



File Code: 2400; 1950
Route To:

Date: NOV 22 2016

Subject: Healthy Forest Restoration Act Section 602(c): Request to Designate Additional Insect & Disease Acres for Seventeen 6th Level Hydrologic Unit Code Watersheds on the Sawtooth NF

To: Deputy Chief, National Forest System

The Intermountain Region is requesting additional areas on the Sawtooth National Forest be considered for designation under Section 602 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591a), as added by section 8204 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (commonly known as the 2014 Farm Bill). Designation will provide the Forest with additional tools to address current insect or disease threats in several at risk watersheds encompassing approximately 262,794 acres across the north end of the Forest outside of designated wilderness (see attached Map).

After consultation with the District and Area Rangers, Forest Silviculturist, and Timber/Fuels Specialists on the Forest, we conclude that seventeen 6th level Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watersheds meet the 2014 Farm Bill criteria and would benefit from designation (see the attached list). All proposed watersheds meet one or more of the criteria outlined in the 2014 Farm Bill. Annual surveys found these watersheds are experiencing declining forest health conditions and contain hazard trees as a result of increased bark beetle activity and tree mortality. These hazard trees pose an imminent risk to public and private infrastructure, and public health & safety. The National Insect and Disease Risk Map shows these watersheds to be at risk of substantially increased tree mortality over the next 15 years due to insect or disease infestation.

The Forest was approved earlier this year for additional Insect and Disease acres on the Fairfield Ranger District for the Salt Bowns project. This original request was made in April 2016 and approved by the WO June 2016. The Forest chose to not wait for a consolidated request so they could get the Salt Browns CE Decision Memo signed. During this same period the Forest Fuels Specialist determined additional areas based on 6th level HUCs meeting the criteria outlined in the WO letter. This effort was more involved and therefore increased the timeframe to request additional acreage.

The designation of these additional watersheds as priority treatment areas under the 2014 Farm Bill Authority will focus areas for accelerated restoration efforts across the Sawtooth National Forest.

Please direct any questions concerning this request to Mike Dudley, Director of State and Private Forestry, at mdudley@fs.fed.us or 801-625-5253 or Steve Clezie, Forest Fuels Planner, at sclenzie@fs.fed.us or 208-737-3256.

for
NORA B. RASURE
Regional Forester

cc: S. Clezie; N. Lancaster; K. Lee; D. Gwaze

Enclosures

