

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

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 96-033N]

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods; Meeting

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods' (NACMCF) subcommittees on Risk Assessment, Fresh Produce, Codex, and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) will hold meetings on September 10 and 11, 1996, in Rooms 4347 and 0745, South Agriculture Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

On September 10, 1996, the Codex Subcommittee will meet in Room 4347 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. to hear a presentation from a U.S. Government representative about the proposed draft "Code of Hygienic Practice for Uncured and Unripened Cheese and Ripened Soft Cheese" which will be discussed by the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene in October 1996.

On September 10, 1996, the Fresh Produce Subcommittee will meet from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Room 4347 to continue writing a report about pathogens on fresh produce.

On September 10 and 11, 1996, the HACCP Subcommittee drafting group will meet from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Room 0745 to continue updating the Committee's 1992 document on HACCP principles.

On September 11, 1996, the Risk Assessment Subcommittee will meet from 8:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Room 4347 to complete work on a document addressing microbiological risk assessment.

The Subcommittee meetings are open to the public on a space available basis. Comments may be sent before and after the meetings and should be addressed to: Mr. Craig Fedchock, Advisory Committee Specialist, U.S. Department

of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 311, 1255 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Background materials are available for inspection by contacting Mr. Fedchock on (202) 254-2517.

Done at Washington, DC, on August 21, 1996.

Michael R. Taylor,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-21731 Filed 8-23-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-M

Forest Service

Prince John Project, Boise National Forest, ID

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Cascade Ranger District of the Boise National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for an integrated resource management project in the headwaters of Big Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Payette River below Cascade Reservoir. The project area is located 15 miles east of Cascade, Idaho, and about 100 road miles north of Boise, Idaho.

The agency invites written comments and suggestions on the scope of the analysis. The agency also hereby gives notice of the environmental analysis and decision-making process that will occur on the proposal so interested and affected people are aware of how they may participate and contribute to the final decision.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An environmental assessment (EA) for this project was released for a 30-day public review and comment period in April 1996 under the auspices of Public Law 104-19. Since that time, and prior to the release of the Decision Notice, clarification on implementation of Public Law 104-19 has made it necessary to prepare an EIS for the project (Secretary of Agriculture Glickman, July 2, 1996).

Proposed Action

Five primary objectives have been identified for the project: (1) Salvage the dead and imminently dead trees from the area; (2) achieve the desired future condition of a healthy diverse forest in which important resource values, including healthy timber stands, are

sustained; (3) improve big-game forage habitat, thin overcrowded stands of plantations, and reduce natural fuel loads through the use of prescribed fire; (4) reduce current sediment delivery from existing roads by obliterating sections of these roads located immediately adjacent to perennial streams; and (5) provide sawlogs and other wood products to help sustain local sawmills and economies.

The proposed action would treat, either with timber harvest or prescribed fire, a total of 3,695 acres in the 67,637-acre Gold Fork/Clear Creek Management Area. An estimated 15 MMBF of timber would be harvested through silvicultural treatment of the stands. Approximately 2,856 acres would be harvested by ground-based (916 acres), cable (772 acres), or helicopter (1,168 acres) yarding systems. The proposed action would employ a variety of silvicultural systems including clearcutting with reserve trees (9 percent), irregular shelterwood (74 percent), and individual tree selection (17 percent). Prescribed fire would occur on another 839 acres to improve big-game forage habitat (110 acres), thin overcrowded plantations (385 acres), and/or reduce natural fuel loads (344 acres). The existing transportation system would be improved to facilitate harvest and reduce sedimentation, with individual sections of 28 miles of road being reconstructed, 4.7 miles of new specified road construction, and 2 miles of temporary road construction. An estimated 6.1 miles of existing roads, most of which lie immediately adjacent to perennial streams, would be obliterated. Portions of the new specified road construction would be necessary to access heavily used recreational areas, such as Gold Fork Meadows.

Preliminary Issues

Anticipated concerns with the proposed action are: (1) The project's visual impacts to the area as seen from Forest Highway 22; (2) timber harvest and associated road construction could impact the undeveloped characteristics and wilderness attributes of the Needles and Stony Meadows Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA's); (3) proposed activities could result in a low likelihood of persistence of pileated woodpecker, northern goshawk, and fisher within the analysis area; and (4)

proposed activities could increase water yield in amounts that would decrease bank stability, thus increasing sediment in Johnson Creek and lower Big Creek.

Possible Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Three alternatives to the proposed action have been identified: (1) A no action alternative; (2) An alternative that would exclude timber harvesting and road construction in the IRA's; and (3) an alternative that would mitigate increases in water yield and loss of pileated woodpecker, northern goshawk, and fisher habitat. Other alternatives may be developed as issues are raised and information is received.

Decisions To Be Made

The Boise National Forest Supervisor will decide the following:

Should roads be built and timber harvested within the Prince John Project area at this time, and if so; where within the project area, and how many miles of road should be built; and which stands should be treated and what silvicultural systems should be used?

Should prescribed fire be used within the Prince John Project area at this time, and if so; where within the project area; and what mitigation/watershed enhancement measures should be applied to the project?

Should the obliteration of portions of roads 497, 497A, 497A2, 497F, 497J1, and 497L be implemented at this time?

Schedule

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), September 1996.
Final EIS, November 1996.

Public Involvement

The proposal has been previously scoped by two public meetings. The first was at the Cascade Ranger District office on December 6, 1995, with the second meeting at the Boise National Forest Supervisor's Office on December 7, 1995. In addition, the Cascade Ranger District mailed a scoping package in November 1995 to over 180 individuals and/or groups who may be affected by the decision. Further, the EA was released for a 30-day public review and comment period in April 1996 to 75 interested groups and/or individuals. Comments received from these public involvement efforts will be incorporated into the analysis process.

Comments

Written comments concerning the proposed project and analysis are encouraged and should be postmarked within 30 days following publication of this announcement in the Federal

Register. Mail comments to Steve Patterson, Cascade Ranger District, Boise National Forest, P.O. Box 696, Cascade, ID 83611, telephone, 208-382-7430. Further information can be obtained at the same location.

The comment period on the DEIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the Federal Register.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of the DEIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the DEIS stage but are not raised until after completion of the final EIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1002 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980).

Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed section participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the DEIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the DEIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Responsible Official

David D. Rittenhouse, Forest Supervisor, Boise National Forest, 1750 Front Street, Boise, ID 83702.

Dated: August 14, 1996.

Milton D. Coffman,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 96-21684 Filed 8-23-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Potomac Headwaters Watershed, Hardy, Hampshire, Mineral, Grant, and Pendleton Counties WV; Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of a Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council of Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Part 1500); and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Regulations (7 CFR Part 650); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is not being prepared for the Potomac Headwaters Watershed, Hardy, Hampshire, Mineral, Grant, and Pendleton Counties, West Virginia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger L. Bensey, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 75 High Street, Morgantown, West Virginia 26505, Telephone: 304-291-4153.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment of this federally assisted action indicates that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Roger L. Bensey, State Conservationist, has determined that the preparation and review of an environmental impact statement are not needed for this project.

The project purpose is water quality improvement of streams in the Potomac Headwaters. The planned works of improvement include installation of animal waste storage systems, dead bird composters, livestock confinement areas, nutrient management plans, and riparian buffer zones.

The Notice of a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency and to various Federal, State, and local agencies and interested parties. A limited number of copies of the FONSI are available to fill single copy requests at the above address. Basic data developed during the environmental assessment are on file and may be reviewed by contacting Roger L. Bensey.

No administrative action on implementation of the proposal will be taken until 30 days after the date of this publication in the Federal Register.