

formation and results in male sterility of the transformed plants. The subject Radicchio rosso lines also contain the *nptII* selectable marker gene and the *bar* gene isolated from the bacterium *Streptomyces hygroscopicus*. The *bar* gene encodes a phosphinothricin acetyltransferase (PAT) enzyme, which, when introduced into a plant cell, inactivates glufosinate. Linkage of the *barnase* gene, which induces male sterility, with the *bar* gene, a glufosinate tolerance gene used as a marker, enables identification of the male sterile line for use in the production of pure hybrid seed. The subject Radicchio rosso lines were transformed by the *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* method, and expression of the introduced genes is controlled in part by gene sequences derived from the plant pathogen *A. tumefaciens*.

Radicchio rosso lines RM3-3, RM3-4, and RM3-6 are currently considered regulated articles under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because they contain gene sequences derived from the plant pathogen *A. tumefaciens*. The subject Radicchio rosso lines have been evaluated in field trials conducted since 1993 in Europe, and since 1995 in the United States. In the process of reviewing the permit applications for the U.S. field trials of these Radicchio rosso lines, APHIS determined that the trials, which were conducted under conditions of reproductive and physical containment or isolation, would not present a risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination.

In the Federal Plant Pest Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 150aa *et seq.*), "plant pest" is defined as "any living stage of: Any insects, mites, nematodes, slugs, snails, protozoa, or other invertebrate animals, bacteria, fungi, other parasitic plants or reproductive parts thereof, viruses, or any organisms similar to or allied with any of the foregoing, or any infectious substances, which can directly or indirectly injure or cause disease or damage in any plants or parts thereof, or any processed, manufactured or other products of plants." APHIS views this definition very broadly. The definition covers direct or indirect injury, disease, or damage not just to agricultural crops, but also to plants in general, for example, native species, as well as to organisms that may be beneficial to plants, for example, honeybees, rhizobia, etc.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the regulation of pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*). FIFRA requires that all pesticides, including herbicides, be registered prior to distribution or sale,

unless exempt by EPA regulation. In cases in which the genetically modified plants allow for a new use of an herbicide or involve a different use pattern for the herbicide, the EPA must approve the new or different use. In conducting such an approval, the EPA considers the possibility of adverse effects to human health and the environment from the use of this herbicide. When the use of the herbicide on the genetically modified plant would result in an increase in the residues of the herbicide in a food or feed crop for which the herbicide is currently registered, or in new residues in a crop for which the herbicide is not currently registered, establishment of a new tolerance or a revision of the existing tolerance would be required. Residue tolerances for pesticides are established by the EPA under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) (21 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) enforces tolerances set by the EPA under the FFDCA.

The FDA published a statement of policy on foods derived from new plant varieties in the **Federal Register** on May 29, 1992 (57 FR 22984-23005). The FDA statement of policy includes a discussion of the FDA's authority for ensuring food safety under the FFDCA, and provides guidance to industry on the scientific considerations associated with the development of foods derived from new plant varieties, including those plants developed through the techniques of genetic engineering. Bejo has begun consultation with FDA on the subject Radicchio rosso lines.

In accordance with § 340.6(d) of the regulations, we are publishing this notice to inform the public that APHIS will accept written comments regarding the Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status from any interested person for a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. The petition and any comments received are available for public review, and copies of the petition may be ordered (see the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice).

After the comment period closes, APHIS will review the data submitted by the petitioner, all written comments received during the comment period, and any other relevant information. Based on the available information, APHIS will furnish a response to the petitioner, either approving the petition in whole or in part, or denying the petition. APHIS will then publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the regulatory status of the Bejo Zaden BV Radicchio rosso lines RM3-3, RM3-4, and RM3-6 and the availability of APHIS' written decision.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 150aa-150jj, 151-167, and 1622n; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.17, 2.51, and 371.2(c).

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of August 1997.

Terry L. Medley,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 97-22760 Filed 8-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Information Collection To Improve Methods of Measuring Public Benefits of Natural Resource Management and Agency Communication

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent; request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Forest Service announces its intent to establish a new information collection. The new collection will provide information that will help Forest Service personnel better identify and measure the benefits that the public perceives and demands from public lands. The agency also will use the information collection to evaluate and improve its methods of communicating with the public about Forest Service programs and services. Respondents will be randomly selected members of the general public, both users and non-users of National Forest System lands and grasslands. Data gathered in this information collection is not available from other sources.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing on or before October 27, 1997.

ADDRESSES: All comments should be addressed to George Peterson, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Forest Service, USDA, 3825 East Mulberry, Fort Collins, CO 80524.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Peterson, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, at (970) 498-1885.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The mission of the Forest Service is "caring for the land and serving the people." As the U.S. population grows and diversifies, demands on natural resources from the public lands are increasing. Public perceptions of forests seem to be changing from the forest as a source of products to the forest as a source of services. Currently, the agency is unable to accurately identify and

measure the services and benefits the public perceives, needs, expects, or demands from the land. Research is needed to develop more accurate measures of what the public wants in order for the agency to meet these wants. So, Forest Service research personnel will ask members of the public to help the agency develop more effective methods of evaluating and measuring their needs and expectations.

The agency will use a two-phase information collection approach which includes focus groups and experimental applications. During Phase I, the focus group phase, the agency will ask small groups of people, selected to represent a diverse cross-section of the public, to identify benefits that they perceive from the land resource. The goal of this phase will be to determine a baseline of information on what members of the public know about the land, its natural resources, the benefits available therefrom, and the terminology they use to describe these benefits. The agency also will ask focus groups to construct alternative question formats that will allow the determination and measurement of preferences, values, concerns, expectations, and sources of conflict related to perceived benefits.

In Phase II, Forest Service personnel will use the results of the focus groups to design, test, and apply information collection measures and methods, including interactive computerized interviews, personal interviews, and mail-in questionnaires. Using these alternative formats, Forest Service personnel will conduct surveys of users and non-users of National Forest System lands and grasslands to obtain rankings, weightings, values, or other measures of benefits that people receive, perceive to be available, expect, or demand from natural resources on the public lands.

Results of this research, and subsequent application of the experimental measures and methods developed, will help the agency better understand public demands for its programs and services, how well it communicates its programs and services to the public, and how well it meets the needs and expectations of the public.

Once the research project has been completed, the Forest Service will publish the results of the data collection in Forest Service Research Station papers for agency use and will submit articles to scientific journals, such as the "Journal of Environmental Management," the "Journal of Environmental Psychology," or the "Journal of Leisure Research."

Description of Information Collection

Title: Phase I—Focus Groups to Improve Methods to Measure Public Benefits of Forest Service Communication and Natural Resource Management.

OMB Number: New.

Expiration Date of Approval: New.

Type of Request: The following describes Phase I of a new collection requirement and has not received approval from the Office of Management and Budget.

Abstract: The agency will use a series of small focus groups to identify, using the focus groups' own terminology and understandings, benefits that members of the public perceive from the public lands. The focus groups also will be asked to design alternative question formats to identify and measure preferences, values, concerns, expectations, and sources of conflict related to their perceived benefits.

The focus group phase of the research will be sequential and developmental; that is, each focus group will build on the results of the previous group. The first group will be asked to identify and discuss benefits from natural resources and public lands. Ideas, terms, issues, concerns, and other information that surface from this group will become the baseline from which the next focus group will begin. Successive groups will develop, discuss, and refine alternative question formats. In this way, the agency will learn how people describe, measure, and rank benefits. The number of individuals in each focus group, the issues addressed, and the time required will vary from group to group, depending on what is learned as the focus group phase of the research progresses.

Forest Service research personnel and/or professional facilitators will facilitate focus group discussions.

Data gathered in this information collection are not available from other sources.

Estimated Burden per Respondent: 2 hours.

Type of Respondents: Voluntarily responding individuals chosen to represent a diverse cross section of the general public, including both visitors and non-visitors to National Forest System lands and grasslands.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 72.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated total burden on respondents: 144 hours.

Description of Information Collection

Title: Phase II—Experimental Applications to Improve Methods to

Measure Public Benefits of Forest Service Communication and Natural Resource Management.

OMB Number: New.

Expiration Date of Approval: New.

Type of Request: The following describes Phase II of a new collection requirement and has not received approval from the Office of Management and Budget.

Abstract: Forest Service research personnel will use the issues and methods developed by the focus groups to design, test, and apply information collection methods and measures, including interactive computerized interviews, personal interviews, and mail-in questionnaires. These will be used to collect information from the public to obtain rankings, weightings, values, or other measures of benefits that people receive, perceive to be available, expect, or demand from natural resources on the public lands.

Forest Service personnel will use the results to evaluate whether the agency's land management programs produce the benefits desired by the public and to evaluate agency information dissemination to the public about Forest Service programs and the benefits they are designed to deliver.

Data gathered in this information collection are not available from other sources.

Estimated Burden per Respondent: 30 minutes.

Type of respondents: Voluntarily responding individuals selected from the general public using random processes; these will include users of and visitors on National Forest System lands and grasslands, as well as non-users and non-visitors.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,900.

Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Burden on Respondents: 950 hours.

Comments Are Invited

The agency invites comments on the following: (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 or scientific utility; (b) the accuracy of the 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 respondents, including the use of automated, mechanical, or other

technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Use of Comments

All comments received in response to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. Those who submit comments should be aware that all comments, including names and addresses when provided, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection.

Dated: August 20, 1997.

Ronald E. Stewart,

Acting Associate Chief.

[FR Doc. 97-22732 Filed 8-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

California Spotted Owl Federal Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The California Spotted Owl Federal Advisory Committee will meet on September 11-13, 1997, in Visalia, California. This is the third meeting of the committee. The three day meeting will be a working session for the advisory committee; the public is invited to observe.

Those needing California Spotted Owl RDEIS documents should contact Mike Skinner at (415) 705-1870.

DATES: The meeting will be held September 11-13, 1997, as follows: Thursday, September 11, 8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M., 7:00-10:00 P.M.; Friday, September 12, 8:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M., 7:00-10:00 P.M.; Saturday, September 13, 8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Radisson Hotel, 300 South Court, Visalia, California, 93291, phone (209) 636-1111.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Charles Philpot, Committee Chair, (503) 808-2113; or Jonathan Stephens, Forest Service, (202) 205-0948; or Katherine Clement, (415) 705-1834.

Dated: August 21, 1997.

Michael D. Srago,

Acting Assistant Regional Forester, Ecosystem Conservation.

[FR Doc. 97-22727 Filed 8-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection, comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Housing Service's (RHS) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of the program for Fire and Rescue Loans.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by October 27, 1997 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Yoonie MacDonald, Loan Specialist, Community Programs Division, RHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 3222, 1400 Independence, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3222. Telephone (202) 720-1501.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Fire and Rescue Loans.

OMB Number: 0575-0120.

Expiration Date of Approval: January 31, 1998.

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

Abstract: The Fire and Rescue Loan program is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public entities, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes for the development of community facilities for public use in rural areas and is covered by 7 CFR 1942-C. The primary regulation for administering the Community Facilities program is 7 CFR 1942-A (OMB Number 0575-0015) which outlines eligibility, project feasibility, security, and monitoring requirements.

The Community Facilities fire and rescue program has been in existence for many years. This program has financed a wide range of fire and rescue projects varying in size and complexity from construction of a fire station with firefighting and rescue equipment to financing a 911 emergency system. These facilities are designed to provide fire protection and emergency rescue services to rural communities.

Information will be collected by the field offices from applicants, borrowers, and consultants. This information will be used to determine applicant/borrower eligibility, project feasibility, and to ensure borrowers operate on a

sound basis and use funds for authorized purposes. Failure to collect proper information could result in improper determination of eligibility, improper use of funds, and/or unsound loans.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.16 hours per response.

Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions, state, local or Tribal governments.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,130.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 2.73.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 6,695.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Barbara Williams, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, (202) 720-9734.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of RHS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of RHS'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 Barbara Williams, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 0743, Washington, DC 20250-0743. 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: August 19, 1997.

Jan E. Shadburn,

Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 97-22711 Filed 8-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB; Comment Request

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for