

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

December 17, 2009

Sandy Mack
Team USFS
Salt Project
1801 N. First
Hamilton, MT 59840-3114

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Salt Timber Harvest and Fuel Hazard Reduction Project, Trinity County, California (CEQ#20090391)

Dear Ms. Mack:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and provided comments to the Forest Service on May 6, 2009. We rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns – Insufficient Information (EC-2) and asked that the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) include additional information on proposed treatment descriptions, the economic viability of the project, closure and decommissioning of roads, smoke management plan, worker exposure to naturally occurring asbestos, air quality mitigation measures, and climate change. Finally, we recommended that the Forest Service focus on the use of local stewardship contracts that utilize community and Tribal labor pools.

EPA is pleased that many of the issues identified in our review of the DEIS have been addressed in the FEIS. Additional information was provided to address our concerns about treatment methods, economic viability, closure and restoration plans for the proposed temporary roads and landings, and effects from climate change. We appreciate the Forest Service addressing our recommendation to use local stewardship contracts that utilize community and Tribal labor pools.

EPA is also pleased with the additional information provided in the FEIS, and changes made to the proposed project, in response to some of our concerns. Specifically, we appreciate the additional detail provided to the dust abatement resource protection

measure, and the inclusion of a worker protection measure, to account for potentially naturally occurring asbestos. The relocation of 0.15 miles of temporary road and development of new landing locations away from serpentine soils are key mitigation measures that will protect human health.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. When the Record of Decision is signed, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 972-3521, or Jason Gerdes, the lead reviewer for this project. Jason can be reached at (415) 947-4221 or gerdes.jason@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Connell Dunning for

Kathleen M. Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Office (CED-2)

cc: J. Sharon Heywood, Forest Supervisor, Shasta-Trinity National Forest