



United States Department of the Interior
California Department of Parks and Recreation

Redwood National and State Parks
1111 Second Street
Crescent City, California 95531



L7617 (MFLMC Second Growth Management)

November 18, 2011

Dear Friend of the Parks:

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking your input on a proposal to use silvicultural techniques to accelerate recovery of 1048 acres of dense underdeveloped second growth forest in the Middle Fork Lost Man Creek (MFLMC). The MFLMC watershed, located north of Orick, regenerated after commercial timber harvest nearly 50 years ago to a dense, Douglas-fir dominated forest. The stands have been left untreated since that time. The purpose of this project is to reduce the time required for the restoration of conditions more typical of old growth redwood forests. The NPS is proposing to accelerate restoration of old growth forest conditions by thinning these second growth forests to reduce overall stem density and increase redwood dominance.

The NPS conducted similar silvicultural operations to restore forest stands and reduce impairment on about 1700 acres in the South Fork Lost Man Creek (SFLMC) area between 2009 and 2011. This project in the Middle Fork Lost Man Creek (MFLMC) would use similar treatments to accomplish the same objectives.

Specific short-term objectives of forest restoration in Lost Man Creek include:

- Stimulate growth and development of redwood or other desired conifers by reducing the number of stems per acre.
- Preferentially remove Douglas-fir to enhance redwood dominance
- Minimize excessive accumulation of ground fuel to reduce fire hazard.

General objectives and considerations include:

- Enhance forest structure and improve forest canopy development
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Enhance aquatic systems and fish habitat
- Minimize soil erosion and impacts to aquatic systems
- Minimize attraction of avian nest predators such as jays and ravens near old growth forests

The SFLMC project treated 1493 acres to stimulate stand development with different prescriptions based on forest type and slope:

- Thinned 126 acres adjacent to old growth forests using lop-and-scatter
- Thinned 169 acres within tanoak dominated areas using lop-and-scatter
- Thinned 972 acres on steep slopes using lop-and-scatter
- Thinned 226 acres on gentle slopes and removed 2.5 million board-feet of woody biomass

The woody biomass generated by forest restoration on 226 acres was sold to the contractor to offset the cost of the restoration project to the government. The majority of trees removed for the SFLMC project were less than 16" dbh.

Under the new proposal, the NPS would use the same suite of silvicultural treatments and forest operations used in the SFLMC project. We are also proposing to use variable density thinning (a silvicultural method) and cable yarding (a wood removal operation), which were not used in the SFLMC project.

Under the new proposal, the NPS would treat 1048 acres in MFLMC using standard silvicultural and forest operation methods:

- Thin 392 acres using a low thinning silvicultural method on 335 of the 392 acres; variable density thinning is proposed on 57 acres. Woody debris would be removed using ground-based yarding operations.
- Thin 242 acres using a low thinning silvicultural method. Woody debris would be removed using cable-yarding operations.
- Thin 414 acres using a crown thinning silvicultural method with lop-and-scatter operations and no woody debris removal.

We are soliciting input on this proposal from interested individuals, adjacent private landowners, organizations, and agencies to understand, address, and incorporate public views, issues, and concerns.

If you have any issues, new information, or input you believe should be considered in the environmental assessment that will be prepared for this forest restoration proposal, please send them in writing by January 2, 2012 to Steve Chaney, Superintendent, Redwood National and State Parks, 1111 Second Street, Crescent City, California 95531.

A public meeting will be held from 6:30pm – 8:30pm on December 13, 2011 at the Humboldt Area Foundation, located at 373 Indianola Road, Bayside, California 95524.

If you have further questions regarding this project, please contact Jason Teraoka at 707-465-7783 or via e-mail at Jason_Teraoka@nps.gov or visit the project home page at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov> and search under Redwood National Park for Middle Fork Lost Man Creek forest restoration.

Sincerely,



for

Steve W. Chaney
National Park Superintendent

Enclosures

- 1) Map
- 2) Photographs: Before and After Second Growth Forest Restoration in Redwood NP