



NEWS RELEASE

Lolo National Forest

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United States
Department of Agriculture

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

For Immediate Release

Date: March 7, 2008

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Butte Lookout Draft EIS Released

Missoula, MT. – The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Butte Lookout project on the Missoula Ranger District has been released and is available for public review and comment. Hard copies of the document were sent to those who requested them this week and the document is also available on the Lolo National Forest website, under Plans and Projects (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo/>). The public comment period for the project is expected to remain open until April 21, 2008. Comments can be sent to: Deborah L. R. Austin, Forest Supervisor, Attention: Tami Paulsen, Lolo National Forest, Building 24, Fort Missoula, Missoula, MT 59804. Electronic comments may be sent to comments-northern-lolo-missoula@fs.fed.us. Please type Butte Lookout DEIS in the email subject line, and submit electronic comments in Microsoft Word.

The Butte Lookout project area covers 11,446 acres and is approximately 15 miles southwest of Missoula, on the south side of Lolo Creek. The purpose of the project is increase vegetative diversity, reduce the threat of high-intensity wildfire, decrease the potential for bark beetle infestation, rehabilitate degraded watershed and aquatic conditions, and provide for local economic benefit through timber harvest and processing.

Specific work under the Preferred Action includes:

- Improvement cutting and/or underburning on 1,274 acres
- Ecosystem maintenance burning on 166 acres
- Building about 0.7 miles of short-term specified road, about 0.5 miles of temporary road, and about 0.2 miles of permanent road
- Decommissioning about 5 miles of road and placing about 0.6 miles of road in storage
- Replacing one under-sized culvert, removing one culvert, narrowing about 2 miles of National Forest System Road 451, and implementing Best Management Practices (e.g., surface drainage devices) on about 27 miles of road
- Additional funding may allow for decommissioning an additional 29 miles of road, four culvert replacements, and one culvert removal

An open house has been scheduled for March 19 for the public to learn more about the project. The meeting will be at the Best Western Grant Creek Inn, at 5280 Grant Creek Road, from 5-8 p.m. For more information about this project, please contact Tami Paulsen at (406) 329-3731.

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