

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Research, Education, and Economics; Notice of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board Executive Committee Special Meeting

AGENCY: Research, Education, and Economics, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of special meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App., the United States Department of Agriculture announces a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board, which represents 30 constituent categories, as specified in section 1408 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended by section 802 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-127), will have a special meeting of the Advisory Board's Executive Committee, with USDA officials to discuss the Advisory Board's role under the pending Agricultural Research, and Education Reform Act of 1998.

Dates: June 29, 1998, 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Place: USDA, Cooperative State Research Service, Aerospace Building, Conference Room 824A-B, 901 D Street, SW., Washington, DC.

Type of Meeting: Open to the public. Conference room space is limited. The public is requested to confirm attendance with the contact person below. Identification is required upon entering the USDA facilities.

Comments: The public may also file written comments before or within 2 weeks after the meeting with the contact person. All statements will become a part of the official records of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board and will be kept on file for public review in the Office of the Advisory Board; Research, Education, and Economics; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Washington, D.C. 20250-2255.

For Further Information Contact: Deborah Hanfman, Executive Director, National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board, Research, Education, and Economics Advisory Board Office, Room 3918 South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP: 2255, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-2255. Telephone: 202-720-3684. Fax: 202-720-6199, or e-mail: lshea@reeusda.gov.

Done at Washington, D.C. this 9th day of June 1998.

I. Miley Gonzalez,

Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics.

[FR Doc. 98-16154 Filed 6-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Moir Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an 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 up to an estimated 435 million board feet (mmbf) of timber on an estimated 3,000 acres in several timber sales. A range of alternatives responsive to significant issues will be developed and will include a no-action alternative. The proposed timber harvest is located within Tongass Forest Plan Value Comparison Units 683, 691, 692, 693,

and 694 on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, on the Craig Ranger District of the Ketchikan Area of the Tongass National Forest.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of this project should be received by July 30, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Please send written comments to Forest Supervisor's Office; Tongass National Forest, Ketchikan Area; Attn: Moira EIS; Federal Building, Ketchikan, AK 99901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions about the proposal and EIS should be directed to Dale Kanen, District Ranger, Craig Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, P.O. Box 500, Craig, AK 99921; telephone (907) 826-3271 or Norm Matson, Planning Biologist, Federal Building, Ketchikan, AK 99901; telephone (907) 228-6273.

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 insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a previous environmental review. 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 July 30, 1998. 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, soil and 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 May 1999. 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 April 2000.

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.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 of the proposed action, comments 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 of 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 Standard (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: June 9, 1998.

Bradley E. Powell,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 98-16222 Filed 6-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Comprehensive Management Plan, Wallowa-Whitman, Nez Perce, and Payette National Forests, Baker and Wallowa Counties in Oregon and Nez Perce, Idaho, and Adams Counties in Idaho

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare a Revised Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the USDA, Forest Service will prepare a revised draft environmental impact statement for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Comprehensive Management Plan. The decision to revise the draft environmental impact statement is based on two factors: (1) Over two years have passed since the release of the draft environmental impact statement and new information has been released from the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project that may affect the project area, thus warranting a review. This new information will be evaluated in the context of the affected environment to determine if proposed management direction should be modified; and (2) an additional alternative should be analyzed in detail that was submitted by interest groups in 1995 and was never fully analyzed in the February 1996 draft environmental impact statement. This alternative proposes management direction to manage the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area to thrive as a healthy native ecosystem that is an integral component of a larger bioregion. The proposed action is unchanged from that described in the November 16, 1994 issue of **Federal Register** (59 FR 59203).

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing, no later than June 30, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, P.O. Box 907, Baker City, Oregon 97814.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this notice of intent and its modification to Kurt Wiedenmann, Ecosystem Planning Staff Officer at 541-523-1296 or e-mail at: kwiedenmann/r6pnw__wallowawhitman@fs.fed.us.