

- Survey contacts will be personally addressed, toll free numbers will be provided for answering questions and providing help. Confidentiality of responses will be ensured and respondents will know how to contact the surveyor if they have questions on security or other issues.

- All contacts will be personalized and will emphasize why the study is important and express appreciation for respondents' help. They will be formally thanked for promptly completing questionnaires.

- Small tangible token rewards provided in advance and at the time of the survey request will be further tested with small businesses to encourage response. Previous survey research has shown that small cash token incentives provided with the survey significantly increase response rates and do much better than promised rewards or nonmonetary rewards.

A key component of tailored survey design is considering and balancing how features of questions, questionnaires, mailings, interviewing, and the context of the survey will influence trust, cost, and rewards associated with the survey circumstances and respondents.

All study instruments will be kept as simple and respondent-friendly as possible. Responses are voluntary and confidential. Responses will be used to produce statistics and for no other purpose. Data files from the survey will not be released to the public.

**Affected Public:** Respondents include business establishments with at least 5 employees in both nonmetropolitan and metropolitan counties.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** The survey is cross-sectional and will be completed at one point in time. The survey will have a complex mixed survey administration to include telephone screening, pre-notification letter with Web access, multi-contact telephone interviewing, follow-up nonrespondent mail questionnaires, and simultaneous Web questionnaires offered during all contacts. Completion time for each questionnaire, based on comparisons with similar mixed modes is estimated at 30 minutes per completion, including time for reading correspondence, returning an eligibility postcard or responding to a screening call, reviewing instructions, gathering data needed, and responding to questionnaire items. It is also expected that those choosing not to participate

will require 10 minutes to review the materials and decide not to participate.

**Full Study:** The initial sample size for the full study is 30,000 businesses. The expected overall response rate is 80 percent for firms in the main study. The total estimated response burden for all of those participating in the study is 12,000 hours (30,000 respondents × 80 percent response rate × 0.50 hours) and for the non-responding business is 1,000 hours (6000 respondents × 10 minutes).

**Pilot Study:** A pilot test of the survey will be done in advance of the full study survey. The purpose of the pilot is to evaluate the survey protocol, and test instruments and questionnaires. The initial sample size for this phase of the research is 4,000 businesses. The expected response rate is 80% of firms. The total estimated response burden for the pilot testing is 1,600 hours (4,000 respondents × 80 percent × 0.5 hours). Non-responding businesses will experience 133 hours of burden (800 respondents × 10 minutes). Total respondent burden is estimated at 14,733 hours (see table below).

Testing will be limited to a maximum of 9 businesses which will be consulted on the questionnaire and asked to complete the questionnaire in a cognitive interview test.

ESTIMATED RESPONDENT BURDEN FOR RURAL ESTABLISHMENT INNOVATION SURVEY

| Survey            | Sample Size | Freq  | Responses   |               |             |              | Non-Response  |               |             |              | Total burden hours |
|-------------------|-------------|-------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
|                   |             |       | Resp. Count | Freq. × Count | Min./ Resp. | Burden Hours | Nonresp Count | Freq. × Count | Min./ Nonr. | Burden Hours |                    |
| Pilot Study ..... | 4,000       | 1     | 3,200       | 3,200         | 30          | 1,600        | 800           | 800           | 10          | 133          | 1,733              |
| Pilot Study ..... | 30,000      | 1     | 24,000      | 24,000        | 30          | 12,000       | 6,000         | 6,000         | 10          | 1,000        | 13,000             |
| Total .....       | 34,000      | ..... | .....       | .....         | .....       | 13,600       | .....         | .....         | .....       | 1,133        | 14,733             |

Dated: May 9, 2011.

**Katherine R. Smith,**  
Administrator, Economic Research Service.  
[FR Doc. 2011-15474 Filed 6-21-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-18-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Rangeland Allotment Management Planning on the Fall River and Oglala Geographic Areas, Pine Ridge Ranger and Fall River Ranger Districts, Nebraska National Forest, Nebraska and South Dakota

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Request for an extension of the proposed environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** We are requesting an extension of the proposed EIS for the USDA Forest Service Rangeland Allotment Management Planning on the Fall River West Geographic Area of the Fall River Ranger District and the Oglala Geographic Area of the Pine Ridge Ranger District, Nebraska National Forest. Our initial Notice of Intent was published in Vol. 75, No. 112 Friday, June 11, 2010.

The USDA, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) analyzing the management of rangeland vegetation resources, which includes livestock grazing, on the National Forest System (NFS) lands within the Oglala Geographic Area (OGA) of the Oglala National Grassland on the Pine Ridge Ranger District and the West Geographic Area (WGA) of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland on the Fall River Ranger

District of the Nebraska National Forest (Analysis Area) areas as mapped by the 2001 Nebraska National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). A Notice of Intent (NOI) for this project was published June 11, 2010 (75 No. 112 FR 33239-33241). This revised NOI is being issued to update the project schedule. There will be a record of decision (ROD) for each geographic area.

Proposed management actions would be implemented beginning in the year 2013. The agency gives notice of the full environmental analysis and decision-making process that will occur on the proposal so interested and affected people may become aware of how they may participate in the process and contribute to the final decision.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis were received by July 30, 2010. The initial scoping period has

been completed. The draft environmental impact statement is expected [January 2012] and the final environmental impact statement is expected [July 2012].

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information about the Oglala Geographic Area on the Oglala National Grassland call Lora O'Rourke, Co-Interdisciplinary Team Leader, at 308-432-0300. For further information about the West Geographic Area on the Buffalo Gap National Grassland, call Robert Novotny, Co-Interdisciplinary Team Leader at 605-745-4107.

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:** Vegetation resources on approximately 94,174 acres of NFS lands lying within the Oglala National Grassland in Sioux and Dawes Counties of northwest Nebraska, and approximately 117,548 acres of NFS lands lying within the Buffalo Gap National Grassland in Fall River County of southwest South Dakota, are being analyzed to determine if and how existing conditions differ from desired conditions outlined in the 2001 Nebraska National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

Vegetation in the Analysis Area is characteristic of mixed-grass prairie and lesser amounts of ponderosa pine/juniper habitats. Short-grass species include blue grama, buffalograss, and upland sedges. Mid-grass species include western wheatgrass, green needlegrass, and to a lesser extent sideoats grama. Shrubs include Wyoming big sagebrush, greasewood, and yucca glauca. Some creeks transverse the area and support plains cottonwood, green ash, and willow.

A large portion of the Analysis Area evolved under a history of homesteading in the early twentieth century, and a prolonged drought period combined with the economic depression of the late 1920's and early 1930's caused many of these homesteads to fail. Starting in the 1930's, land was purchased through northwestern Nebraska and southwestern South Dakota under the Land Utilization Project initiated by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. This continued with the Bankhead Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, which was designed to develop a program of land conservation. Administration of these lands was turned over to the Soil Conservation Service the following year

and transferred to the United States Forest Service in 1954.

Today the Oglala and Buffalo Gap National Grasslands support and provide a variety of multiple resource uses and values. Livestock ranching operations in the area depend on National Grassland acreage to create logical and efficient management units. Cattle and sheep, in accordance with 10-year term and/or annual temporary livestock grazing permits, are currently authorized to graze the allotments within the Analysis Area. In order to determine how existing resource conditions compare to desired conditions, data from monitoring and analysis (historical and present) will be used. During the past 5-7 years, drought conditions have impacted plant vigor, canopy, and litter cover in most parts of the Analysis Area.

*Purpose and Need for Action:* The purpose of this project is to determine if livestock grazing will continue to be authorized on all, none, or portions, of the 41 allotments in the Fall River West GA and the 35 allotments in the Oglala GA. And if livestock grazing is to continue, how to best maintain or achieve desired conditions and meet forest plan objectives, standards and guidelines. The action is needed to ensure that the project areas are meeting forest plan desired conditions for plant species composition, vegetation structure, and habitat for sharp-tailed grouse, sage grouse, black-tailed prairie dog (management indicator species) and swift fox (r2 sensitive species). There is also a need to review existing livestock management strategies and, if necessary, update them to implement 2001 Forest Plan direction and meet the requirements of section 504 of Public Law 104-19 (Rescissions Act, signed 7/27/95). The 2001 Forest Plan states that livestock grazing may occur as one of the multiple uses on the Nebraska National Forest, consistent with standards and guidelines. Livestock grazing is currently occurring in the analysis area under the direction of existing Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and through direction provided in annual operating instructions (AOIs). The results of this analysis may require issuing or modifying grazing permits and AMPs including reductions of permitted livestock numbers and/or modifications of the grazing season. Modifications would be documented in updated term grazing permits and/or grazing agreements and associated AMPs for the allotments.

The Forest Plan identifies lands within the OGA and FRWGA as containing lands that are capable and suitable for grazing by domestic

livestock. These lands are to be monitored to evaluate both implementation and effectiveness of management actions.

In all cases, vegetation management tools will be used that meet Forest Plan objectives, standards, and guidelines and that will maintain or move existing resource conditions toward desired conditions for that geographic area. If monitoring indicates that practices are being properly implemented and that resource trends are moving toward meeting desired conditions in a timely manner, management may continue unchanged. If monitoring indicates that there is a need to modify management practices, adaptive options as analyzed in the EIS will be selected and implemented.

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as required by the Endangered Species Act (ESA), will be completed on all proposed activities.

An interdisciplinary team has been selected to do the environmental analysis, as well as prepare and accomplish scoping and public involvement activities.

*Possible Alternatives:* Potential alternatives include:

1. No action, No change from authorized grazing use or current situation.

2. No Grazing.

3. Livestock grazing incorporating adaptive management to meet the Forest Plan goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines.

*Responsible Officials:* District Ranger at the Pine Ridge Ranger District, 125 North Main Street, Chadron, Nebraska 69337; and Michael E. McNeill, District Ranger at the Fall River Ranger District, 1801 Highway 18 Truck Bypass, Hot Springs, South Dakota 57747-0732 are the Responsible Officials for making the decision on this action. They will document their decision and rationale in a Record of Decision.

The Responsible Officials will consider the results of the analysis and its findings and then document their decisions in two separate Records of Decision (ROD), one for the OGA and one for the FRWGA. The decisions will determine whether or not to authorize livestock grazing on all, part, or none of the Analysis Area, and if so, what adaptive management design criteria, adaptive options, and monitoring will be implemented so as to meet or move toward the desired conditions as specified in the Forest Plan.

*Nature of Decision To Be Made:* The EIS is not a decision document. The purpose of the EIS document is to disclose the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the proposed

action and other alternatives that are analyzed. After providing the public an opportunity to comment on the specific activities described in the alternatives, the Responsible Officials will review all alternatives and the anticipated environmental consequences of each in order to make the following decisions:

- Whether or not to authorize livestock grazing within the Analysis Area in whole or in part.
- If grazing is to be Authorized, (a) what grazing systems and prescribed livestock use would be implemented; (b) what structural and non-structural range improvements would be necessary; and (c) what type of monitoring program would be proposed.

- If necessary, identify any "mitigation measure(s)" needed to implement the decision.

Individual Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) would then be developed to incorporate conditions outlined in the Record of Decision. These AMPs will become part of each associated term permit and/or grazing agreement issued.

**Public Scoping Process:** Comments and input regarding this proposal were requested from the public, other groups and agencies via direct mailing on March 10, 2008. Comments received during this first scoping process have been made part of the project record and will be addressed in the analysis process. With this second revised NOI, additional comments were received by July 30, 2010. Anyone who has provided comments to the draft EIS or expressed interest during the two comment periods will have standing in the process.

Public involvement will be especially important at several points during the analysis, beginning with the scoping process. The Forest Service will seek information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, local agencies, Tribes, and other individuals or organizations that may be interested in, or affected by, the proposal. The scoping activities will include: (1) Engaging potentially affected or interested parties by written correspondence, (2) contacting those on our Forest media list, and (3) hosting public information meeting(s).

#### Preliminary Issues

Effects of proposed management strategies on natural ecosystems. This includes elements such as native and desirable nonnative plant and animal communities; black-tailed prairie dog management; riparian areas; upland grasslands; wooded draws; ponderosa pine forested areas; areas of hazardous fuels; and threatened, endangered, sensitive, and management indicator

species. Social-economic effects (positive or negative) on livestock grazing permittees and the local economy from changes in livestock management. Effects of proposed livestock grazing strategies on recreational activities and/or experiences.

**Comment Requested:** The notice of intent published on June 11, 2010, initiated the formal scoping process that guides the development of the environmental impact statement. Initial public comments were due and have been received by July 30, 2010.

**Early Notice of Importance for Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:** A draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) 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, 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 at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that 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 on 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 statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the

alternatives formulated and discussed in the document. 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.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21.

Dated: June 15, 2011.

**Jane D. Darnell,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 2011-15572 Filed 6-21-11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Plumas County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC)

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Plumas County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will hold a meeting on July 8, 2011 in Quincy, CA. The purpose of the meeting is to review applications for Cycle 11 funding and select projects to be recommended to the Plumas National Forest Supervisor for calendar year 2012 funding consideration. The funding is made available under Title II provisions of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

**DATES AND ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place from 9–1:30 at the Mineral Building-Plumas/Sierra County Fairgrounds, 208 Fairgrounds Road, Quincy, CA.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** (or for special needs): Lee Anne Schramel Taylor, Forest Coordinator, USDA, Plumas National Forest, P.O. Box 11500/159 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA 95971; (530) 283-7850; or by e-mail [eataylor@fs.fed.us](mailto:eataylor@fs.fed.us). Other RAC information may be obtained at <http://www.fs.fed.us/srs>.

Dated: June 15, 2011.

**Matt Janowiak,**

*Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 2011-15542 Filed 6-21-11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**