

Glenda Wiles

From: Domsalla, Ryan -FS <rdomsalla@fs.fed.us>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2015 11:29 AM
To: Glenda Wiles
Cc: Domsalla, Ryan -FS; Fox, Chris -FS; Grove, Sara -FS; King, Julie K -FS; Pintok, Jacob R -FS
Subject: Westside Collaborative Veg. Management Project Follow Up with Comississioners
Attachments: 2015_0806 DRAFT Westside roads risk benifit analysis.xlsx; Natural Recovery Level and Road Closure & Decom level Diagrams.pptx

Glenda,

Could you please pass the following information along to the County Commissioners?

Based upon a briefing and associated conversation with the Ravalli County Commissioners that occurred two Mondays ago (July 27, 2015), I agreed to provide further information to assist in providing comments. One of the documents I agreed to provide was a copy of the **(DRAFT) Roads Analysis** (as an Excel Spreadsheet) for the proposed Westside Collaborative Vegetation Management Project. Please be advised that **this information is subject to change as further analysis occurs within the project area.**

As the Commissioners will find when reviewing the attached spreadsheet, the following criteria were considered as risks to each road located within the proposed project area:

- **Visuals**
- **Elk Security**
- **Soils & Water**
- **Threatened & Endangered (Aquatic) Species**
- **Threatened & Endangered (Terrestrial) Species**
- **Importance for Fuels Management**
- **Importance for Vegetative Management (aka timber harvest removal)**
- **Importance for Fire Suppression Access**
- **Importance for Roaded Recreation Summer/ Winter/ Fall**
- **Importance of Access to State or Private Lands**
- **Importance for Commercial Access**

As can be surmised from the attached table, all of the roads proposed for decommissioning as part of the proposed project are currently **CLOSED to motorized use, with the exception of National Forest System Roads #62961, #74985 and #74995** (highlighted in yellow).

Forest System Road #62961 (0.096 miles long) is currently **OPEN** to motorized use on a year round basis. It has been determined this road is redundant to other roads within the project area and is thereby being proposed for decommissioning.

Forest System Road #74985 (0.554 miles long) is currently reflected in the Forest Service Database as is currently **OPEN** to motorized use on a year round basis. This road is not constructed to road standards, it is in bad shape, has no water connections, and it is way too steep. We are thereby proposing it for decommissioning.

Forest Road # 74995 (0.275 miles long) is currently OPEN to motorized use on a year round basis. It has been determined this road is redundant to other roads within the project area and is thereby being proposed for decommissioning.

In summary and to assist the Commissioners in considering the effects of the proposed project, the Forest Service is proposing the physical closure of approximately 0.925 miles of road that are currently OPEN to Motorized vehicles on a year round basis within the Westside Collaborative Vegetative Management Project.

The second document (attached) contains a couple of Power Point slides reflecting 5 ways the Bitterroot National Forest decommissions roads. As I stated in the meeting with the Commissioners during their Monday meeting, decommissioning can range from installation of gates to full recontouring of road prisms. Also reflected in the Power Point slides is how Natural Recovery Values (NRVs) are established and considered, prior to closing a road. As a general rule of thumb and unless there is a compelling need (e.g. a restrictive water crossing that doesn't allow for Fish passage, or there is a high potential that crossing failure will have an adverse downstream effect, etc.) the Forest Service doesn't do a whole bunch of decommissioning work on roads that have Natural Recovery Values of 5-7. In essence, we fully recognize there no gain in disturbing or decommissioning roads that are currently impassable, hydrologically stable, and/or re-vegetated.

I hope this information will assist the Commissioners in considering the potential effects of the proposed project on their constituency. As always, I am willing to make myself or my Staff available if further explanation is needed. RSD.



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