

Forest Service, USDA

§ 215.10

(3) When no substantive comments expressing concerns or only supportive comments are received, include a statement indicating that the decision is not subject to appeal pursuant to §215.12.

§ 215.8 Appeal Deciding Officer.

(a) *Appropriate Appeal Deciding Officer.* Appeals must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer as follows:

If the responsible official who made the decision is:	Then the Appeal Deciding Officer is:
Chief	Secretary of Agriculture.
Regional Forester or Station Director.	Chief of the Forest Service.
Forest Supervisor	Regional Forester.
District Ranger	Forest Supervisor.

(b) *Authority.* The Appeal Deciding Officer makes all procedural determinations. Such determinations are not subject to further administrative review.

(1) *Consolidation of appeal decisions.* In cases involving more than one appeal of a decision, the Appeal Deciding Officer may consolidate appeals and may issue one or more appeal decisions.

(2) *Appeals with multiple names (organization(s) or individuals).* (i) When an appeal lists multiple names, the Appeal Deciding Officer shall identify all qualified appellants (§215.13).

(ii) The Appeal Deciding Officer may appoint the first name listed as the lead appellant (§215.2) to act on behalf of all parties to that appeal when the appeal does not specify a lead appellant (§215.14(b)(3)).

(3) *Appeal disposition.* (i) The Appeal Deciding Officer shall render the final disposition on an appeal and notify the appellant(s) in writing concerning the disposition of the appeal (§215.15(e)(2)).

(ii) The Appeal Deciding Officer may issue an appeal decision different from the Appeal Reviewing Officer's recommendation.

§ 215.9 Decision implementation.

(a) When no appeal is filed within the 45-day time period, implementation of the decision may begin on, but not before, the 5th business day following the close of the appeal-filing period (§215.15).

(b) Except for emergency situations (§215.10(c)), when an appeal is filed, im-

plementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of appeal disposition (§215.2). In the event of multiple appeals of the same decision, the implementation date is controlled by the date of the last appeal disposition.

(c) When a project or activity decision is not subject to appeal (§215.12), implementation may occur as follows:

(1) Immediately after publication (§215.7(b)) of a decision documented in a Decision Notice; or

(2) Immediately when documented in a Record of Decision after complying with the timeframes and publication requirements described in 40 CFR 1506.10(b)(2).

§ 215.10 Emergency situations.

(a) *Authority.* The Chief and the Associate Chief of the Forest Service are authorized to make the determination that an emergency situation (§215.2) exists, and they may delegate this authority only to the Deputy Chief for National Forest System and to the Regional Foresters. Persons acting in these positions may exercise this authority only when they are filling vacant positions and they have been formally delegated full acting authority for the positions. Persons acting in positions during temporary absences of the incumbents shall not be delegated this authority to make emergency situation determinations.

(b) *Determination.* The determination that an emergency situation exists shall be based on an examination of the relevant information. During the review, additional information may be requested.

(c) *Implementation.* When it is determined that an emergency situation exists with respect to all or part of the decision, implementation may proceed as follows:

(1) Immediately after publication (§215.7(b)) of a decision documented in a Decision Notice, for that portion of the decision determined to be an emergency.

(2) Immediately when documented in a Record of Decision, after complying with the timeframes and publication requirements described in 40 CFR 1506.10(b)(2), for that portion of the decision determined to be an emergency.

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(d) *Notification.* The Responsible Official shall notify the public in the legal notice of the decision (§215.7) that the Forest Service made a determination that all or part of a project decision is an emergency situation.

§215.11 Decisions subject to appeal.

The following decisions are subject to appeal under this part:

(a) Decisions for projects and activities implementing land and resource management plans (§215.2) documented in a Record of Decision (ROD) or Decision Notice (DN), including those which contain a non-significant amendment to a land and resource management plan as a part of the decision;

(b) A new DN after revision of an environmental assessment (EA), or a new ROD after supplementation or revision of an environmental impact statement (EIS), pursuant to FSH 1909.15, Chapter 10, section 18. However, only that portion of the decision that is changed is subject to appeal.

(c) Decisions made in conjunction with other Federal agencies and meeting the requirements of preceding paragraph (a). However, only that portion of the decision made by the Forest Service affecting National Forest System lands (§215.2) is subject to appeal under this part.

(d) Decisions which affect the holders of a special use authorization or certain applicants for special use authorizations for use or occupancy of National Forest System lands (§251.86) and meeting the requirements of preceding paragraph (a), are subject to appeal by those same parties under either this part or part 251, subpart C, but not under both parts.

§215.12 Decisions and actions not subject to appeal.

The following decisions and actions are not subject to appeal under this part, except as noted:

(a) The amendment, revision, or adoption of a land and resource management plan that includes a project decision, except that the project portion of the decision is subject to this part. The amendment, revision, or adoption portion of a decision is subject to either the objection process of

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§219.32 or the administrative appeal and review procedures of part 217 in effect prior to November 9, 2000 (*see* 36 CFR parts 200 to 299, Revised as of July 1, 2000);

(b) Determination, with documentation, that a new decision is not needed following supplementation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) or revision of an environmental assessment (EA) pursuant to FSH 1909.15, Chapter 10, section 18.

(c) Preliminary findings made during planning and/or analysis processes on a project or activity. Such findings are appealable only upon issuance of a decision document.

(d) Subsequent implementing actions that result from the initial project decision that was subject to appeal.

(e) Projects or activities for which notice of the proposed action and opportunity to comment is published (§215.5) and

(1) No substantive comments expressing concerns or only supportive comments are received during the comment period for a proposed action analyzed and documented in an EA (§215.6); or

(2) No substantive comments expressing concerns or only supportive comments are received during the comment period for a draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19), and the Responsible Official's decision does not modify the preferred alternative identified in the draft EIS.

(f) Decisions for actions that have been categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS pursuant to FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, section 31.

(g) An amendment, revision, or adoption of a land and resource management plan that is made independent of a project or activity (subject to either the objection process of §219.32 or the administrative appeal and review procedures of part 217 in effect prior to November 9, 2000 (*see* 36 CFR parts 200 to 299, Revised as of July 1, 2000)).

(h) Concurrences and recommendations to other Federal agencies.

(i) Hazardous fuel reduction projects conducted under provisions of the HFRA, as set out at part 218, subpart A, of this title.

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