

Glenda Wiles

From: Snook, Ed -FS <esnook@fs.fed.us>
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 4:44 PM
Subject: Darby Lumber Lands Project EA released to the public for comment
Attachments: DarbyLumberLandsEAReleaseLetterFINAL.pdf; EACommentForm.docx

You have expressed an interest in The Darby Lumber Lands Watershed Improvement and Travel Management Project. The Environmental Assessment is now available on the web. Please see the attached documents for information on the project, links to the project web site and how to comment under the recently introduced 36 CFR218 regs. Thanks for your interest in the management of the Bitterroot National Forest.



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File Code: 1950

Date: January 23, 2015

Dear Interested Party,

The Bitterroot National Forest has released the Darby Lumber Lands Watershed Improvement and Travel Management Project Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review and comment.

The Darby Lumber Lands project area is approximately 28,758 acres, located in the South Fork Sleeping Child and Rye Creek watersheds, in the Sapphire Mountain Range, east of Darby, Montana. The project is designed to address road density and sediment concerns, while also responding to a desire for loop-based motorized routes. The project includes approximately 66 miles of road decommissioning and about 51 miles of road storage treatments. Most of these roads are currently closed. Travel management actions would increase routes open to motorized access from about 139 miles to 150 miles, but would reduce roads open yearlong by about 10 miles. About 6 miles of connector trails would be built and combined with access changes on existing roads to create several new loop opportunities for OHVs < 50" in width. A new full-size road segment about 0.4 miles long would be built around private land at the Crystal Mine, providing a public route that eventually connects to FR75 (the Skalkaho-Rye Road). Additionally, about 49 acres of aspen stands would be non-commercially thinned to promote their longevity.

The EA is available on the internet at

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/bitterroot/landmanagement/projects> A limited amount of hard copies are available at the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office as well as CDs containing the EA. Comments on the EA are due within 30 days from publication of the Legal Notice in the Ravalli Republic, and should be sent to the Darby Ranger District, 712 N. Main Street, Darby, MT 59829. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00-4:30, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays (FAX-406-777-7423). Electronic comments must be submitted to comments-northern-bitterroot-Darby@fs.fed.us. The subject line must contain the name of the project for which you are submitting comments. For electronically mailed comments, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of the receipt of comments, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means. All comments must comply with 36 CFR 218.2, which requires "timely and specific written comments" and is defined in the legal notice. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names, addresses and e-mail addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record, and will be available for public inspection.

If you need additional information about the EA, please contact me at (406) 821-4244 or Ed Snook at (406) 363-7103, esnook@fs.fed.us

Sincerely,

s/s Charles T. Oliver January 23, 2015
Charles T. Oliver
District Ranger



Darby Lumber Lands Watershed Improvement and Travel Management Project – Comment on Environmental Assessment

How to Comment and Timeframe

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral and electronic comments will be accepted for 30 days after the publication of the legal notice in the Ravalli Republic. Publication of the legal notice is scheduled for January 24, 2015.

The proposed project is an activity implementing a land management plan and not specifically authorized under the Healthy Forests Recreation Act (HFRA); therefore it is subject to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Only individuals or entities (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) about this proposed project or activity during this or another public comment period established by the responsible official will be eligible to file an objection (also known as “the objection process”). Other eligibility requirements are defined by 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(3) and include name, postal address, title of the project and signature or other verification of identity upon request and the identity of the individual or entity who authored the comments. Individual members of an entity must submit their own individual comments in order to have eligibility to object as an individual. A timely submission will be determined as outlined in 36 CFR 218.25 (a)(4). It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted.

Comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider (36 CFR 218.2).

In submitting comments, please provide: (1) your name, address, and organization represented, if any; (2) reference the Darby Lumber Lands project; (3) information regarding the proposed action along with supporting reasons that you believe should be considered; and (4) your signature.

Please submit written comments to: Responsible Official: Chuck Oliver, District Ranger, Darby Ranger District, 712 N. Main Street, Darby, MT 59829. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00-4:30, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays (FAX-406-777-7423). Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone 406-821-3913 or in person; or at an official agency function (ie. public meeting) that is designed to elicit public comments. Electronic comments must be submitted in rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc) or Word Perfect format to comments-northern-bitterroot-Darby@fs.fed.us The subject line must contain the name of the project for which you are submitting comments. For electronically mailed comments, the sender should normally receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of the receipt of comments, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names, addresses and e-mail addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record, and will be available for public inspection.

If you need additional information regarding this proposal, please contact Ranger Chuck Oliver at (406) 821-4244 or Ed Snook at (406) 363-7103, esnook@fs.fed.us