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

JUN 02 2011

J. Sharon Heywood, Forest Supervisor
Shasta-Trinity National Forest
3644 Avtech Parkway
Redding, CA 96002
Attn: Gemmill Thin Project

Subject: Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Gemmill Thin Project, Trinity County, California (CEQ# 20110134)

Dear Ms. Heywood:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the above project. Our review and comments are 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.

Developed during the administrative appeals process, the preferred alternative (Alternative 4) will thin vegetation on approximately 1,618 acres in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest within the Chanchelulla Late-Successional Reserve (LSR). EPA previously reviewed the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) and, in an October 25, 2010 letter, expressed concerns regarding continuing ambiguity in reference to which trees will and will not be removed as part of the thinning project and how these decisions will be made. EPA thanks the Forest Service for providing additional clarification in its Response to Comments. We note that the Gemmill Thin Marking Guidelines will be carried out by foresters and technicians and guide site-specific decisions regarding treatments to achieve desired conditions, including forest health and natural landscapes resilient to fire.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FSEIS and are available to discuss our comments. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Skophammer, the lead reviewer for this project, at (415) 972-3098 or skophammer.stephanie@epa.gov, or contact me at (415) 972-3521.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Martyn Goforth, Manager
Environmental Review Office

cc: Bobbie DiMonte Miller, Shasta-Trinity National Forest