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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

September 19, 2007

Joyce Anderson, District Ranger
Weaverville Ranger Station
360 West Main Street
Weaverville, CA 96093

Subject: Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Revised DEIS) for the Browns Project (CEQ# 70346)

Dear Ms. Anderson:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the document referenced above. Our review is pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

In 2005 and 2006, EPA reviewed the DEIS and Final EIS (FEIS) for this project, rating the proposed action as Environmental Concerns, Insufficient Information (EC-2). EPA previously expressed concerns with the water quality impacts from Alternative 3 as well as impacts to old-growth and late-growth successional forests. We recommended that Alternative 4 be carried forward as the preferred alternative as it would not result in an increase in Equivalent Roaded Acres (ERA) and would be less likely to affect water quality or quantity in Little Browns Subwatershed (p. 70 of RDEIS). However, we are supportive of the increase in road decommissioning as included in this RDEIS as well as the inclusion of a water quality monitoring plan associated with the project.

We also continue to request additional information on air quality impacts and associated mitigation measures. As stated in our comments on the DEIS, operations of the proposed tractor and cable yarding, when added to the effects of other timber sales, may have cumulative impacts to air quality that should be analyzed and mitigated in the Revised FEIS. Therefore, we have rated this revised document as Environmental Concerns, Insufficient Information (EC-2).

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Revised DEIS. Please send two copies of the Revised FEIS to EPA at the address above (Mail Code CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-972-3846 or Summer Allen, the lead reviewer for this project. Summer can be reached at 415-972-3847 or allen.summer@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Connell Dunning

For Nova Blazej, Manager
Environmental Review Office

Main ID # 4549

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