

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 information collection 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.

Done at Washington, DC, this 6th day of October 2009.

**Rajiv J. Shah,**

*Chief Scientist, USDA, Under Secretary for REE.*

[FR Doc. E9-24677 Filed 10-13-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food and Nutrition Service

#### **Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection: Comment Request: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS)**

**AGENCY:** Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on a proposed information collection. The proposed collection is an extension, without change, of a currently approved collection.

The purpose of the Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS) form is to collect uniform and standard information on nutrition education activities (SNAP-Ed) funded by SNAP. The data collected will inform management decisions, support policy initiatives, and provide documentation for legislative, budget and other requests that support planning within the agency.

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before December 14, 2009.

**ADDRESSES:** 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 has 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 that were 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 Jane Duffield, Chief, State Administration Branch, Program Accountability and Administration Division, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 818, Alexandria, VA 22302. Comments may also be submitted via fax to the attention of Jane Duffield at 703-605-0795, Room 824 or via e-mail to [jane.duffield@fns.usda.gov](mailto:jane.duffield@fns.usda.gov). Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All written comments will be open for public inspection at the office of the Food and Nutrition Service during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday) at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 824 Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval.

All comments will also be a matter of public record.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the proposed information collection form and instructions should be directed to Jane Duffield at (703) 605-4385.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Education and Administrative Reporting System.

*OMB Number:* 0584-0542.

*Form Number:* FNS-759.

*Expiration Date:* 08/31/2010.

*Type of Request:* Extension, without change, of a currently approved collection.

*Abstract:* The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) developed the Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS) for the nutrition education (SNAP-Ed) component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is provided for in Section 11 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020 (f)(3)(B)(ii)). In 2003, the Agency convened a workgroup of diverse stakeholders to assist with this task, including people from the State, local, and federal levels, as well as academia.

The EARS form was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. The first phase of EARS implementation, launched in FY 2008, required SNAP State agencies to report on financial questions #9 and #10 on the EARS form. Full implementation of all applicable EARS questions is required of SNAP State agencies by FY 2010.

EARS provides uniform data and information about the nutrition education activities of all participating States across the country. Data collected on the EARS form includes demographic characteristics of participants receiving nutrition education benefits, information about education topics and strategies, and use of resources. The EARS form is designed as an annual report that SNAP State agencies submit using the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) web-based Food Program Reporting System (FPRS). FPRS is available to SNAP State agencies between October 15 and December 30 of each year for the submission of EARS data for the prior FY's nutrition education activities.

*Affected Public:* Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) State Agencies, and implementing partners such as extension universities and non-profit organizations and local program operators.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 52.

*Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.

*Estimated Total Annual Responses:* 52.

*Hours per Response:* 54.

*Total Annual Reporting Hours:* 2,808.

*Total Annual Burden Hours:* 2,808.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 52 SNAP State agencies.

Dated: October 5, 2009.

**Julia Paradis,**

*Administrator.*

[FR Doc. E9-24678 Filed 10-13-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Business-Cooperative Service

#### **Inviting Applications for the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2010**

**AGENCY:** Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice is to invite applications for loans and grants under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program pursuant to

7 CFR part 4280, subpart A for fiscal year (FY) 2010 subject to the availability of funding. The commitment of program dollars will be made to applicants of selected responses that have fulfilled the necessary requirements for obligation. Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's risk. Historically, Congress has appropriated funding for these programs. This Notice is being issued prior to passage of a FY 2010 Appropriations Act, which may or may not provide an appropriation for these programs, to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, submit applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within the 2010 fiscal year. A subsequent notice identifying the amount received in the appropriations will be published, if any.

**DATES:** The deadline for receipt of applications in the USDA Rural Development State Office is: First Quarter, September 30, 2009; Second Quarter, December 31, 2009; Third Quarter, March 31, 2010; and Fourth Quarter, June 30, 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit applications in paper format to the USDA Rural Development State Office in the state where your project is located. A list of the USDA Rural Development State Offices addresses and telephone numbers are as follows:

#### **District of Columbia**

USDA Rural Development, Specialty Lenders Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 3225, Room 6867, Washington, DC 20250-3225, (202) 720-1400.

#### **Alabama**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Sterling Centre, Suite 601, 4121 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3400/TDD (334) 279-3495.

#### **Alaska**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645-6539, (907) 761-7705/TDD (907) 761-8905.

#### **Arizona**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 230 N. 1st First Ave., Suite 206, Phoenix, AZ 85003, (602) 280-8701/TDD (602) 280-8705.

#### **Arkansas**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Room 3416, Little Rock, AR 72201-3225, (501) 301-3200/TDD (501) 301-3279.

#### **California**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 430 G Street, # 4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5800/TDD (530) 792-5848.

#### **Colorado**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 655 Parfet Street, Room E100, Lakewood, CO 80215, (720) 544-2903/TDD (720) 544-2976.

#### **Delaware-Maryland**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1221 College Park Drive, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904, (302) 857-3580/TDD (302) 857-3585.

#### **Florida/Virgin Islands**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4440 NW 25th Place, P.O. Box 147010, Gainesville, FL 32614-7010, (352) 338-3400/TDD (352) 338-3499.

#### **Georgia**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Stephens Federal Building, 355 E. Hancock Avenue, Athens, GA 30601-2768, (706) 546-2162/TDD (706) 546-2034.

#### **Hawaii**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 311, 154 Waiianuenue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720, (808) 933-8380/TDD (808) 933-8321.

#### **Idaho**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 9173 West Barnes Dr., Suite A1, Boise, ID 83709, (208) 378-5600/TDD (208) 378-5644.

#### **Illinois**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 2118 W. Park Court, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61821, (217) 403-6200/TDD (217) 403-6240.

#### **Indiana**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 5975 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46278, (317) 290-3100/TDD (317) 290-3343.

#### **Iowa**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 873, 210 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309, (515) 284-4663/TDD (515) 284-4858.

#### **Kansas**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1303 S.W. First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040, (785) 271-2700/TDD (785) 271-2767.

#### **Kentucky**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200,

Lexington, KY 40503, (859) 224-7300/TDD (859) 224-7422.

#### **Louisiana**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, LA 71302, (318) 473-7921/TDD (318) 473-7655.

#### **Maine**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, P.O. Box 405, Bangor, ME 04402-0405, (207) 990-9160/TDD (207) 942-7331.

#### **Massachusetts/Rhode Island/Connecticut**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 451 West Street, Suite 2, Amherst, MA 01002-2999, (413) 253-4300/TDD (413) 253-4590.

#### **Michigan**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 324-5190/TDD (517) 324-5169.

#### **Minnesota**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 375 Jackson Street, Suite 410, St. Paul, MN 55101-1853, (651) 602-7800/TDD (651) 602-3799.

#### **Mississippi**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 831, 100 W. Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39269, (601) 965-4316/TDD (601) 965-5850.

#### **Missouri**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center, Suite 235, Columbia, MO 65203, (573) 876-0976/TDD (573) 876-9480.

#### **Montana**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 900 Technology Boulevard, Suite B, P.O. Box 850, Bozeman, MT 59771, (406) 585-2580/TDD (406) 585-2562.

#### **Nebraska**

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 152, 100 Centennial Mall North, Lincoln, NE 68508, (402) 437-5551/TDD (402) 437-5093.

#### **Nevada**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, NV 89703-5146, (775) 887-1222/TDD (775) 885-0633.

#### **New Jersey**

USDA Rural Development State Office, 8000 Midlantic Drive, 5th Floor North, Suite 500, Mt. Laurel, NJ

08054, (856) 787-7700/TDD (856) 787-7784.

#### New Mexico

USDA Rural Development State Office, 6200 Jefferson Street, NE., Room 255, Albuquerque, NM 87109, (505) 761-4950/TDD (505) 761-4938.

#### New York

USDA Rural Development State Office, The Galleries of Syracuse, 441 South Salina Street, Suite 357, Syracuse, NY 13202-2541, (315) 477-6400/TDD (315) 477-6447.

#### North Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4405 Bland Road, Suite 260, Raleigh, NC 27609, (919) 873-2000/TDD (919) 873-2003.

#### North Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 208, 220 East Rosser, P.O. Box 1737, Bismarck, ND 58502-1737, (701) 530-2037/TDD (701) 530-2113.

#### Ohio

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 507, 200 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215-2418, (614) 255-2400/TDD (614) 255-2554.

#### Oklahoma

USDA Rural Development State Office, 100 USDA, Suite 108, Stillwater, OK 74074-2654, (405) 742-1000/TDD (405) 742-1007.

#### Oregon

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1201 NE. Lloyd Blvd., Suite 801, Portland, OR 97232, (503) 414-3300/TDD (503) 414-3387.

#### Pennsylvania

USDA Rural Development State Office, One Credit Union Place, Suite 330, Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996, (717) 237-2299/TDD (717) 237-2261.

#### Puerto Rico

USDA Rural Development State Office, IBM Building, Suite 601, 654 Munos Rivera Avenue, San Juan, PR 00918-6106, (787) 766-5095/TDD (787) 766-5332.

#### South Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, Strom Thurmond Federal Building, 1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 765-5163/TDD (803) 765-5697.

#### South Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 210, 200 Fourth Street, SW., Huron, SD 57350, (605) 352-1100/TDD (605) 352-1147.

#### Tennessee

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37203-1084, (615) 783-1300.

#### Texas

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 102, 101 South Main, Temple, TX 76501, (254) 742-9700/TDD (254) 742-9712.

#### Utah

USDA Rural Development State Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Room 4311, Salt Lake City, UT 84138, (801) 524-4320/TDD (801) 524-3309.

#### Vermont/New Hampshire

USDA Rural Development State Office, City Center, 3rd Floor, 89 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 828-6000/TDD (802) 223-6365.

#### Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 238, Richmond, VA 23229-5014, (804) 287-1550/TDD (804) 287-1753.

#### Washington

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1835 Black Lake Boulevard SW., Suite B, Olympia, WA 98512-5715, (360) 704-7740/TDD (360) 704-7760.

#### West Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, 75 High Street, Room 320, Morgantown, WV 26505-7500, (304) 284-4860/TDD (304) 284-4836.

#### Wisconsin

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4949 Kirschling Court, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 345-7600/TDD (715) 345-7614.

#### Wyoming

USDA Rural Development State Office, 100 East B, Federal Building, Room 1005, P.O. Box 11005, Casper, WY 82602-5006, (307) 233-6700/TDD (307) 233-6733.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Rural Development State Office identified in this Notice where the project will be located.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Overview

*Federal Agency:* Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

*Funding Opportunity Type:* Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants.

*Announcement Type:* Initial Announcement.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:* 10.854.

*Dates:* Application Deadline: Completed applications must be received in the State Office as follows: First Quarter, September 30, 2009; Second Quarter, December 31, 2009; Third Quarter, March 31, 2010; and Fourth Quarter, June 30, 2010.

#### I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Regulations for these programs are at 7 CFR part 4280, subpart A. The primary objective of the program is to promote rural economic development and job creation projects. Assistance provided to rural areas, as defined, under this program may include business startup costs, business expansion, business incubators, technical assistance feasibility studies, advanced telecommunications services and computer networks for medical, educational, and job training services and community facilities projects for economic development. Awards are made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in 7 CFR part 4280, subpart A. Information required to be in the application includes an SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance;" a Resolution of the Board of Directors; AD-1047, "Debarment/Suspension Certification;" Assurance statement for the Uniform Act; Restrictions on Lobbying, AD 1049; "Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;" RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement;" RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement;" Seismic certification (if construction); Form RD 1940-20, "Request for Environmental Information;" RUS Form 7, "Financial and Statistical Report;" and RUS Form 7a, "Investments, Loan Guarantees, and Loans," or similar information; and written narrative of project description. Applications will be tentatively scored by the State Offices and submitted to the National Office for review.

#### Definitions

The definitions are published at 7 CFR 4280.3.

#### II. Award Information

*Type of Awards:* Loans and Grants.  
*Fiscal Year Funds:* FY 2010.

*Maximum Anticipated Award:* Loans—\$740,000; Grant—\$300,000.

*Anticipated Award Dates:* First Quarter, December 15, 2009; Second Quarter, March 16, 2010; Third Quarter, June 15, 2010; and Fourth Quarter, September 15, 2010.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### A. Eligible Applicants

Loans and grants may be made to any entity that is identified by USDA Rural Development as an eligible borrower under the Rural Electrification Act. In accordance with 7 CFR 4280.13, applicants that are not delinquent on any Federal debt or otherwise disqualified from participation in these programs are eligible to apply. An applicant must be eligible under 7 U.S.C. 940c.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching

For loans, either the Ultimate Recipient or the Intermediary must provide supplemental funds for the project equal to at least 20 percent of the loan to the Intermediary. For grants, the Intermediary must provide supplemental funds for the project equal to at least 20 percent of the grant to the Intermediary.

#### C. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications will only be accepted for projects that promote rural economic development and job creation.

#### D. Completeness Eligibility

Applications will not be considered for funding if they do not provide sufficient information to determine eligibility or are missing required elements.

### IV. Fiscal Year 2010 Application and Submission Information

#### A. Address To Request Application Package

For further information, entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the Rural Development State Office identified in this NOFA to obtain copies of the application package.

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications through the Grants.gov Web site at: <http://www.grants.gov>. Applications may be submitted in either electronic or paper format. Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov Web site. Applications may not be submitted by electronic mail.

- When you enter the Grants.gov Web site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site as well as the hours of operation. USDA Rural Development

strongly recommends that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number which can be obtained at no cost via a toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or at <http://www.dnb.com>.

- You may submit all documents electronically through the Web site, including all information typically included on the application for REDLGs and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- After electronically submitting an application through the Web site, the applicant will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number.

- USDA Rural Development may request that the applicant provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

- If applicants experience technical difficulties on the closing date and are unable to meet the deadline, you may submit a paper copy of your application to your respective Rural Development State Office. Paper applications submitted to a Rural Development State Office must meet the closing date and local time deadline.

Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number or FedGrants Funding Opportunity Number, which can be found at <http://www.grants.gov>.

#### B. Content and Form of Submission

An application must contain all of the required elements. Each selection priority criterion outlined in 7 CFR 4280.42(b), must be addressed in the application. Failure to address any of the criteria will result in a zero-point score for that criterion and will impact the overall evaluation of the application. Copies of 7 CFR part 4280, subpart A, will be provided to any interested applicant making a request to a Rural Development State Office listed in this notice.

#### C. Submission Dates and Times

*Application Deadline Dates:* First Quarter, September 30, 2009, Second Quarter, December 31, 2009, Third Quarter, March 31, 2010, and Fourth Quarter, June 30, 2010.

*Explanation of Deadlines:* Applications must be in the Rural Development State Office by the deadline dates as indicated above.

### V. Application Review Information

The National Office will score applications based on the grant selection criteria and weights contained in 7 CFR part 4280, subpart A, and will select an Intermediary subject to the Intermediary's satisfactory submission of the additional items required by 7 CFR part 4280, subpart A and the USDA Rural Development Letter of Conditions.

### VI. Award Administration Information

#### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification for funding from the Rural Development State Office. Applicants must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations before the loan/grant award will be approved. Provided the application requirements have not changed, an application not selected will be reconsidered in three subsequent funding competitions for a total of four competitions. If an application is withdrawn, it can be resubmitted and will be evaluated as a new application.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Additional requirements that apply to Intermediary's selected for this program can be found in 7 CFR 4280, subpart A. Applicable provisions of 7 CFR parts 3015, 3019, and 3052 also apply.

### VII. Agency Contacts

For general questions about this announcement, please contact your Rural Development State Office identified in this NOFA.

### VIII. Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the information collection requirement contained in this Notice is approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0570-0024.

#### Nondiscrimination Statement

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender."

Dated: September 23, 2009.

**Judith A. Canales,**

*Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.*

[FR Doc. E9-24612 Filed 10-13-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Kings River Experimental Watershed Forest Health and Research Project

**AGENCY:** Sierra National Forest, Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service will prepare a Kings River Experimental Watershed Forest Health and Research Project (KREW Project) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will evaluate the environmental effects of the KREW Project which is designed to treat portions of the Kings River watershed to improve forest health and to examine the short- and long-term effects of these treatments. The research will lead to information that will be instrumental in future land management planning for the Sierra National Forest (SNF) and other Sierra Nevada forests.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by November 13, 2009. The draft environmental impact statement is expected December 2009 and the final environmental impact statement is expected April 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Judi Tapia, SNF, Supervisor's Office, 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis, CA 93611, Attn: KREW Project.

Comments may also be sent via e-mail to [jetafia@fs.fed.us](mailto:jetafia@fs.fed.us), or via facsimile to 559-294 4809.

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. We intend to use comments received from the public to help formulate our draft EIS so please provide any suggestions or concerns prior to the close of the comment period.

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.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For research information, contact Carolyn Hunsaker, Ecologist, Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW), available by phone at 559-323-3211 or via e-mail at [chunsaker@fs.fed.us](mailto:chunsaker@fs.fed.us). For forest management information, contact Judi Tapia at 559-297-0706 extension 4938 or via e-mail at: [jetafia@fs.fed.us](mailto:jetafia@fs.fed.us). Information regarding the KREW Project EIS can be found on the SNF Web site located at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/sierraprojects/>.

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:** The Forest Service routinely conducts land management activities to help restore forests to a healthy, diverse, fire-resilient condition by reducing stand densities and fuel loads. Such management activities involve thinning forests to reduce competition among trees for water, nutrients, and sunlight; to reduce the continuity of fuels; and to protect and/or reestablish a resilient, diverse forest ecosystem.

PSW, in collaboration with the SNF, propose to complete a land management project to achieve forest health goals, part of which is the subject of research to assess the response of the ecosystem to these management practices. The forest management practices are designed for ecological restoration: for example, to reduce the effects of uncharacteristic wildfire, drought, invasive species and insect attack while providing habitat for wildlife species including sensitive species such as California spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and Yosemite toad.

The proposed KREW Project activities, implemented under the SNF Land and Resources Management Plan (LRMP) as amended by the 2004 SNF LRMP Amendment, have two coupled components: Component 1, management treatments and Component 2, research to examine ecosystem response to those treatments. The research has been underway since 2000 to instrument the subject watersheds and measure baseline (pre-treatment) ecological response. Upon completion of the forest restoration treatments planned post-treatment data collection will be completed.

The project area encompasses 3,051 acres and has two separate parts: the KREW Providence Unit (1,899 acres) and the KREW Bull Unit (1,152 acres). The KREW Providence Unit is off of the Dinkey Creek Road, adjacent to the Providence Creek Road. The KREW Bull Unit is on Patterson Mountain adjacent to the Ross Crossing Road and includes part of the Teakettle Experimental Forest.

Much is known about vegetative responses to thinning in terms of growth rates, resistance to insect attack, and resulting fire behavior in treated stands. Less is known about physical, biological, and chemical responses to moderate thinning of trees and application of prescribed fire at a watershed scale. The KREW Project research component is a replicated, paired-watershed research area for headwater streams in the southern Sierra Nevada. The KREW Project research addresses both basic and applied science questions regarding sustainable forests for current and future conditions. The KREW Project research component is a formal research project and has a scientist reviewed study plan that is periodically updated (<http://www.psw.fs.fed.us/snrc/water/kingsriver>). The Forest Service already collects data at eight instrumented watersheds on the following topics to meet KREW Project research goals:

- Hydrology.
  - Meteorology.
  - Air quality.
  - Sediment & turbidity.
  - Soils & geomorphology.
  - Water chemistry.
  - Biology.
- Stream macroinvertebrates.  
—Algae.  
—Riparian & upland vegetation & fuels.  
—Yosemite toad.

In June of 2009, the Sierra Nevada Alliance highlighted the need to monitor, protect and restore Sierra Nevada headwater resources. The KREW Project is uniquely positioned to allow researchers to collect data from an area where a particular management practice is applied along with corresponding data from a similar, but untreated area. By conducting various types of thinning and prescribed fire treatments and comparing data from paired areas, the proposed research project is intended to evaluate the watershed-scale effects of management activities designed to create a more sustainable forest in a financially viable way.

#### Purpose and Need for Action

The KREW Project has two goals: the SNF's goal of forest health treatment for