



File Code: 1950-1

Date: March 20, 2008

Mailing List
10025 Hwy 12
Randle, Washington 98377

Dear Interested Parties:

The Cowlitz Valley Ranger District of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest is proposing a timber sale project within the Kirk Thin planning area south of US Highway 12 and southwest of Randle. The project would occur in the Lower Cispus River watershed, specifically in the drainages of Yellowjacket Creek and McCoy Creek (see attached map). The timber sale would be sold in 2009, or later.

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in the analysis process by providing any comments, suggestions, or concerns you may have about this proposal. To encourage your informed participation, this letter includes a description of the Purpose and Need for action and the Proposed Action.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is

- Increase the health, vigor and growth of stands within the Matrix areas of the Kirk Thin planning area.
- Apply thinning practices for Riparian Reserves to promote desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain Aquatic conservation Strategy objectives.
- Supply wood products consistent with the Northwest Forest Plan goal of maintaining the stability of local and regional economies.
- Improve safety and efficiency of the transportation system in support of proposed project activities and reduce resource impacts.

Kirk Thin will provide logs and employment for the local timber industry, allowing for sustainable use of the forest's natural resources in a way that maintains options for habitat and resource use in the future.

Proposed Action

Commercial thinning is proposed over roughly 630 acres within 19 units utilizing both tractor and skyline logging systems (see Attachment A). These units include both managed and natural stands, and the age of the stands varies between 50 and 105 years. Units are located within areas designated as Matrix by the Northwest Forest Plan. Stands are predominantly Douglas fir, with



varying amounts of western hemlock, western red cedar, pacific silver fir, noble fir, grand fir, big leaf maple, red alder and black cottonwood.

Potential treatments of the Kirk Thin units may include no-cut islands, gaps in the canopy, and retention of features important to wildlife (for example: legacy patches with late-successional characteristics, snags and hardwoods). Riparian areas will be evaluated and unit specific treatments will be developed with protection measures in accordance with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

About 0.3 mile of permanent road construction is proposed as two units are currently inaccessible due to the destruction of the bridge on road 2809000 during flooding (see attached map). About 0.5 mile of road 2809000 would be closed and stabilized or decommissioned. In addition, up to 7 miles of existing road reconstruction may occur, and about 0.5 miles of temporary road may be built.

Furthermore, invasive species monitoring and hand or mechanical treatment where needed would occur following harvest to minimize the potential for increasing invasive species in and around treated areas.

The Forest Service interdisciplinary team conducting the analysis process has identified the following preliminary issues relating to the proposed actions:

- Potential impacts to listed plant and animal species;
- Potential impacts to deer and elk winter range;
- Potential impacts to aquatic resources;
- Potential soil effects related to compaction from logging machinery;
- Potential impacts to recreational use and safety within the planning area.

Please keep in mind that these issues are tentative. Your comments, concerns, and ideas which are site specific, or are based on your knowledge of the area will better help us define the important issues and develop alternatives needed to conduct the environmental analysis. Please provide these or additional information you may have regarding this project via e-mail, fax, or U.S. Mail to:

Bonnie Allison, ACT2 USFS Enterprise Unit
PO Box 377,
Happy Camp, CA 96039
Phone: 530-493-1788; Fax: 530-493-1775
email: ballison@fs.fed.us.

Your comments will also be accepted at the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District office. You may also email comments to comments-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot-cowlitzvalley@fs.fed.us.

Although comments are welcome throughout the planning process, providing your comments by April 23, 2008 will allow time to consider your input during alternative development and analysis. Comments are a matter of public record and as such may be provided to interested parties upon request.

The ACT2 Forest Service Enterprise Unit is working closely with local Forest Service personnel of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Cowlitz Valley Ranger District. They are assisting in

planning and analysis for this project and are knowledgeable about the proposal. If you have questions, please contact the Kirk Thin Planning Team Leader, Bonnie Allison, listed above.

Thank you for your participation in this process.

Sincerely,

/s/ KRISTIE L. MILLER

KRISTIE L. MILLER

Cowlitz Valley District Ranger

cc: Kristy Boscheinen
Bonnie L Allison
Mailroom R6 Gifford Pinchot

Attachment A

Kirk Thin proposed units, approximate acres of riparian and non-riparian areas, and harvest system.

Unit Number	Stand Origin	Acres of no-cut riparian reserve	Acres of treatable riparian reserve	Acres of treatable non-riparian reserve (includes potential skips)	Total Unit Acres	Harvest System for Thinning
1	natural	0	1	76	30	Tractor/Skyline
2	natural	8	22	28	12	Tractor/Skyline
3	natural	1	11	24	4	Skyline
4	natural	1	3	20	4	Skyline
5	natural	2	2	14	18	Skyline
6	natural	.5	0	15	15.5	Skyline
7	managed	3	17	0	20	Skyline
9	natural	3.5	7.5	30	41	Skyline
11	managed	3	21	21	17.5	Tractor/Skyline
13	managed	5.5	12	55	17.5	Skyline
14	managed	3	13	21	28	Skyline
15	managed	8	20	24	30	Tractor/Skyline
16	managed	9	21	21	14	Tractor
17	managed	4	10	8	0	Tractor
21	natural	0	0	12.5	12.5	Skyline
23	natural	0	.5	15	15.5	Skyline
24	natural	0	.5	9	9.5	Skyline
25	natural	0	3	7	10	Skyline
26	natural	0	0	13	13	Skyline
TOTAL:		51.5	164.5	413.5	312	