



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Mt. Hood National Forest

Hood River Ranger District
6780 Highway 35
Mt. Hood-Parkdale, OR 97041
(541) 352-6002
FAX (541) 352-7365

File Code: 1950

Date:

Dear Interested Party,

The Hood River Ranger District on the Mt. Hood National Forest has identified you as an individual, agency, or organization that might be interested in the planning process to thin sapling trees in the Hood River Precommercial Thinning project. The Decision Memo for this project is now complete. It is available on the Mt. Hood National Forest website, <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/mthood/projects/>. If you do not have access to the internet, please notify Jennie O'Connor at 541-352-6002 x634, if you would like us to send you a compact disc or a hard copy of the document.

The purpose of this project is to develop timber stands which are more productive, healthier and resilient to wildfire and to accelerate the development of mature forest characteristics adjacent to streams in order to provide habitat for late-successional associated wildlife/aquatic species and to meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives (Northwest Forest Plan) in a timelier manner.

As the Responsible Official, I have decided to precommercially thin approximately 5,774 acres of overstocked plantations on the Hood River Ranger District over the next eight years to meet the purpose and need for this project. I view this thinning program as a means of accelerating the characteristics of a mature forest on this district, while providing for a more productive, healthier forest that would be more resilient to catastrophic wildfire. I find the proposed action can be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact State because the action fits into Category 31.2-6, described in Forest Service Handbook 1909.15-2007-1, February 15, 2007. This category states: "Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction." More information on the rationale can be found in the Decision Memo.

Administrative Appeal: Implementation of this decision may occur immediately. While this decision is not subject to appeal pursuant to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 215.8(a)(4), I encourage you to discuss this project with me if you have any concerns about implementation.

Thank you for your continuing interest and participation in this process. For further information about this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, please contact Jennie O'Connor at the Hood River Ranger Station, 6780 Highway 35 Parkdale, Oregon 97041; Phone: 541-352-6002 x634; Fax: 541-352-7365; or Email: jmoconnor@fs.fed.us

Sincerely,

/s/ Daina L. Bambe
DAINA L. BAMBE
District Ranger

