

—RE-2a emphasizes dispersed, unroaded recreation in a semi-primitive setting having existing or potential trails for motorbikes, hikers and horseback riders;

—GF emphasizes long-term growth and production of commercially valuable wood products at a high level of investment in silvicultural practices.

The Northwest Forest Plan primarily allocates the area to late successional reserve, which is managed to protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystems. Other lands in the project area are allocated to matrix and administratively withdrawn in the Northwest Forest Plan. Matrix is designed to provide connectivity between the LSRs, and habitat for species needing both late successions and younger forests. Administratively withdrawn areas are areas identified in the current Forest Plans where management emphasis precludes scheduled timber harvest. All allocations in the Northwest Forest Plan are overlaid with Riparian Reserve direction designed to maintain and restore riparian structures and functions, benefit riparian dependent and other species, enhance habitat conservation for species dependent on transition zones between upland and riparian areas, improve travel and dispersal corridors for many terrestrial animals and plants, and provide for greater watershed connectivity.

Most of the lands affected lie within the Sawtooth Roadless Area, inventoried in Appendix C of the Okanogan Land and Resource Management Plan, final EIS.

The analysis will develop a range of alternatives to address the significant issues, from the no-action alternative which would not construct or improve any facilities and would not change current management of the trail network, to alternatives that address the significant issues to varying degrees.

Public participation will be especially important at several points during the analysis. The Forest Service is seeking information, comments and assistance from Federal, State, Indian Tribes, local agencies, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed project. This input will be used in preparation of the draft EIS. The scoping process began in April, 1996, and resulted in significant issues being raised that could relate to significant impacts to the environment. The scoping process includes:

1. Identifying potential issues;
2. Identifying significant issues to be analyzed in depth;

3. Identifying issues which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis;

4. Exploring additional alternatives based on themes which will be derived from issues recognized during scoping activities;

5. Identifying potential environmental effects (i.e., direct, indirect and cumulative effects, and connected actions);

6. Determining potential cooperating agencies and task assignments;

7. Notifying interested members of the public of opportunities to participate in the process. Public involvement includes keeping the public informed through the media and/or written material.

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by July, 1998. Your comments and suggestions are encouraged and should be in writing. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of a draft EIS 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 draft EIS stage but that 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, 1022 (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 action 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 draft EIS 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 draft EIS 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.)

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed by January, 1999. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making a decision regarding the proposal. Sam Gehr, Forest Supervisor for the Okanogan National Forest, and Sonny O'Neal, Forest Supervisor for the Wenatchee National Forest are the responsible officials. The responsible officials will document the decision and rationale for the Sawtooth Ridge Trail and Improvement Project decision in the Record of Decision, which will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR Part 215).

Dated: December 16, 1997.

Allen N. Garr,

Acting Forest Supervisor, Okanogan National Forest.

Dated: December 18, 1997.

Paul Hart,

Acting Forest Supervisor, Wenatchee National Forest.

[FR Doc. 97-33664 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Maximum Dollar Amount on Loan and Grant Awards Under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) hereby announces the maximum dollar amount on loan and grant awards under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program for FY 1998. The maximum dollar award on zero-interest loans for FY 1998 is \$750,000. The maximum dollar award on grants for FY 1998 is \$330,000. The maximum loan and grant awards stated in this notice are effective for loans and grants made during the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1997, and ending September 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Wing, Loan Specialist, Rural

Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 1521, Room 5412, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250, Telephone: (202) 720-9558. FAX: 202-720-6561. E-mail: PWing@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The maximum loan and grant awards are calculated as 3.0 percent of the projected program level for zero-interest loans and grants during the fiscal year. The projected program level for zero-interest loans during FY 1998 is \$25,000,000, and the projected program level for grants is \$11,000,000. Applying the specified 3.0 percent to these program levels results in the maximum loan award of \$750,000 and the maximum grant award of \$330,000.

Dated: December 19, 1997.

Dayton J. Watkins,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 97-33696 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-U

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of Export Administration

Sensors and Instrumentation Technical Advisory Committee; Notice of Open Meeting

A meeting of the Sensors and Instrumentation Technical Advisory Committee will be held January 13, 1998, 9:00 a.m., in the Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 1617M-2, 14th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. The Committee advises the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration with respect to technical questions that affect the level of export controls applicable to sensors and instrumentation equipment and technology.

Agenda

1. Opening remarks by the Chairman.
2. Presentation of papers or comments by the public.
3. Update on the status of the National Defense Authorization Act implementation regulation.
4. Update on the status of the Wassenaar Arrangement implementation regulation.

The meeting will be open to the public and a limited number of seats will be available. To the extent that time permits, members of the public may present oral statements to the Committee. Written statements may be submitted at any time before or after the meeting. However, to facilitate distribution of public presentation materials to the Committee members, the Committee suggests that presenters

forward the public presentation materials two weeks prior to the meeting date to the following address: Ms. Lee Ann Carpenter, OAS/EA/BXA—MS:3886C, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th St. & Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

For further information or copies of the minutes, contact Lee Ann Carpenter on (202) 482-2583.

Dated: December 22, 1997.

Lee Ann Carpenter,

Director, Technical Advisory Committee Unit.

[FR Doc. 97-33685 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DT-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Manufacturing Extension Partnership National Advisory Board

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Open Meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2, notice is hereby given that the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Advisory Board, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), will meet to hold a meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 1998. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership National Advisory Board is composed of 9 members appointed by the Director of NIST who were selected for their expertise in the area of industrial extension and their work on behalf of smaller manufacturers. The Board was set up under the direction of the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to fill a need for outside input and advice for MEP, a unique program consisting of centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico which are created by a state, federal and local partnership. The Board works closely with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership to provide input and advice on MEP's programs, plans and policies. The purpose of this meeting is to delve into areas the Board selected at the previous meeting. On January 21, 1998, the agenda for the meeting of the Board will include an ethics briefing by the Department of Commerce's Ethics Division, an overview of MEP's national marketing efforts to assist the centers in reaching their clients, studying the impacts of services provided by the centers and an overview of a national initiative-supply chain integration.

DATES: The meeting will convene on January 21, 1998 at 9:00 am and will adjourn at 3:00 pm.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in Building 101, Employee Lounge (seating capacity 60, includes 15 participants), at NIST, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: MEP services to smaller manufacturers address the needs of the national market as well as the unique needs of each company. Since MEP is committed to providing this type of individualized service through its centers, the program requires the perspective of locally-based experts to be incorporated into its national plans. The MEP National Advisory Board was set up at the direction of the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to maintain MEP's focus on local and market based needs. The MEP National Advisory Board was approved on October 24, 1996, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app.2., to provide advice on MEP programs, plans, and policies; assess soundness of MEP plans and strategies; assess current performance against MEP program plans, and function in an advisory capacity. The Board will meet three times a year and reports to the Director of NIST. This will be the first meeting of the members in 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Linda Acierio, Assistant to the Director for Policy, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899, Telephone number (301) 975-5033.

Dated: December 22, 1997.

Michael R. Rubin,

Deputy Chief Counsel for NIST.

[FR Doc. 97-33762 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 093097E]

Small Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Space Launch Vehicles at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of issuance of incidental harassment authorizations.

SUMMARY: In accordance with provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is