

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 61, No. 151

Monday, August 5, 1996

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Extension of Certain Timber Sale Contracts; Finding of Substantial Public Interest

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of additional extension.

SUMMARY: Government indices indicate a major downturn in the lumber market during 1994 and 1995. While many National Forest System timber sale contracts contain provisions to extend termination dates during severely declining markets, the mechanisms used in some areas of the country to measure severely declining markets do not appear to measure the softwood lumber market. Accordingly, on April 2, 1996, the Under Secretary of Agriculture determined that it was in the substantial overriding public interest to extend for 120 days certain National Forest System timber sale contracts which were awarded prior to January 1, 1995j, in order to evaluate alternatives to existing market-related contract term addition rules for both existing and new contracts. The study indicates that contract extension is the best alternative to address existing contracts. Accordingly, the Chief of the Forest Service is now granting an additional extension of 1 year for contracts awarded prior to January 1, 1995, except for salvage sales and sales in western Washington and western Oregon. The intended effect is to minimize contract defaults, mill closures, and company bankruptcies.

DATES: The Chief's new determination was made on July 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rex Baumbach, Timber Management Staff, Forest Service, USDA, (202) 205-0855.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service sells timber from National Forest System lands to individuals or companies. Each sale is formalized by

execution of a contract between the purchaser and the Forest Service. The contract sets forth the explicit terms and provisions of the sale, including such matters as the estimated volume of timber to be removed, period for removal, price to be paid to the Government, road construction and logging requirements, and environmental protection measures to be taken. The average contract period is approximately 3 years, while a few contracts have terms of 7 or 8 years.

The National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(c)) provides that the Secretary of Agriculture shall not extend any timber sale contract period with an original term of 2 years or more, unless the purchaser has diligently performed in accordance with an approved plan of operations or the "substantial overriding public interest" justifies the extension. The authority to make this determination has been delegated to the Chief of the Forest Service (7 CFR 2.60).

Government indices indicate a major downturn in the softwood lumber market occurred during 1994 and 1995. During this period, price indices have declined approximately 25 percent. Rules at 36 CFR 223.52 permit extensions when Forest Service officials determine that adverse wood product market conditions have resulted in a drastic decline in wood product prices. Under contract procedures, the Douglas fir dressed lumber price index (commodity code 081101) used to measure severe market declines in western Oregon and western Washington has reflected the market decrease. Timber sale purchasers in this area have received 1 year of additional contract time, if requested. However, the indices used to measure severe market declines in other parts of the country do not appear to be as predictable an indicator of market declines as the index used in the Pacific Northwest. As a result, timber sale purchasers outside of the Pacific Northwest have not received any additional time to complete their contracts, and some of these purchasers are facing contract default, mill closure, and bankruptcy. It has been determined that additional contract time will assist these purchasers by giving them more time in which the market may improve or in which they can mix their high-priced sales with lower priced sales.

Accordingly, based on a study of alternatives and current rules at 36 CFR 223.115, the Chief of the Forest Service has made a finding that there is a substantial overriding public interest in extending sales for 1 year. This determination does not apply to contracts that were previously extended under market-related contract term addition contract provisions or to salvage sale contracts that were sold with the objective of harvesting deteriorating timber. In addition to extending contracts pursuant to the Chief's finding, periodic payments will be deferred for 1 year on the extended sales. To receive the extension and periodic payment deferral, purchasers must request the extension in writing and agree to release the Forest Service from damages for the replacement cost of timber if the contract is canceled in the future. The text of the finding, as signed by the Chief, is set out at the end of this notice.

Dated: July 31, 1996.

Gray F. Reynolds,
Acting Chief.

Determination of Substantial Overriding Public Interest for Extending Certain Timber Sale Contracts

Government indices indicate a major downturn in the lumber market has occurred during 1994 and 1995. While many Forest Service timber sale contracts contain provisions to extend termination dates during severely declining markets, the mechanisms used in some areas of the country to measure severely declining markets do not appear to measure the softwood lumber market.

Periodically, lumber markets may experience severe declines in prices. Based on Bureau of Labor Statistics producer price indices, the lumber market peaked in January 1994. During 1994 and 1995, price indices have declined approximately 25 percent. The Douglas fir dressed lumber price index (commodity code 081101) used to measure severe market declines in western Oregon and western Washington has reflected the market decrease. Timber sale purchasers in this area have received 1 year of additional contract time, if requested. However, the indices used to measure severe market declines in other parts of the country do not appear to measure the softwood

lumber market as well as the index used in the Pacific Northwest.

Until April 2, when the Under Secretary of Agriculture extended their contracts for 120 days, timber sale purchasers outside of the Pacific Northwest had not received any additional time to complete their contracts. Some of these timber sale purchasers are still facing contract default, mill closure, and bankruptcy. A contract extension would assist these purchasers by giving additional time in which the market may improve or in which they could mix their high-priced sales with lower-priced sales.

The Government benefits if defaulted timber sale contracts, mill closures, and bankruptcies can be avoided by granting contract extensions, because having numerous, economically viable timber sale purchasers both maintains market opportunities and increases competition for National Forest System timber sales. These factors result in higher prices paid for such timber. In addition, the Government would avoid the difficult and expensive process of collection contract default damages.

Therefore, pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 472a, 36 CFR 223.115, and the authority delegated to the Chief at 7 CFR 2.60, I have determined that it is in the substantial overriding public interest to extend for 1 year National Forest System timber sale contracts that were awarded prior to January 1, 1995. This finding does not apply to contracts in western Washington and western Oregon that have been previously extended under market-related contract term addition contract provisions or to salvage sale contracts that were sold with the objective of harvesting deteriorating timber. For those contracts extended pursuant to this finding, periodic payments also will be deferred for 1 year. To receive the extension and periodic payment deferral, purchasers must make written request and agree to release the Forest Service from damages for the replacement cost of timber if the contract is canceled in the future.

Dated: July 31, 1996.

Gray F. Reynolds,

Acting Chief.

[FR Doc. 96-19915 Filed 8-1-96; 2:36 pm]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

ADAAG Review Advisory Committee; Meeting

AGENCY: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) gives notice of the dates and location of the meetings of the ADAAG Review Advisory Committee.

DATES: The ADAAG Review Advisory Committee will meet on August 26, 27, and 28, 1996. The August 26 meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end no later than 5:00 p.m. The August 27 and 28 meetings will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end no later than 5:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in the lower level board room at the National Association of Home Builders, 1201 15th Street, NW., Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the meetings, please contact Marsha Mazz, Office of Technical and Information Services, Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, 1331 F Street, NW., suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004-1111. Telephone (202) 272-5434 ext. 21 (voice); (202) 272-5449 (TTY). This document is available in alternate formats (cassette tape, braille, large print, or computer disk) upon request.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In September 1994, the Access Board established an advisory committee to review the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for buildings and facilities. 36 CFR part 1191, appendix A. The advisory committee will make recommendations to the Access Board for updating ADAAG to ensure that the guidelines remain a state-of-the-art document which is generally consistent with technological developments and changes in national standards and model codes, and continue to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. The advisory committee is scheduled to complete its work in September 1996.

The advisory committee will meet on the dates and at the location announced in this notice to review a draft of its final report and to discuss recommendations regarding future harmonization or coordination of ADAAG with other codes and standards.

The meetings are open to the public. The meeting site is accessible to

individuals with disabilities.

Individuals with hearing impairments who require sign language interpreters should contact Marsha Mazz by August 19, 1996, by calling (202) 272-5434 ext. 21 (voice) or (202) 272-5449 (TTY).

Lawrence W. Roffee,

Executive Director.

[FR Doc. 96-19789 Filed 8-2-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8150-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-201-805]

Notice of Extension of Time Limit for Antidumping Duty Administrative Review of Circular Welded Non-Alloy Steel Pipe From Mexico

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 5, 1996.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (the Department) is extending the time limit for the preliminary and final results of the antidumping duty administrative review for the antidumping order on circular welded non-alloy steel pipe from Mexico, pursuant to the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended by the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (hereinafter, "the Act").

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Linda Ludwig or John Drury, Office of Agreements Compliance, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230, telephone (202) 482-3833 or 482-0414, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the Act, the Department may extend the deadline for completion of an administrative review if it determines that it is not practicable to complete the review within the statutory time limit of 365 days. In the instant case, the Department has determined that it is not practicable to complete the review within the statutory time limit. See Memorandum from Joseph A. Spetrini to Paul L. Joffe (May 17, 1996).

Since it is not practicable to complete this review within the time limits mandated by the Act (245 days from the last day of the anniversary month for preliminary results, 120 additional days for final results), in accordance with Section 751(a)(3)(A) of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, the Department is extending the time limit as follows: