



July 2008

R6-OLY-08-01

The Olympic National Forest's Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA) is published in order to provide you with early notice of projects and activities which may undergo environmental analysis and documentation. By reviewing the SOPA, you will have a better understanding of the type and number of activities that will be occurring on the National Forest. We believe that this will enable you to identify those activities of particular interest to you and about which you may wish additional information. The SOPA names a contact person who can best provide you with information about the project and also advise you as to the best time to become involved in the project should you wish to comment on it.

The SOPA will include projects for which we normally do an environmental analysis leading to a decision which is documented in a Decision Memo, Decision Notice, or Record of Decision. Some examples of projects included are: campground development, issuing some types of special use permits, timber harvest, fisheries habitat improvement projects, watershed improvement projects, and some road and bridge reconstruction activities. This SOPA may also include categorically excluded projects that do not require a decision document if no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action are found that warrant further analysis and documentation. Examples of these projects include proposals for minor uses of National Forest land under special use permit; permits to haul commercial products on existing National Forest System roads; and minor maintenance and repair of existing buildings, grounds, roads, trails and recreation facilities.

Documentation of Analysis and Decisions

The National Environmental Policy Act, Federal Regulations (CEQ Regs, 40 CFR 1500-1508) and Forest Service direction, as set out in its handbooks and manuals, provide for three types of decision documents, each supported by a different type of analysis document or record:

1. **CE - Categorical Exclusion (sometimes referred to as Cat. Ex.).** This refers to proposals for action that have been categorically excluded from documentation requirements in the form of an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment. It has been determined that actions of these types do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Some decisions which are based on analysis of proposals for categorically excluded actions are documented in a Decision Memo. Although an analysis document is not required and not generally prepared, a project file is required and will be maintained for all projects for which a Decision Memo (DM) is prepared. Categorically excluded projects which require a Decision Memo are included in the SOPA.

Some categorically excluded actions may be implemented without preparation of a Decision Memo. Examples of these projects include issuance of an order to close an area during a period of extreme fire danger and repair and maintenance of buildings, roads and trails, recreation sites and facilities. Proposals to accomplish projects of this type may or may not be included in the SOPA.

2. **EA - Environmental Assessment.** An EA is prepared to document the results of the environmental analysis of a proposal that is not categorically excluded when it is not certain whether or not the proposal will have a significant effect on the human environment. If, through analysis, it is determined that there will be no significant effect on the human environment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is prepared. A Decision Notice (DN) is used to document a decision that is based on an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact.
3. **EIS - Environmental Impact Statement.** An EIS is prepared to document the results of the environmental analysis of a proposal when it has been determined that the proposed action or alternatives will have a significant effect on the human environment. A Record of Decision (ROD) is used to document a decision that is based on an Environmental Impact Statement.

Projects Included

It is our intent to include entries for proposals currently under consideration and those for which we expect to begin scoping within the next few months. Note, though, that we may occasionally develop, respond to, or begin scoping a proposal before we have a chance to include it in the SOPA. We will follow our normal public notification process for any projects for which this becomes necessary.

The SOPA will not take the place of notification of individuals and groups who have asked to be notified of individual projects or who have asked to receive Decision Notices and other documents. People on these lists will continue to receive information as they request it from us.

The SOPA is intended to provide a minimal amount of information about each proposed project. It will inform you about the proposed projects we plan to analyze in the coming months and will give you a feel for the kind and amount of activity occurring on the National Forest. Should you wish additional information, or wish to comment on any proposal, you may call or write the contact person listed for each project.

The SOPA is now posted on our web site (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/olympic>) for easy access. You can locate it under the section "Projects and Plans" and heading "Schedule of Proposed Action". If you'd prefer to access the information directly from the web site or by e-mail instead of receiving a mailed hard copy, please e-mail us at: comments-pacificnorthwest-olympic@fs.fed.us or call 360-956-2375.

We appreciate your interest and welcome your participation.

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