

Request for Comments

South Schell Creek Range Pinyon-Juniper Treatment Project

USDA Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Ely Ranger District

White Pine County, Nevada

February 29, 2012

Why we are proposing this project

We are proposing this project to maintain and enhance sagebrush and mountain brush communities which provide important habitats for sage grouse, mule deer and other sagebrush obligate species

What we propose to do

This project involves the cutting of small pinyon and juniper trees that are invading the mountain sagebrush and mountain brush habitats in the Schell Creek Mountain range. Potential treatment areas will be between 5 to 500 acres in size within the project area. Trees selected for removal are young encroaching trees (e.g., >100 years or less than eight feet tall) that have established within the mountain brush and sagebrush habitats. On an average there are about 10-50 trees/acre. Slash generated from the treatment will be left on the ground to provide a microclimate that will retain moisture and facilitate the establishment and growth of grasses. This treatment will maintain and enhance the sagebrush-grass community types.

The project area is located within the Schell Creek Mountain Range from the Kalamazoo Road south to the southern boundary of the district near Connors. The project area does not include any acres within the High Schell Wilderness. See enclosed map.

We will mechanically cut young pinyon and juniper trees within the project area. Approximately 15,000 acres may be treated within the larger project area. The treatments will involve chainsaws, brushers, loppers and/or hand saws. Vehicles will stay on existing roads and trees to be cut within individual project areas will be accessed by foot.

Key project components

- We will avoid sensitive cultural resources.
- No riparian areas or meadows will be adversely impacted.

How we will figure out what to do

We will use the issues we receive from you to analyze the effects of implementing the project. After hearing from you, we will decide how to meet our goals and what measures we can take to eliminate or reduce any negative effects.

How you can help us decide what to do

We ask that you think about this proposal and let us know what you think. You can call or send letters to the address below. Comments we receive, including names and addresses, are part of the public record and are available through the Freedom of Information Act. Please provide us your comments by March 30, 2012.

The decision to be made

The decision to be made is whether or not to cut small pinyon and juniper trees from mountain brush and sagebrush communities.

If you would like more information contact:

Jose Noriega, District Ranger or
Kathleen Johnson, Wildlife Biologist
Ely Ranger District
825 Ave E
Ely, NV 89301
775-289-3031

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Comment Form

We have provided this form for your convenience. Please use this or any other format to let us know your concerns or ideas about this project. Send comments by March 30, 2012 to: Kathy Johnson, Wildlife Biologist (kathyjohnson@fs.fed.us), or Jose Noriega, District Ranger (jnoriega@fs.fed.us), Ely Ranger District, 825 Avenue E, Ely, NV 89301.

For your information: names and individuals commenting on Forest Service proposals may be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Here are my concerns, issues, and/or ideas about the South Schell Creek Range Pinyon-Juniper Removal Project: