
File Code: 1950
Date: January 19, 2018

Dear Forest Stakeholder:

The Blue Ridge Ranger District of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, has prepared an environmental assessment (EA), draft Decision Notice (DN) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Cooper Creek Watershed Project.

Three alternatives were analyzed in the Cooper Creek Watershed Project EA, and I am proposing to implement Alternative 3 with some minor modifications. The decision authorizes the following treatment: vegetation management (1,397 acres of commercial timber sales and 661 acres of non-commercial treatments); 589 acres of herbicide treatments; 11,842 acres of prescribed burning, 1890 acres of old-growth designated; road access management (road reconstruction, temporary road construction, year-round and seasonal closures and changes in road maintenance levels) and a parking lot expansion. Project design criteria, visual standard and the monitoring plan are included in this decision. The EA and draft DN/FONSI are available online at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=44385> or may be requested from the address above.

The proposed project or activity is subject to the pre-decisional objection process pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B.

How to Object and Timeframe

The opportunity to object ends 45 days following the date of publication of the legal notice in *The News Observer and North Georgia News* newspapers, in Blue Ridge and Blairsville, GA, respectively. The publication date of the legal notice in the newspapers of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity during a public comment period, unless based on new information arising after designated comment opportunities. Interested individuals or entities who have not previously commented may gain limited eligibility to object based on new information, but only for issues that arise based on new information where that information is truly new and was not available during the designated public comment opportunity.

Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in §218.8(b). It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer.

At a minimum, the objection must include the following:

- List the name, address, and if possible, a telephone number of the objector;
- Provide a signature or other verification of authorship (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);
- Identify the lead objector, when multiple names are listed on an objection;
- Provide the name of the project being objected to, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the National Forest(s) and/or ranger district on which the project is located;
- A statement of the issues and/or the parts of the project to which the objection applies;
- If applicable, a statement explaining how the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies; and supporting reasons; and
- A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments and the



content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment.

Written objections, including attachments, must be filed with: Betty Jewett, Forest Supervisor, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, 1755 Cleveland Highway, Gainesville, GA 30501, phone: (770) 297-3000, fax: (770) 297-3011. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are: 8:00 am to 12:00, 1:00 to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc, .docx) to objections-southern-chattahoochee-oconee@fs.fed.us

Please state “Cooper Creek Watershed Project” in the email subject line when providing electronic objections, or on the envelope when replying by mail.

Objection may also be made directly on the Cooper Creek Watershed Project webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=44385> by selecting the “**Comment/Object on Project**” link in the “**Get Connected**” group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Attachments may be in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf).

Objections received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who object, will be considered part of the public record on these proposed actions and will be available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

If you have any question about this project or activity, please contact: Jim Wentworth, Blue Ridge Ranger District, (706)745-6928, or at jwentworth@fs.fed.us

For information about the objection process, contact Nelson González-Süllow, (770) 297-3051, or at nelsongonzalezsullow@fs.fed.us

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests.

Sincerely,

/s/ Andrew Baker
ANDREW BAKER
District Ranger

cc: Jim Wentworth, Nelson González-Süllow, Andy Baker