



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Medicine Bow - Routt
National Forests and Thunder
Basin National Grassland

2468 Jackson Street
Laramie, WY 82070-6535
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/mbr>

File Code: 1950

Date: June 28, 2018

Dear Interested Party:

I am pleased to inform you that the *Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis (LaVA) Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)* is available for public review and comment. The DEIS is currently filed online at: www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=51255. To save printing and mailing costs, we are asking that you review the DEIS online. If online viewing is not an option for you, please contact Melissa Martin of my staff at (307) 745-2371, and she will provide you with a hardcopy of the document.

The LaVA Project is a plan for action that responds to unprecedented, landscape-level tree mortality from bark beetles and other forest health issues across the Medicine Bow National Forest. It is a large-scale analysis designed to produce one decision to authorize up to 360,000 acres of vegetation management on the Sierra Madre and Snowy Range Mountain Ranges of the forest for the next 15-20 years. Project purposes include: enhancing forest and rangeland resiliency to future insect and disease infestations; providing for recovery of forest products; providing for human safety; providing for protection of infrastructure, municipal water supplies, and restoration of wildlife habitat; mitigating hazardous fuel loading; providing for recreation access; and providing management adaptability and flexibility in the face of uncertainty and rapidly changing forest and rangeland conditions.

The DEIS was prepared in compliance with the *Medicine Bow National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (2003)*, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA 2003), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA 1969), and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations. The HFRA, title I, section 104 requires development of a proposed action, a no-action alternative, and an additional action alternative if one is proposed during scoping or the collaborative process and meets the purpose and need for the project. No alternatives that met the purpose and need for the project were proposed during scoping or the collaborative process (project analysis file, scoping disposition); therefore, only a no-action alternative and a modified proposed action were analyzed in detail in the DEIS.

The Environmental Protection Agency is expected to publish a notice of availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* on July 6, 2018; the NOA will initiate the formal comment period for the DEIS. To ensure consideration in the analysis process prior to a decision, comments on the DEIS must be postmarked or received within 45 days following the date of publication of the NOA. Comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider (36 CFR 218.2).



Please address written comments to:

Medicine Bow National Forest
Melissa Martin, LaVA Project Manager
2468 Jackson Street
Laramie, WY 82070

FAX: (307) 745-2398

E-mail: Comments-rocky-mountain-medicine-bow-routt@fs.fed.us (Acceptable formats for electronic comments are .rtf, .pdf, .doc, or .docx).

The LaVA Project is within the boundaries of designated, priority landscape areas for treatment of insects and diseases, as identified under the HFRA, section 602, and is therefore subject to subparts A and C of 36 CFR part 218 - Project-level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process (herein after referred to as "objection"). Only individuals or entities who submit timely and specific written comments (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) on this proposal during this or any other established public comment period will be eligible to file an objection.

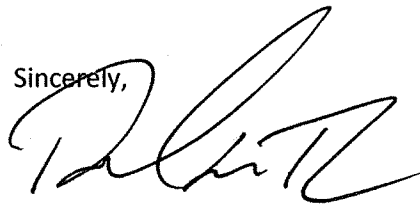
It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action and will be available at the above web address. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative or judicial review.

Public engagement sessions for the LaVA Project will be held during the comment period at the following locations:

- July 30 – Wyoming Game and Fish Department, 1212 S. Adams Street, Laramie, WY.
- August 1 – Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities, 2416 Snyder Avenue, Cheyenne, WY.
- August 2 – Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District Office, 101 Cypress, Saratoga, WY.

All meetings will run from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. For further information, contact Melissa Martin, Project Manager, at (307) 745-2371.

Sincerely,



RUSSELL M. BACON
Forest Supervisor

Cc: Melissa Martin; LaVA_Public_Updated_Feb2018; LaVA_LocalGovernments; LaVA_StateMatrix