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Planning and Project Implementation Update



January 2003

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### ABOUT THIS UPDATE

The purpose of the Chippewa Quarterly is to provide a summary of environmental analyses on the Chippewa National Forest. Issued quarterly, this is intended to complement other public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers. Legal notices will continue to be published in the following local newspapers: Bemidji's *The Pioneer* for Forest Supervisor decisions; and *Blackduck's American*, *Cass Lake Times*, *Western Itasca Review*, and Walker's *The Pilot-Independent* for District Ranger decisions.

Projects are classified into one of three categories:

#### **Environmental Analyses in Progress**

This category includes projects in which public input is being or is about to be solicited. It also includes those projects that are currently under study or analysis. Environmental analyses include Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments (EA), and Categorical Exclusions (CE).

#### **Completed Decision Documents**

These are projects that have culminated in the preparation of completed environmental analyses and decision documents since the last issue. These decision documents include Records of Decision (ROD), Decision Notices (DN), and Decision Memos (DM). Findings of No Significant Impacts will be included in this category, also.

#### **Proposals withdrawn or deferred**

Some projects are initiated and published in this Quarterly but may be withdrawn or deferred for various reasons. These projects may or may not be picked up for completion at a later date. Project summaries include reasons for discontinuing the project.

#### **HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED**

Read through the list of proposed projects. If you want to provide site-specific comments on a project, get more information, or be placed on the project mailing list, write or call the contact person listed for that project. We value your site-specific involvement. A generic statement of interest in all projects is not specific enough. It is only through site-specific input that we can be responsive to and incorporate your concerns into project development. Project specific involvement is required for standing.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Appeal Period** - The 45-day period after publication of a decision in which an appeal can be filed.

**Categorical Exclusion (CE)** - A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

**Comment Period** - The time allowed for interested persons to provide comments to a Responsible Official on a proposed action.

**Decision Memo (DM)** - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision to implement an action that has been categorically excluded from documentation.

**Decision Notice (DN)** - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact.

**Environmental Assessment (EA)** - A document that presents issues and concerns important to a project, alternate means of accomplishing a project, and environmental effects of each of those alternatives.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** - This document is required for proposed actions that may have significant effects on the human environment. The contents are similar to an environmental assessment, and it includes some additional sections.

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)** - A document prepared by a federal agency presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

**NEPA** - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The procedural guide for the decision making process for site-specific projects.

**Proposed Action** - A proposal made by the Forest Service to authorize, recommend, or implement an action on National Forest System lands to meet a specific purpose and need which is subject to public notice comment provisions.

**Scoping** - Includes internal and public involvement to determine the range of issues to be addressed. Scoping aids in the development of alternatives for a proposed action.

**Significance** - As used in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires consideration of both context and intensity.

### Anticipated "Walk-in" Business

Requests from the public occasionally necessitate analyses be completed with a short turn-around. This may mean that decisions are made without prior announcement in this Update. As these projects come up for consideration however, they will continue to be announced by legal notices in newspapers. Examples of walk-in requests include special use roads and utility rights-of-way. Scoping efforts for these requests will be conducted as applicable.

### Forest Policy on Distributing Documents

Draft and Final Environmental Assessments and Decision Notices/FONSI's and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision are routinely mailed to individuals who submit written comments to any projects. We do not routinely distribute biological assessments or biological evaluations with the previously listed documents. If you wish to receive biological evaluations or biological assessments for NEPA projects, please contact the district and/or Supervisor's Office NEPA Coordinators.

### Privacy on Comments Received

Comments received in response to solicitation as part of the NEPA process, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on a proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within stated number of days.

**SCHEDULE OF NEPA PROPOSED ACTIONS**

**Blackduck Ranger District**  
**417 Forestry Drive**  
**Blackduck, MN 56630**  
**(218) 835-4291 TTY: (218) 835-4189**

**TRACY BECK, District Ranger**  
**NEPA Coordinator: Leo Johnson (ljohnson@fs.fed.us)**

*Environmental Analyses in Progress*

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Scoping Status</b>	<b>Analysis Status</b>	<b>Expected Decision Date</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
B106	Sandplain Vegetation Management	T145 28, 29,30 T146 29, 30	Developing Proposal to include thinning and Prescribed burning	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	May 2003	Mark VanTassel (218) 835-3112
B108	Cass Lake Vegetation Management	T145N,R30,31W; T146N,R30,31W, T147N,R31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Norway Beach parking lot, Norway Beach Work Center Building, Bike Trail, and Star Island toilet	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	May 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B110	County Road 22 Reconstruction & Easement	T148N,R31W	Reconstruct and pave the county road	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	April 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B111	Bowstring River Bridge Replacement	T149N,R27W, Sec. 23 and 26	Easement (about 400 feet by 66 feet) and replace a narrow bridge	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	February 2003	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B115	Beaulieu Road Paving	T147N, R31W	Pave ¼ mile of FR 2211E for access to private housing area near Flora Lake. Reduce erosion and dust. Increase safety.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress.	February 2003	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B116	Mission Buried Water Line	T146N, R31W	Permit for installing a buried water line 3/4 mile long to private housing areas along Highway 33 in the ditch.	Included and analyzed in Cass Lake Veg project.		May 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B117	Mississippi Riparian Planting	T146N, R29W	Planting trees on 7 acres by the Mississippi River	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	February 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B119	Rambling Woods Resource Management	T146N,R29,30,31W, T147N,R29,30,31W T148N,R30,31W T149N,R30,31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Minor Recreation Projects.	Scope in February 2003	Not begun yet.	November 2003	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B121	Bridge Rehab	Various locations across forest.	Repairs may include wing walls, rip rap, pile caps, and rail posts	Scope spring 2003.	Not begun yet.	Fall/winter 2003.	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672
B120	Bridge Replacement	Mitt Lake Creek T150N R27 W Sec 21	Replace bridge.	Scope spring 2003.		Fall/winter 2003.	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672

*Completed Decision Documents*

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision Approval Date</b>	<b>Appeal Due Date</b>	<b>Appeal Review Date</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
B109	Carlson SU Road Permit	T147N,R31W, Sec. 32	Easement for a private road	December 9, 2002 DN legal ad published Dec.12, 2002	End of January	Mid-March	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117
B118	Popple and Dunbar Rock Reefs	T148N, R28W	Construct 2 walleye spawning reefs in the Popple and Dunbar Rivers.	December 19, 2002	Not Appealable	Not Appealable	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B113	Goble Small Tract	T149N, R27W	Land exchange for small private trespass.	December 4, 2002	Not Appealable	Not Appealable	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116

Walker Ranger District  
 201 Minnesota Ave. East  
 Walker, MN 56484  
 (218) 547-1044 Fax: (218) 547-3260

THOMAS G. SOMRAK, District Ranger  
 NEPA Coordinator: Chris Brunner ([cbrunner@fs.fed.us](mailto:cbrunner@fs.fed.us))

*Environmental Analyses in Progress*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
W64	Boy River Resource Management (formerly Maboy Vegetation)	T141-143N R26-29W	Prescribed burning, timber harvest, road decommissioning, and snowmobile trail reroutes.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	April 2003	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044
W68	North Star Resort	T144N R28W Sec 17	Resolve an encroachment through sale with Small Tracts Act.	Letter sent September 12, 2002	Analysis in progress	February 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W69	Pike Bay Shoreline Stabilization	T145N R31W Sec 25	Stabilize the bottom of steep slopes primarily with rock on about 660 feet of severely eroding shoreline in front of up to three summer homes under special use permit.	Letter sent September 12, 2002	Analysis in progress	February 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W70	Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance	District-wide	Evaluate the renewal of road special use permits near expiration to access private land. Permits are valid for five years.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Throughout the year	Jim Tande (218) 547-1044
W71	Leech Lake River Resource Management	T142-T145N R26-28W	Timber harvest, prescribed burning, planting, and road decommissioning	Scope in February		September 2003	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044
W72	Remer Repeater Tower	T141N R27 Sec 10	Placement of a 100-foot repeater tower, and a small building to house electronic equipment, in an existing permanent opening.	Scope in March 2003	Should begin in March 2003	April 2003	Gary Roerick (218) 547-1044
W73	Pipeline Maintenance	Numerous spots along pipeline that crosses Walker district.	Maintenance of pipeline and corridor. Digs to inspect pipeline that are necessary to ensure spills/leaks do not occur.	Scope in spring		October 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W74	Bridge Replacement	Laura Lake Creek T141N R 27W Sec 25	Replace bridge	Scope in spring		Fall/winter 2003	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672

**Deer River/Marcell Ranger District  
Ranger  
1037 Division Street  
Michael Jiménez ([mjimenez@fs.fed.us](mailto:mjimenez@fs.fed.us))  
Deer River, MN 56636  
(218) 246-2123 TTY: (218) 246-9743**

**Marcell Office  
49554 State Hwy 38  
Marcell, MN 56657  
(218) 832-3161**

**WADE SPANG, District  
NEPA Coordinator:**

*Environmental Analyses in Progress*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
9	Private Road Access to Bowstring Lake Property	T147N, R26W, Section 2, SWSW and Section 11, NWNW.	Applicant has requested special use permit for a ¼ mile road crossing NF lands to access private land	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	March 2003.	Gregg Allen (218) 832-3161
5	Cuffe Road Special Use Permit	T148N, R26W, Section 35 SESE.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	October 2003.	Jane Munneke (218) 246-2123
6	Noard Road Special Use Permit	T141N, R25, Section 15.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping completed.	Analysis in progress	October 2003.	Jane Munneke (218) 246-2123
1	Upper Bowstring Intergrated Resource Project (IRP)	Encompasses the Upper Bowstring Watershed including Spring, Jessie, Rice, Caribou, and Turtle Lakes.	Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, wildlife, & watershed management and restoration in the Upper Bowstring Watershed.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress.	May 2003.	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123
4	Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance	Various locations throughout Marcell/Deer River Ranger Districts.	Evaluates the renewal of land special use permits near expiration. The majority of these permits involve road uses and are valid for five years.	Ongoing scoping	Analysis in progress	March 2003.	Dave Sorenson (218) 246-2123
3	Rice Lake Access an Snowmobile Trail Reroute	T60N, R26W, Section 32.	Proposal is to consider a snowmobile trail re-route and trailhead improvement.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	February 2003.	Michelle Healy (218) 246-2123
2	Eagle Nest Road	Road extends from Hwy 46 to South Deer Lake Campground. T147N, R27W, Sections 14,15,21,22, &28.	Project will look at small realignments, reconstructing bridges and adding bituminous surface to Eagle Nest Road. Project will also encompass the rehabilitation of East and West Seelye Campgrounds adjacent to this road.	Scoping completed.	Analysis to be initiated in December 2002.	August 2003.	Michelle Healy (218) 246-2123
7	Pipeline Maintenance	Numerous spots along pipeline that crosses Deer River district.	Maintenance of pipeline and corridor. Digs to inspect pipeline that are necessary to ensure spills/leaks do not occur.	Scope in spring		October 2003	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
8	Bridge Replacement	Two Mile Creek T147 N R 26W Sec 30 Long Lake Creek T143N R25W Sec 30	Replace bridge	Scope in spring		Fall/winter 2003	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8655
5	Bridge Rehab	Various locations	Repairs may include wing walls, rip rap, pile caps, and rail posts	Scope in spring		Fall/winter 2003	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8655
6	Hwy 6 Reconstruction	Hwy 6 north of Talmoon	Resurfacing and widening of road. Federal Highway Administration planning/coordinating the project.	Completed	Analysis in progress	Summer 2003	John Freetly (218) 335-8655

*Completed Decision Documents*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
	Mississippi River Revetment, Great Lakes Gas	T144N, R26W, Sec 3	Rip rap over natural gas pipeline on banks of Mississippi River	DM signed 11/18/02	Non-appealable	--	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
	Maintenance dings, Enbridge Energy	8 locations on District in pipeline corridor	Repairs of pipeline	DM signed 12/12/02	Non-appealable	--	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655

## Forest Plan Revision

The Chippewa and Superior National Forests are working together to revise both Forest Plans under a joint NEPA analysis. One environmental impact statement will be prepared, and two revised Forest Plans will be developed—one for each National Forest.

The planning team is currently analyzing the environmental impacts of the alternatives and preparing documentation for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which the Forests expect to release to the public by Spring 2003. The DEIS will identify which alternative is preferred by Regional Forester, Randy Moore.

The planning team is also preparing a Proposed Forest Plan for each Forest to be released along with the DEIS. The Proposed Forest Plans will be developed based on the preferred alternative. A "Request Form" is being sent to individuals on the Forest Plan Revision mailing list. The Forest Service is asking interested individuals to indicate whether they prefer to receive the documents on a CD or on paper. Copies of the documents will be available at the Chippewa and Superior National Forest offices. The same information will be posted on the Forest Plan Revision web site noted below. This web site contains helpful background information and some preliminary analysis for Forest Plan revision.

Interested individuals and organizations are encouraged to review the DEIS and Draft Revised Plans and submit written comments during the 90-day comment period following release of the documents. All comments will be reviewed and substantive comments will be addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statement. More information about how and where to submit comments will accompany the documents and will be a topic at public meetings. A schedule of public meetings will be announced and posted on the web site at the same time as, or shortly after, the release of the documents.

The final Environmental Impact Statement and final plans will be completed in 2003 based on the response to the draft EIS and draft plans. The Regional Forester will select an alternative for implementation. The selected alternative will be disclosed in a Record of Decision (ROD). The final Revised Forest Plans will guide management of the Chippewa and Superior National Forests for 10 to 15 years following approval by the Regional Forester.

### **For more information:**

Chippewa National Forest web site: [www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa)

Specific questions concerning revision may be directed to:

Duane Lula, Forest Planner, Minnesota National Forests (218) 626-4383

Kay Getting, Chippewa Public Affairs, (218) 335-8673

Kris Reichenbach, Superior Public Affairs, (218) 626-4393

In order to request revision documents not available on the internet:

Please call (218) 335-8681, [tstruecker@fs.fed.us](mailto:tstruecker@fs.fed.us)

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Individuals and organizations with legal, economic, or preservation interests may request to participate in consultation on the project's effects on historic properties.