



File Code: 1950
Date: November 15, 2019

Dear Interested Public,

I have signed the final Record of Decision (ROD) for the Gold Butterfly Project on the Stevensville Ranger District of the Bitterroot National Forest.

I have selected the Proposed Action, with modifications, which I believe best meets the resource needs while contributing to desired conditions for the Bitterroot National Forest. Specifically, the selected alternative would improve landscape resilience to disturbances, reduce sediment inputs into Willow Creek over the long term, and restore key habitats. The selected alternative includes vegetation management through commercial harvest, non-commercial thinning and prescribed burning. However, the Proposed Action has been modified to change regeneration harvest in old growth stands to intermediate and non-commercial thinning. This modification would result in old growth status being retained for all treatment units. There would also be construction of system and temporary roads needed to complete vegetation management activities. Temporary roads would be revegetated after use. The selected alternative would include road upgrades, decommissioning and storage. I have added clarifying language to the final ROD indicating the Bitterroot National Forest will be responsible for road maintenance, including dust suppression, along the full gravel section of Willow Creek Road during project implementation. The selected alternative would also approve a site-specific Forest Plan amendment for plan standards relating to elk habitat effectiveness and elk thermal cover.

The Gold Butterfly Project was subject to the Project-Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process, "Objection Process," pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and C. Seventeen timely objections were received. The Objection Reviewing Officer reviewed the project in the context of the objection points and suggested remedies. He found the project complied with all applicable laws and the Forest Plan. He allowed the decision to be signed after his instructions to the Forest were fulfilled and approved. The instructions were fulfilled and I signed the Record of Decision on November 15, 2019.

Thank you for your participation in this analysis process. I appreciate your interest and participation. If you have questions about the Gold Butterfly Project decision, please contact me at (406) 363-7100 or stop by the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office at 1801 N. 1st St., Hamilton, Montana. Steve Brown, Stevensville District Ranger, is also available to answer your questions at (406) 777-5461.

Sincerely,

Matthew Anderson
Forest Supervisor

RECEIVED

NOV 18 2019

Ravalli County Commissioners

--	--	--	--	--

