

(3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) 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 should reference OMB No. 0581-0087 and Marketing Order No. 958, and be sent to USDA in care of Robert J. Curry, Northwest Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1220 SW Third Avenue, room 369, Portland, OR 97204. All comments received will be available for public inspection during regular business hours at the same address.

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

Dated: September 13, 1996.

Robert C. Keeney,

*Director, Fruit and Vegetable Division.*

[FR Doc. 96-24041 Filed 9-19-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

## Forest Service

### **Environmental Impact Statement, Sedona Alternate Crossing of Oak Creek, Coconino National Forest, Sedona Ranger District, Yavapai County, Sedona, AZ**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** Yavapai County in the vicinity of Sedona, Arizona, proposes to develop a safe and fully functional 2-lane, paved, through-route between the Village of Oak Creek and State Route 89A for general traffic, but especially for medical, fire and law enforcement emergencies. Ultimately, this development, much of which is within the Coconino National Forest and an existing transportation easement, will require, over time and in phases, the replacement of a vehicular crossing of Oak Creek, segmented realignment of both the Verde Valley School and Upper Red Rock Loop roads, segment surfacing, construction of scenic viewpoints, mitigation of driveway safety issues, etc. In the short run (the next 5 years), because the existing roads are capable of safely handling the anticipated low volume increases in traffic during this time as is, the County

proposes to focus on the construction of a replacement vehicular crossing of Oak Creek at what is known as Red Rock Crossing. The only exception and inclusion besides the bridge and its approaches may be the upgrading of selected drainage crossings (concrete or asphalt bottoms) along the unpaved Verde Valley School Road corridor. The remaining improvements would be scheduled after the crossing installation on an as-needed basis in conformance with the Yavapai County Road Ordinance 1995-1 and in response to traffic changes. While the County is unable to "obligate" future funding, it appears likely (because of the route's predicted popularity and therefore increasing traffic) that subsequent improvements that may be needed will rank high in the County's priority and appropriation processes.

The recently completed Design Concept Report for the crossing calls for a 4-span concrete bridge designed for 2-lane traffic (2 twelve foot wide travel lanes). The proposed bridge is characterized by the various colors, shapes, textures, and forms found in the adjoining landscape to partially mitigate its presence in this location, such as exposed faces of the structure will be textured and colored to match the red rock of the area. In addition, the bridge as conceived includes numerous provisions for pedestrians (walkways on both sides), a bike path on the bridge, access to the creek, parking, etc., all further design features to reduce or eliminate concern for its presence.

An alternate route needs determination was completed by Yavapai County in January 1995. The conclusion was drawn that an alternate crossing/route is needed to address traffic flow, reduce public risk, particularly for movement of emergency vehicles and enhancing the viability of public transit. A subsequent corridor evaluation indicated four crossing locations that would best meet Yavapai County's objectives. Red Rock Crossing was one of the four locations and was chosen by the County as its preferred route. Its advantages included existing roads, existing easements, and the strongest potential for phased improvement. This analysis also predicted a potential use of 6000 vehicles per day once fully upgraded to a 2-lane, paved roadway, potentially reducing State Route 179 congestion by 38%.

As noted earlier, inherent in the phased improvement of the corridor are the impacts associated with potential realignment, surfacing, scenic viewpoints, mitigation of driveway safety issues, dust abatement, etc.

Yavapai County's Road Ordinance prioritizes road improvements within the county system based on number of residents, number of vehicles per day, right of way, road geometrics, accident history, maintenance cost, future growth, placement in the Regional Road system, and benefit to the public. The County Engineer would make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on when additional improvements to the remainder of the roadway corridor leading to the crossing would be necessary based on the above criteria and how this corridor relates with other county roadway needs and the limited funding for these types of improvements.

This EIS will include analysis of the proposed improvements within the easement area granted to Yavapai County in 1983 and alternatives to those improvements.

**DATES:** Public scoping will begin in September 1996 and will continue over the life of the analysis. The Draft EIS is scheduled for publication in April 1997 and the Final EIS in September 1997. Written comments concerning this proposed action should be received on or before November 4, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Questions and written comments and suggestions concerning the analysis should be sent to Ken Anderson, District Ranger, Sedona Ranger District, P.O. Box 300, Sedona, AZ 86339, phone (520) 282-4119, FAX (520) 282-4119 (FAX is available during office hours Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, MST).

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:** The Forest Supervisor, Coconino National Forest, will be the responsible official and will make the decision on the Sedona Alternate Oak Creek Crossing.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sedona District Ranger, Ken Anderson or Judy Adams, Sedona Lands Officer at (520) 282-4119.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A public scoping letter with information similar to this notice will be sent to all persons indicating or having previously indicated interest in the project by responding to the needs assessment, corridor analysis and correspondence to the Forest Service or Yavapai County or who otherwise notify the Sedona Ranger District that they are interested in the Sedona Alternate Crossing of Oak Creek. Public scoping meetings will be scheduled during September or October.

The EIS will evaluate Yavapai County's proposed improvements for the corridor. The EIS will also evaluate the no action alternative which would disapprove the proposed improvements and alternatives to those improvements

considered in response to significant issues.

Preliminary issues include: scenic quality of the area, recreation experience and facilities, traffic and transportation needs, hydrology of the stream, residential concerns about noise, light, air quality and property values and development, emergency vehicle and public transit issues, water quality, and land use along the corridor.

There is information on use of the crossing in this area and the road corridor in the record for many years under the management of Yavapai County. The last vehicular crossing was washed out in 1978. The record indicates substantial discussions during the subsequent 3–4 years relative to replacement, culminating in an easement issued by the USFS to Yavapai County across national forest lands where they occur between the Village of Oak Creek south of Sedona on Arizona Highway 179 and U.S. Highway 89A in West Sedona, just downstream from the old crossing location. Although the easement was issued by the Forest Service in 1983, detailed construction plans were not submitted at that time. The easement wording allows the Forest Service approval of the detailed construction plans once submitted. All indications in the records up until recently was that the crossing would be replaced by a low water crossing similar to what had been at the location prior to the 1978 flood. Yavapai County has submitted plans (submitted in March 1996) for a bridge in order to better meet their transportation needs at the current time and for the future.

There has been many changes in the transportation system and transportation planning that has occurred since 1983 through Arizona Department of Transportation, Yavapai County and the City of Sedona that relate to the concern about replacement of this crossing, as well as increased residential and recreation development and use in the immediate vicinity of the proposed crossing location. This location is in the foreground of Cathedral Rock, one of the most photographed spots in Arizona.

This project is very controversial with strong feelings both in favor of and against a replacement crossing in this location. The historical presence of a road and crossing are not challenged and there is no general disagreement that traffic management of some forms are needed in the area. Even the most staunch critics of the Red Rock Crossing proposal would add that they realize an alternate crossing of Oak Creek is probably appropriate. They further add, however, that it should not be at Red

Rock Crossing which has far greater value and purpose for the esthetic and amenity values.

Yavapai County will be required to obtain permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) for working within Oak Creek. The Army Corps of Engineers has indicated that this proposal falls under their Nation-wide permit requirements and would not require further environmental analysis for permitting. Since Oak Creek is a unique waterway, ADEQ will require a 401 certification before working in the stream channel for construction. Yavapai County will be cooperating with the Forest Service in the development of the EIS and alternatives.

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 impacts statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewer's positions and contentions. *Vermont Yankee 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 impacts 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 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.

Dated: August 27, 1996.

Fred Trevey,

Forest Supervisor, Coconino National Forest.

[FR Doc. 96–24028 Filed 9–18–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

### Transfer of Administrative Jurisdiction; Applegate Lake Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of joint interchange of lands.

**SUMMARY:** On December 7, 1995, and May 6, 1996, the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Agriculture respectively signed a joint interchange order agreeing to the transfer of administrative jurisdiction from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Army of 66.28 acres, more or less, lying within the Rogue River National Forest in Jackson County, Oregon, and from the Department of the Army to the Department of Agriculture of 2,755.82 acres, more or less, lying within the exterior boundaries of the Rogue River National Forest in Jackson County, Oregon. As required by the Act of July 26, 1956, Congress has received 45 days advance notice of this action. A copy of the Joint Order, as signed, appears at the end of this notice.

**DATES:** The order is effective September 19, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** The maps are on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Director, Lands Staff, 4 South, Auditors Building, Forest Service, USDA, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to David M. Sherman, Lands Staff, Forest Service, USDA, Telephone: (202) 205–1362.

David G. Unger,  
Associate Chief.

Enclosure

Department of the Army

Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretaries, Applegate Lake Project, Oregon and California

Joint Order Interchanging Administrative Jurisdiction of Department of the Army Lands and National Forest System Lands.

By virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary of the Army and in the Secretary of Agriculture by Public Law 804 of the 84th Congress approved 26 July 1956 (70 Stat. 656; 16 U.S.C. 505a, 505b), it is ordered as follows:

(1) The lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Army described in Exhibit