



File Code: 1900

Date: August 7, 2008

Dear Interested Citizen,

I have signed the Decision Notice (DN) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Armuchee Ridges Thinning and Restoration Project on the Conasauga Ranger District, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, Georgia.

This decision is the culmination of almost 3 years of collaboration. I want to thank everyone who has been involved for their commitment to this project. I believe this project will improve forest health, allow for the restoration of native plant communities, improve habitat for riparian associated species, and will enhance wildlife habitat throughout the project area. I am committed to continuing this collaboration in the implementation of the Armuchee Ridges project.

I have chosen Alternative 2, with some minor modifications, for implementation which includes approximately 6,909 acres of treatment. More specifically, Alternative 2- Modified includes the following activities:

- 669 acres of mountain longleaf and shortleaf pine restoration
- 453 acres of oak/oak-pine restoration and maintenance
- 5,787 acres of pine thinning to improve forest health.

The areas to be treated are located in Chattooga, Floyd, Gordon and Walker Counties. The DN discusses in detail my decision and rationale for reaching my decision. Copies of the DN and FONSI are enclosed.

The September 2007 EA was updated to respond to public comments and the final August 2008 EA document is available upon request or can be downloaded in PDF format from the Forest's Internet website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/sopa/nepa_docs.htm

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11. A written appeal, including attachments, must be postmarked or received within 45 days after the date this notice is published in *The Daily Citizen* in Dalton. The appeal shall be sent to Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, ATTN: Appeals Deciding Officer, 1755 Cleveland Highway, Gainesville, GA, 30501. Appeals may be faxed to (770) 297-3011. Hand-delivered appeals must be received within normal business hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. Appeals may also be mailed electronically in a common digital format to: chatt_comments@fs.fed.us.



Those who provided comments or otherwise expressed interest in a particular proposed action by the close of the comment period may appeal this decision (as per the recent *The Wilderness vs. Rey* ruling). Appeals must meet content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14.

For further information on this decision contact Ruth Stokes, Conasauga Ranger District Wildlife Biologist, at (706) 695-6736.

Again, I want to thank our partners for the time and effort that they have put into this project over the last few years. I look forward to working with you as we begin implementation.

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Conasauga Ranger District.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michele H. Jones
MICHELE H. JONES
District Ranger

Enclosure