

Decision Memo
Fords Bay Salvage
USDA Forest Service, Southern Region
Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area
Trigg, KY

May 2020

This memorandum documents the need to remove down and damaged timber as a result of a storm event on Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area (LBL).

Background and Location

On January 11, 2020 portions of Land Between the Lakes in Trigg County, were impacted by a tornadic event. The primary impacted area is located approximately 5 miles north of the Tennessee state line. The initial observed impact location begins east of the Woodlands Trace Scenic By-way (Trace) across from Forest Service Road (FSR) 171 (Redd Hollow). The storm event traveled in a north and easterly direction for approximately 4 miles terminating in the area of FSR 170 and FSR 165 near Wranglers Campground. Approximately 100 acres of mixed hardwoods, Virginia pine and non-native loblolly pine were impacted by the storm. This proposal will assist the forest in reducing large concentrations of storm damaged materials. The actions will also aide in the clean-up of impacted portions of trails and provide for user safety. This activity will result in the reduction of potential source points for insect infestations, disease outbreaks, and localized catastrophic stand-changing fire intensities.

Decision

I have decided to cut, remove, and salvage down and/or damaged trees over a total estimated area of approximately 100 acres using ground-based salvage operations. This decision is based on a review of the project record which provides a thorough analysis of relevant scientific information, and consideration of responsive opposing views. We acknowledge existence of incomplete or unavailable information, scientific uncertainty, and risks.

This removal would include trees that have been damaged by the storm and/or may include non-visible and visible effects (not limited to the following):

blowdowns, uprooting, snapped, twisted or otherwise damaged stems; standing pine trees with 20% or more of their live crown broken; hardwood tree species severely damaged having 20% or more of their live crown broken; and trees missing more than 144 square inch of bark damage or removal as a result of the event.

Trees that are root sprung but still standing will also be removed. Trees without visible damage may be removed for safety concerns and to facilitate the removal operations. Removal operations will include the incidental removal of live or dead trees for log landings, skid trails, or maintenance of existing roads and trails.

Category of Action

This proposal is within a category of projects for which a formal environmental assessment and further analysis is not required. This proposal falls under the following Categorical Exclusion:

(36 CFR 220.6(e)(13)) - Salvage of dead and/or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than ½ mile of temporary road construction. The proposed action may include the incidental removal of live or dead trees for landing, skid trails, and road clearing

Finding of No Extraordinary Circumstances

There are no known extraordinary circumstances which may significantly affect the environment. The following extraordinary circumstances were considered as part of this analysis, as required by FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30, Section 31.2.

- (1) Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species;
- (2) Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds;
- (3) Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreational areas;
- (4) Inventoried roadless areas and potential wilderness areas;
- (5) Research natural areas;
- (6) American Indian and Alaskan Native religious or cultural sites, and
- (7) Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas.

A more detailed explanation on each individual circumstance is in the project record under the Concurrences and Categorical Exclusion Checklist.

Public Involvement

The proposal was originally provided to the public and other agencies on LBL's public website and was emailed to the schedule of proposed action (SOPA) list for a 14-day public scoping period on March 11, 2020. A Legal Notice and 14-day Comment Period were published in the

Paducah Sun on March 11, 2020. LBL received 18 comments during the comment period. These concerns are addressed in the response to comment document in the project record.

Findings required by Other Laws

This project is consistent with the emphasis of the 2004 Land and Resource Management Plan for Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area (Plan) page 27 to “Provide vigorous forest that are resistant to insects and disease.”


The action is consistent with the forest management program objectives outlined in Goal 5 of the Plan - *Use a collaborative approach to maintain and restore: 1) a diversity of plant and animal communities that support viability of associated plants, fish , and wildlife; and 2) sustainable levels of habitat and wildlife populations to support public demand for wildlife-related recreation.*

Administration Review or Appeal Opportunity

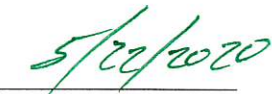
The 14-day comment period for this project ended on March 26, 2020. No substantive comments expressing concerns or only supportive comments were received during the comment period, therefore this decision is not subject to appeal (36 CFR part 215.12).

Implementation Date

Implementation of this decision may begin immediately after the legal notice is published in The Paducah Sun.



Tina R. Tilley
Land Between the Lakes National Rec. Area
Area Supervisor



Date