



Flathead National Forest

Media Release

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Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project Identifies Salvage

Flathead National Forest Supervisor Cathy Barbouletos has signed a decision approving the Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project. The project includes salvage harvest of wood products on 3,973 acres of the 2007 Brush Creek Wildland Fire located approximately 20 miles west of Whitefish on National Forest System lands.

Tally Lake District Ranger Lisa Timchak said, “The Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project has been a priority for the district and the forest this past year. We have worked diligently and expeditiously to complete an environmental impact statement that meets the purpose and need for the project.”

The purpose of the project is to harvest fire-affected trees from the area and recover merchantable wood fiber while it is still economically feasible to do so. The Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Project decision allows for approximately 26 million board feet of wood fiber to be harvested and approximately 1,500 acres of the project area to be planted with trees. To access the area, approximately six miles of temporary roads will be constructed and later rehabilitated. An additional 11.8 miles of historic roads will be reopened for use and reclaimed at the conclusion of the project.

Based on economic and resource concerns, Chief of the Forest Service Gail Kimball granted an emergency situation determination that allows for the implementation of some actions with this

project immediately after the decision, instead of waiting until the end of the appeal period before doing any work. This emergency situation determination does not change the appeal process, it only allows for expedited project work.

Three salvage sales are planned. Elk Brush and Swaney Dun Salvage Sales will be advertised in the next week with bids due by November 12. Sylvia Ingalls Salvage Sale will be advertised in late October. For more information about the three salvage sales, contact Mike Shira at 758-5290.

The Brush Creek Fire burned a total of approximately 30,000 acres on the Flathead and Kootenai National Forests, Plum Creek Timber Company Lands, and a small amount of other private property. Approximately 24,700 acres of the fire burned on lands administered by the Tally Lake Ranger District.

The Sheppard Creek Post-Fire Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are available by visiting www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead. For further information on the project, contact District Ranger Timchak at (406) 758-5204 or Project Leader Bryan Donner at (406) 758-3508.

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