

Nez Perce National Forest
Response to 6 Action Items from May 10 Forest Health Meeting
Revised September 15, 2004

This document is updated monthly and all updates are in bold. These action items are also linked to Senator Craig's website at: <http://craig.senate.gov>.

1. Expedited Forest Plan Amendment (Fish/Water Quality standards, extraordinary hazards)

Forest Plan amendments are being proposed within the Red Pines EIS.

2. Use of New Stewardship Authorities in Red River

- *Red Pines DEIS* was released in August.
- Stewardship contracting will be one of the options considered for all projects, but especially for American/Crooked River implementation.
- A Stewardship Workshop for the public was held July 22 at the Grangeville Education Center. An additional workshop for Forest Service/BLM employees was held on July 23 at the Nez Perce Forest Supervisor's Office.

3. Plans to implement new authorities using categorical exclusions (CE) on forest

Currently, five Limited Timber Harvest projects are being analyzed. **These may qualify as CE projects.**

- **Salmon River Ranger District: Decision Memos for Morrison Ridge and John Day limited timber harvest projects have been signed. The analysis is ongoing with the Florence proposal. We plan on advertising John Boy Timber Sale and Morrison Mistletoe Timber Sale in mid to late September.**
- **Red River Ranger District: Decision Memo signed on 9/24/04. Appears to qualify under the Limited Timber Harvest CE category.**
- **Clearwater Ranger District: The Bullied Grouse Project is being scoped for public comment. The district is considering contracting with a Forest Service team to do the analysis. This project may qualify as a CE.**
- **The North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) has approved funding for five CE projects on the Forest for a total of \$175,000 - \$225,000. The Forest has initiated work to identify and start additional projects that may qualify as CEs.**

4. Limit (off-forest) Fire assignments of people who are key to Red River projects

Key personnel are excluded from off-Forest fire and other temporary assignments pending completion of critical projects.

5. Work with Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) and Idaho County to reduce hazards in Elk City community and access corridors.

Idaho County and RC&D have identified high priority needs in Elk City, Dixie, Red River and Orogrande. USFS has worked with Emergency Services to address community protection and evacuation in 2003.

- Red River Hazard Tree - Logging has been completed in 4 of the sales **and the fifth one has been extended to September 30, 2004**. This project has reduced hazards along 20 miles of road. The USFS fire crews and contractors completed the 109 miles as of 7/13/04.
- Defensible Space projects (Newsome and Crooked River) will be implemented in 2004 through a partnership with Framing Our Community (#6 below).
- Whiskey-South is a cooperative project with the communities and the BLM. This includes USFS and BLM lands.
- The Forest and the BLM are cooperating agencies and are coordinating with the community in the development of the American/Crooked River project, which is adjacent to the Elk City Township.
- Forest/BLM are coordinating on the development and timing of activities of the BLM's *Eastside Township Project*, which is designed to reduce fuel loads in the Elk City Township.
- The Forest is coordinating with the Idaho Department of Lands, BLM and Rural Fire Districts on the development of cooperative projects to implement National Fire Plan goals for the next 5 years.

6. *Work closely with communities to foster economic diversity.*

- The Forest is working with Ed Gee, National Partnership Coordinator, Forest & Rangelands; Joyce Dearstyne, Framing Our Community; and Owen Squires of the Paper and Pulp Workers Resource Council, to look for markets & alternative products that can be developed from low value forest products.
- The Forest is working to foster local employment opportunities through manpower and development programs developed with an Elk city organization called "Framing our Community."
- Two defensible space fuels reduction projects (Newsome and Crooked River (**Orogrande**) Defensible Space) will be completed through this program.
- Supply significant quantities of sawtimber, wood fiber & miscellaneous products (Red Pines and American/Crooked River projects)

The public can access information on projects in Red River and additional project activity in the Elk City area by clicking on the link, "Current Status of Project Work in Red River" on this website. It is updated monthly by the Forest.

For further information, please contact Steve Williams, Nez Perce **Acting Forest Supervisor** at (208) 983-7017, or Laura Smith, Public Affairs Officer at (208) 983-5143.