

Ravalli County Commissioners Office

From: McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmkay@fs.fed.us>
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2015 8:26 AM
Subject: News Release: Open House planned for Westside Collaborative Project
Attachments: Westside Collaborative Project.docx

Open House Planned for Westside Collaborative Project

Hamilton, Montana (July 15, 2015) – The Bitterroot National Forest is inviting the public to an open house to discuss and solicit input on the Westside Collaborative Vegetation Management Project located in the Bitterroot Mountains southwest of Hamilton. The project proposes thinning approximately 2,500 acres of overstocked National Forest System lands between Lost Horse Creek and Roaring Lion Creek.

Objectives of the project include:

- Reduce hazardous fuels and lower crown fire hazard in low-to-mid elevation mixed Ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forests.
- Improve forest resilience to natural disturbances (fire, insects, and disease).
- Manage timber to provide forest products, jobs and income to local communities.
- Restore, maintain, and enhance wildlife and native plant habitat and diversity, including riparian areas, meadows, and pastures.

Proposed treatments include commercial timber harvest, non-commercial thinning, and prescribed burning to improve wildlife habitat and ecosystem maintenance.

The collaborative project is proposed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) and has received support from the State of Montana and the Bitterroot Restoration Committee.

The open house will take place on Wednesday, July 22, 2015 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Bitterroot River Inn located at 139 Bitterroot Plaza Drive in Hamilton.

For additional information contact Chris Fox, Stevensville Ranger District at (406) 777-7415. Stay in touch with us through www.facebook.com/DiscoverTheBitterroot and www.twitter.com/BitterrootNF.

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