Initial Proposal for the Cripple Horse 12 Timber Sale
May 11, 2022
Sec. 12, T31N, R29W

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Libby Unit is proposing to harvest timber on approximately 165 acres on State Trust Land located in Sec. 12, T31N, R29W within the Cripple Horse Creek drainage located approximately 15 miles Northeast of Libby, MT. A brief description of the proposed action is listed below:

1. Sell approximately 1 - 1.5 million board feet of timber to generate revenue for the Capital Buildings Trust and to meet annual timber harvest levels mandated by State Law.

2. Use silvicultural treatments to promote the development of historic stand conditions, emphasizing retention and/or regeneration of Ponderosa Pine and Western Larch, while improving stand health and vigor.

3. Manage these lands in a way that would reduce fuels and the potential for a wildfire to become a stand replacing fire, putting at risk the timber asset that currently exists, and capture the value of that asset before tree mortality erodes additional value.

Preliminary field observations indicate that approximately 165 acres would be harvested. Ground based logging systems would be utilized on approximately all acres.

Proposed silvicultural harvest treatments would include seed tree, shelterwood and commercial thinning. The proposed harvest would contribute to the DNRC’s sustained yield as mandated by state statute 77-5-222.

To access timber, approximately 1 mile of new road would be constructed, 0.6 miles of low standard, existing road would be reconstructed, and 1.6 miles of existing road would be maintained.

Follow-up treatments could include machine piling and scarification, slash burning, noxious weed spraying, hand planting tree seedlings and pre-commercial thinning. Harvest activities could begin during 2023.

The DNRC is in the scoping phase of the project environmental assessment, so all volumes, acreages and road distances are preliminary estimates. In preparation for this project, specialists such as wildlife biologists, hydrologists, soil scientists and archeologists will be consulted.

The Montana DNRC invites written comments and suggestions concerning this proposal. Please respond by 5:00 PM on June 13, 2022 to:

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Attn: Dave Marsh
Libby Unit
177 State Lands Office Rd.
Libby, MT 59923

E-Mail: dmarsh@mt.gov Phone: (406) 283-3535
Project Name: Cripple Horse 12 Timber Sale

Project Location: 15 miles Northeast from Libby, MT

Section: 12
Township: 31N
Range: 29W

County: Lincoln