – or 17 percent of the 11,603 acres that burned in the fire last summer. Over 80 percent of the post-fire landscape would remain undisturbed by harvest activities under the proposed action.

The proposed action reflects one of the goals of the Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, which calls for providing, “A sustained yield of timber and other outputs at a level that will help support the economic structure of local communities and provide for regional and national needs.”

Dozens of design criteria were established for the project to minimize resource impacts. Those measures include requiring tractor logging to be done over-snow in some areas to minimize soil disturbance; retaining standing dead and downed trees within salvage units to provide for wildlife habitat, protect soils, and help forest regeneration.

Other measures would be in place to minimize impacts to the public, including allowing weekend snowmobile use of timber salvage haul routes.

The project has benefited from strong initial support from outside groups and citizens, particularly in the Seeley Lake community.

A Jocko Lakes Fire Salvage area map can be viewed on the Lolo National Forest website, under Plans and Projects (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo/>). Scoping comments are most useful if received prior to March 21, 2008. Comments can be sent by fax: 406 363-7106; email: comments-northern-lolo-seeley-lake@fs.fed.us, or U.S. mail: Sandy Mack, TEAMS Enterprise Unit, 1801 N. First, Hamilton, MT 59840.

Approximately 140,000 acres burned last summer on the Lolo National Forest. The ten year average for acres burned on the forest is 16,139. The forest had 200 fires total, exceeding the ten year average of 179. The forest’s containment rate on suppression fires last summer was 98 percent.

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