



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Valley Face Fuels Reduction Project Planned on Tally Lake Ranger District

The Tally Lake Ranger District of the Flathead National Forest plans to reduce fuel loads and treat forest health issues related to insect and disease conditions on about 3,500 acres on the east-facing slopes of the Salish Mountains that form the western boundary in north Flathead Valley. This project, Valley Face Fuels Reduction Project, is planned under the authority of Congress's Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

The project is designed to provide a safe environment for firefighters and the public by reducing the potential for a severe crown fire to occur and improve forest health conditions. The community-developed Flathead County Community Wildfire Fuels Reduction/Mitigation Plan was instrumental in preparation of the Valley Face Project.

Tally Lake District Ranger Lisa Krueger said, "Collaboration with the public has been integral to the development of this project and I appreciate the comments received." After hearing public comment, specifically from several landowners in the project area, Krueger determined that mechanized treatment would take place on about 2,200 acres and hand treatment on about 1,200 acres. Commercial timber harvest would occur on acres planned for mechanized treatment, resulting in about 12 million board feet to be sold by competitive bid. Approximately 3.5 miles of temporary roads would be constructed and reclaimed after the project. Road improvements would be applied to about 40 miles of existing road.

This project is not subject to appeal, but does have an objection process. Anyone that submitted written comment on this project earlier can object to the project by formally filing an objection with the reviewing officer, Northern Regional Forester Gail Kimbell. Activities related to the project could begin as early as next summer. For more information about the project please contact project leader Bryan Donner at 863-5400.

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