

## **Boise Forest gets Chief's approval to move quickly on Pioneer Fire salvage and reforestation**

**Boise, Idaho**, June 7, 2017-- The Boise National Forest has received the Chief Thomas Tidwell's approval through an Emergency Situation Determination to immediately implement timber salvage and reforestation activities as proposed in both the North and South Pioneer Fire Salvage and Reforestation Environmental Assessments. An Emergency Situation Determination, 218.21(b) is defined as: A situation on National Forest System (NFS) lands for which immediate implementation of a decision is necessary to achieve one or more of the following:

- 1) Relief from hazards threatening human health and safety
- 2) Mitigation of threats to natural resources on NFS or adjacent lands
- 3) Avoiding a loss of commodity value sufficient to jeopardize the agency's ability to accomplish project objectives directly related to resource protection or restoration.

*Authority to authorize Emergency Situation Determinations (ESDs) rests solely with the Chief and Associate Chief of the Forest Service. Current regulations concerning authorization of an ESD exempt a project from the administrative review (objection) process.*

The ESD approval will allow the Forest to award salvage sale contracts immediately following issuance of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions, expediting the public health and safety work and avoiding loss of commodity value that would jeopardize accomplishment of project objectives. The area to be salvaged is about 8 percent of the total 194,000 acres affected by the 2016 Pioneer Fire.

Extensive public outreach began in September 2016 with stakeholder tours in areas hit hardest by the burn. The fire burned through areas of the Boise National Forest that are heavily used by recreationists year-round. "The first priority has always been public health and safety. The Chief's approval of the ESDs increases our ability to remove hazards, recoup timber value, and then invest this value in recovery and reforestation activities," said John Kidd, Lowman District Ranger.

For more information visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/boise/home/?cid=fseprd530485>