

1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that will be submitted to OMB for extension.

*Comments are invited on:* (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Michele Brooks, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, USDA RUS, STOP 1522, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1522. FAX: (202) 720-8435.

*Title:* Extensions of Payments of Principal and Interest.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572-0123.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved information collection.

*Abstract:* This collection of information consists of information on the procedures which borrowers must follow in order to request extensions of principal and interest. Authority for these is contained in section 12 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (REAct), as amended and in section 236 of the "Disaster Relief Act of 1970 (Pub. L. 91-606), as amended by the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-354). Eligible purposes include financial hardship, energy resource conservation (ERC) loans, renewable energy projects, distributed generation projects, and contribution-in-aid of construction. These procedures are codified at 7 CFR part 1721, subpart B.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 4.71 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Not-for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 90.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 2.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 424 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Thomas P. Dickson, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 690-4492.

FAX: (202) 720-8435. E-mail: [thomas.dickson@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:thomas.dickson@wdc.usda.gov).

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 31, 2009.

**James R. Newby,**

*Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*

[FR Doc. E9-7720 Filed 4-6-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Willow Creek Pass Fuel Reduction Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA—Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests; Hahns Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District, Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

**PROJECT:** Willow Creek Pass Fuel Reduction Project.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS).

**SUMMARY:** The mountain pine beetle epidemic is continuing to cause large areas of mortality to lodgepole pine throughout the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests. Adjacent private lands are experiencing mortality along shared boundaries and an increasing number of homeowner associations are taking preventive steps to provide defensible space around their properties and reduce overhead hazard trees.

The Willow Creek Pass Village Homeowners Association (WCPV-HOA) has requested assistance with increasing defensible space and removal of hazard trees on Forest lands (east) adjacent to their private boundary.

This project is an "authorized and covered project" under Title I of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). We will be using expedited procedures authorized by this Act to complete project planning and decision-making. Use of this authority requires an emphasis on collaboration with local communities and a determination that an epidemic exists by consulting with forest health specialists.

**DATES:** The draft environmental impact statement is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review during April 2009. At that time, the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the draft EIS will be for a period of not less than 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the NOA in the **Federal Register**. It is important that those

interested in the management of this area comment at that time.

The final EIS is expected to be available in June 2009. In the final EIS, the Forest Service will respond to any comments received during the public comment period that pertain to the environmental analysis. Those comments and the Forest Service responses will be disclosed and discussed in the final EIS and will be considered when the final decision about this proposal is made.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Jamie Kingsbury, District Ranger, 925 Weiss Drive, Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487. Comments may also be sent via e-mail or facsimile. E-mail to: [comments-rocky-mountain-medicine-bow-routt-hahns-peak-bears-ears@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-rocky-mountain-medicine-bow-routt-hahns-peak-bears-ears@fs.fed.us), include "Willow Creek Pass" in the subject line of the e-mail message, or via facsimile to 970-870-2284.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to appeal the subsequent decision.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brian Waugh—Environmental Coordinator (970-870-2185) or Andy Cadenhead—Supervisory Forester (970-870-2220), Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests, 925 Weiss Drive, Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the Willow Creek Pass Project is to provide defensible space along the boundary shared with the U.S. Forest Service and reduce fuel and overhead hazards adjacent to the private properties in the WCPV-HOA. This would include reducing hazard fuels in close proximity to private in-holdings and adjacent properties of the WCPV-HOA, creating defensible space to provide increased protection from wildland fire events, and removing hazard trees that could fall on private residences and other improvements in the Willow Creek Pass Village Homeowners Association.

There is a need to:

- Reduce the development of continuous high hazard fuel conditions.

- Reduce hazard trees within damage distance to private dwellings.
- Remove beetle killed and dying lodgepole pine.
- Promote regeneration of aspen and other conifer species to expedite the establishment of the next forest.

### Proposed Action

The proposed action would occur in the Dome Peak inventoried roadless area. After the proposed Colorado Roadless Rule decision has been signed, this project would be permitted with an Environmental Impact Statement.

The Willow Creek Pass Village Homeowners Association proposal was modified slightly by specialists with the U.S. Forest Service, HPBE Ranger District to treat approximately 100 acres of mature forested stands where lodgepole pine is dead and dying from the ongoing beetle epidemic. The proposed treatment area on National Forest lands is adjacent to the Willow Creek Pass Village Homeowners Association. Access onto the Forest would be through the Marshall Property on the south end and private property to be determined in the central part of the project area where approximately ¼ mile of temporary road would be constructed for the hazard tree removal and then obliterated at the end of the project. The last access would be on an existing dead end road spur that accesses a user trail onto the Forest. This northernmost access would require no temporary road as skidding would occur to the existing access location. Lodgepole pine would be targeted for removal along the shared Forest and private boundaries approximately 800 feet east inside the Forest boundary. The heaviest removal would extend from the shared boundary to a temporary road with whole-tree skidding required from the shared Forest/homeowner boundary to the temporary road east of the boundary approximately 300 feet.

The proposed action would remove all lodgepole pine down to 5 inches diameter at breast height and all other hazard trees greater than 7 inches diameter at breast height. Hazard trees within 300 feet of the shared Forest/homeowner boundary would be whole-tree skidded to a landing along the temporary road, limbed and decked at this location. Removal east of the temporary road could be whole-tree skidded or lopped and scattered at point of felling with excess slash piled for later fall/winter burning operations.

The project area can be accessed off of Routt County Road (RCR) 129 along existing roads in the WCPV-HOA subdivision east of RCR 129. The existing roads in the homeowners

association are well maintained and would require little maintenance for log hauling. New temporary roads would need to be constructed from private properties onto forest lands to facilitate accessing and removing the timber. The temporary roads, skid trails, and landings would be reclaimed to their original contours and permanently closed at the end of the project.

### Responsible Official

The responsible official is Jamie Kingsbury, District Ranger, Hahns Peak/Bears Ears Ranger District, 925 Weiss Drive, Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487.

### Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision will be whether to treat dead and dying lodgepole pine timber affected by the mountain pine beetle epidemic in the Dome Peak Inventoried Roadless Area adjacent to the private properties of the Willow Creek Pass Village Homeowners Association that are fuel and overhead hazards to the community. If the decision is to treat the hazard fuels and standing hazards to complement the on-going work on private lands, the type, distribution, and priority of treatments would be decided with consideration for resource protection for watersheds, recreation, scenery, and wildlife habitat.

### Preliminary Issues

- Subdivision road maintenance and repair.
- Smoke management during pile burning.
- Logging vehicle conduct on subdivision roads during hauling.

### Scoping Process

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Forest Service has listed the project in the Schedule of Proposed Actions that is posted on the Web. A field trip on July 26, 2008 with Forest Service specialists and interested homeowners reviewed the proposed project area and potential treatments. At least one additional meeting is planned after the draft EIS is available. The Forest Service will also respond to information requests about the project and add additional public meetings and field trips as interest dictates.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the

comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. The submission of timely and specific comments can affect a reviewer's ability to participate in subsequent administrative appeal or judicial review.

### Release of Names

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who commented, will be considered part of the public record on this Proposed Action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to object to the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 218. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within ten (10) days.

*Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:* A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement 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, that it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements 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 during the draft environmental impact statement stage, but are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement, 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 environmental impact statement.

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

Dated: March 22, 2009.

**Mary H. Peterson,**

*Forest Supervisor, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests.*

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BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### **Bighorn National Forest; Wyoming; Livestock Grazing and Vegetation Management EIS; Livestock Grazing and Vegetation Management on Six Geographic Areas on the Tongue, Medicine Wheel/Paintrock, and Powder River Ranger Districts, Bighorn National Forest, Sheridan, Johnson, Washakie, and Big Horn Counties, WY**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** The USDA, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to implement vegetation management strategies on forty three (43) domestic livestock grazing allotments, which will result in development of new allotment management plans (AMPs). On portions of the analysis area, fuel management in forested and sagebrush/grassland communities is being analyzed. The agency gives notice of the full environmental analysis and decision-

making process so that interested and affected people are aware of how they may participate in the process and contribute to the final decision.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by May 7, 2009. Based on past actions of this type, the Responsible Official has determined that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for this project. The draft environmental impact statement is expected January 2010 and the final environmental impact statement is expected September 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to William T. Bass, Bighorn National Forest Supervisor, 2013 Eastside Second Street, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801. Comments may also be sent via e-mail to [comments-bighorn@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-bighorn@fs.fed.us) or via facsimile to 307-674-2668.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such a way that they are useful to the Agency's preparation of the EIS. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. The submission of timely and specific comments can affect a reviewer's ability to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Laurie Walters-Clark, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Bighorn National Forest, phone (307) 674-2627.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This NOI corrects two past notices: Beaver Creek NOI (5/16/07) and Goose Creek NOI (5/29/08). These allotments are being included in this analysis. All comments received on Beaver Creek or Goose Creek will be retained for this analysis.

The 43 allotments to be analyzed are located in the Shell Creek, Paintrock Creek, Goose Creek, Little Bighorn River, Piney Creek/Rock Creek, and Tensleep geographic areas as mapped by

the 2005 Bighorn National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Only National Forest System lands (NFS) within the Bighorn National Forest will be considered in the proposal. The purpose of the analysis is to determine if livestock grazing will continue on the analysis area. If the decision is to continue livestock grazing, management strategies outlining how livestock are to graze will be developed to assure implementation of Forest Plan management direction. The analysis will consider actions that continue to improve trends in vegetation, watershed conditions, and ecological sustainability relative to livestock grazing and fire and fuel management within the allotments. Management actions are proposed to be implemented beginning in the year 2011. The Forest Plan identified livestock grazing as an appropriate use and made initial determinations for lands capable and suitable for grazing by domestic livestock. The Forest Plan also identified fuel management activities as appropriate, where needed to maintain or restore ecosystem health.

The 43 allotments involved are: Antelope Ridge Sheep and Goat, Bear/Crystal Creek Sheep and Goat, Beaver Creek Sheep and Goat, Finger Creek Cattle and Horse, Grouse Creek Sheep and Goat, Hunt Mountain Sheep and Goat, Little Horn Sheep and Goat, Red Canyon Cattle and Horse, Red Canyon Sheep and Goat, Sunlight Mesa Cattle and Horse, Whaley Creek Sheep and Goat, Wiley-Sundown Cattle and Horse, Matthews Ridge Cattle and Horse, South Park Cattle and Horse, Big Goose Cattle and Horse, Little Goose Cattle and Horse, Little Goose Canyon Cattle and Horse, Walker Prairie Cattle and Horse, Rapid Creek Cattle and Horse, Stull Lakes Cattle and Horse, Tourist Horse Special Use Permit, Fisher Mountain Cattle and Horse, Little Horn Cattle and Horse, Red Springs Cattle and Horse, Sage Basin Cattle and Horse, Wyoming Gulch Cattle and Horse, Dry Fork Ridge Cattle and Horse, Lake Creek Cattle and Horse, Lower Dry Fork Cattle and Horse, West Pass Cattle and Horse, Rock Creek Cattle and Horse, Baby Wagon Sheep and Goat, Dry Tensleep Cattle and Horse, Garnet Creek Sheep and Goat, Hazelton Sheep and Goat, Leigh Creek Sheep and Goat, McLain Lake Sheep and Goat, Monument Cattle and Horse, North Canyon Cattle and Horse, South Canyon Cattle and Horse, Tensleep Canyon Cattle and Horse, Upper Meadows Sheep and Goat, and Willow Sheep and Goat. The proposed fire and fuel management actions all occur within the above allotment boundaries.