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Date: August 6, 1999

Route To:

Subject: Best Management Practices

To: District Rangers and Program Officers

On March 11, 1999 we received a letter from the Regional Forester concerning Best Management Practices (BMP's) and the 1998 Montana Forestry BMP audit. He expressed great concern over the departures from BMP's that are related to road drainage.

He went on to say that we need to be aggressive and creative in utilizing all our resources in correcting defective features in our entire road system. He particularly singled out project planning where "a preliminary assessment of the BMP's and project viability suggest the project may not be able to meet all BMP requirements on the existing road system needed for the project. We need to prioritize the needed work: 1) correct the defects that are delivering sediment to the waters; 2) correct those that are at risk of delivery; and 3) correct the defects which affect the servability of the road."

There has been some confusion on the forest over the meaning of the Regional Forester's letter. Consequently, I have visited with him to clarify the meaning of this letter.

His intent and the Lolo's position concerning application of BMP's is as follows:

- We will implement BMP's on all new activities on all projects.
- Within the reasonable boundary of any project/timber sale area, we will identify all existing departures from BMP's. We will make every effort to fund repair/restoration of those departures.
- If a timber sale, or other project does not have the dollars to repair/restore the departures from BMP's, we will document that in a letter to the DNRC under my signature.
- For the road system (not in the sale area) servicing a project we will, to the extent feasible and in conjunction with any other available funding, correct as many departures as can be funded within the scope of the project. Unless funding is adequate to correct an entire road system, an individual project will not carry the burden of needing to correct the entire system before it can be implemented.

Rather than foregoing an opportunity for limited improvement, this position allows at least a portion of the departures to be corrected. It is important that project planning not overlook any BMP departures and to identify priority BMP work. Line officers should be involved in this process. We need to use our available resources wisely to gain the most improvement with limited funding.



We need to emphasize coordinating all our funding opportunities to correct any and all departures. However, we cannot afford to miss a chance to at least correct some departures rather than wait until the funding stars align that would allow us to correct all the departures at once.

If you have any questions concerning this issue please feel free to call.

/s/ Deborah L. R. Austin

DEBORAH L. R. AUSTIN
Forest Supervisor