

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****Forest Service****Staney Environmental Impact Statement****AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare a Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to provide timber for the Ketchikan Area timber sale program. The Record of Decision will disclose how the Forest Service has decided to provide harvest units, roads, and associated timber harvesting facilities. The proposed action is to harvest an estimated 35 million board feet (mmbf) of timber on an estimated 1600 acres. A range of alternatives will be developed and will include a no-action alternative. The proposed timber harvest is located within Tongass Forest Plan Management Area K07 Value Comparison Units 571m 587, 588, 590 and part of 577 on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, on the Thorne Bay Ranger District of the Ketchikan Area of the Tongass National Forest.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of this project should be received by September 30, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Please send written comments to District Ranger; Thorne Bay Ranger District; Tongass National Forest, Ketchikan Area; Attn: Staney EIS; P.O. Box 19001; Thorne Bay, AK 99919.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Questions about the proposal and EIS should be directed to Stephen J. Kimball, District Ranger, Thorne Bay Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, P.O. Box 19001, Thorne Bay, AK 99919 telephone (907) 828-3304.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Public participation will be an integral component of the study process and will be especially important at several points during the analysis. The first is during the scoping process. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, local agencies, individuals and organizations that may be interested in, or affected by, the proposed activities. The scoping process will include: (1) identification of potential issues; (2) identification of issues to be analyzed in depth; and, (3) elimination of significant issues or those which have been covered by a previous environmental review. Public scoping meetings are scheduled in Alaska at Thorne Bay, August 25, 1997, Whale Passage, August 26, 1997, Coffman Cove, August 27, 1997,

Naukati, August 28, 1997 and Klawock, September 3, 1997. Written scoping comments are being solicited through a scoping package that will be sent to the project mailing list. For the Forest Service to best use the scoping input, comments should be received by September 30, 1997. Tentative issues identified for analysis in the EIS include the potential effects of the project on and the relationship of the project to: Subsistence resources, old-growth ecosystem management and the maintenance of habitat for viable populations of wildlife and plant species, timber supply, scenery and recreational resources, anadromous and resident fish habitat, water resources, wetlands, cultural resources and others.

Based on results of scoping and the resource capabilities within the project area, alternatives including a "no action" alternative will be developed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS). The Draft EIS is projected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in March 1998. Subsistence hearings, as provided for in title VIII, Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), are planned during the comment period on the Draft EIS. The Final EIS is anticipated by September 1998.

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). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F. 2nd 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 of the proposed action, comment during scoping and 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.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, 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 appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. 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. Requesters should be aware that, under 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 7 days.

**Permits:** Permits required for implementation include the following:

1. U.S. Army Corp or Engineers
  - Approval of discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;
  - Approval of the construction of structures or work in navigable waters of the United States under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899;
2. Environmental Protection Agency
  - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (402) Permit;
  - Review Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan;

3. State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources

—Tideland Permit and Lease or Easement;

4. State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation

—Solid Waste Disposal Permit;  
—Certification of Compliance with Alaska Water Quality Standards (401 Certification)

*Responsible Official:* Bradley E. Powell, Forest Supervisor, Ketchikan Area, Tongass National Forest, Federal Building, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901, is the responsible official. The responsible official will consider the comments, response, disclosure of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies in making the decision and stating the rationale in the Record of Decision.

Dated: July 17, 1997.

**Robert L. Vaught,**

*Deputy Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 97-19470 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Deschutes Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Deschutes PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on August 27, 1997 at the Welcome Center on Highway 97 in Bend, OR. The meeting will start at 9:00 a.m. and finish at 5:00 p.m. Agenda items include: (1) Completion of comments on the DEIS documents for the Eastside Ecosystem project and (2) Open public forum. All Deschutes Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Pam Beyer, Province Liaison, USDA, Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District, 1230 N.E. 3rd, Bend, Oregon 97701, 541-383-4705.

Dated: July 15, 1997.

**Sally Collins,**

*Deschutes National Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 97-19424 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Water Rights Task Force Meeting

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service announces meetings of the Water Rights Task Force established on August 20, 1996, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, as amended. The chairman has changed the location of the previous scheduled August 4-5, 1997, meeting of the Task Force to Boise, Idaho, and has scheduled a new meeting August 18, 1997, in Denver, Colorado.

**DATES:** The meetings will be held August 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; August 5, from 8:30 a.m. until adjourned by the chairman; and August 18, from 8:00 a.m. until adjourned by the chairman.

**ADDRESSES:** The August 4-5 meeting will be held in Boise at the Red Lion/Doubletree Riverside Hotel, Delamar Conference Room, 2900 Chinden Blvd. The August 18 meeting will be held at the United Airlines Red Carpet Club Conference Room at the Denver International Airport.

Send written comments to Eleanor Towns, FACA Liaison, Water Rights Task Force, c/o USDA Forest Service, MAIL STOP 1124, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090-6090. Telephone: (202) 205-1248; Fax: (202) 205-1604.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephen Glasser, Watershed & Air Management Staff, Telephone: (202) 205-1172; Fax: (202) 205-1096.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Water Rights Task Force is composed of seven members appointed by Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture to study and make recommendations on issues pertaining to water rights. All meetings are open to the public and time for the public to address the Task Force is scheduled on August 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Discussion is limited only to Task Force members and Forest Service personnel. Persons who wish to bring water rights matters to the attention of the Task Force may file written statements, either before or after these meetings, with the Forest Service liaison at the address listed earlier in this notice.

Dated: July 17, 1997.

**Robert C. Joslin,**

*Deputy Chief, NFS.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

#### Posting of Stockyards

Pursuant to the authority provided under Section 302 of the Packers and Stockyards Act (7 U.S.C. 202), it was ascertained that the livestock markets named below were stockyards as defined by Section 302(a). Notice was given to the stockyard owners and to the public as required by Section 302(b), by posting notices at the stockyards on the dates specified below, that the stockyards were subject to the provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, as amended (7 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*).

Facility No., name, and location of stockyard	Date of posting
AR-172 Lafayette County livestock Auction, South Lewisville, Arkansas.	Apr. 26, 1997.
OH-152 Rushcreek Stable & Auction, Bremen, Ohio.	May 30, 1997.
WI-146 Bloomington Livestock Exchange, Bloomington, Wisconsin.	Apr. 25, 1997.

Done at Washington, D.C. this 16th day of July 1997.

**Daniel L. Van Ackeren,**

*Director, Livestock Marketing Division, Packers and Stockyards Programs.*

[FR Doc. 97-19434 Filed 7-23-97; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

#### Proposed Posting of Stockyards

The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, has information that the livestock markets named below are stockyards as defined in Section 302 of the Packers and Stockyards Act (7 U.S.C. 202), and should be made subject to the provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, as amended (7 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*).

AL-191 M & N Horse Sale, Russellville, Alabama