

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Dan Vitiello, Domestic Program Manager, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 0002 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3700. Telephone: (202) 690-2683.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: FSIS and the CSREES are cosponsoring a series of one-day workshops with the Livestock Conservation Institute's Education Fund for Animal Agriculture (LCI), entitled "Surviving in a HACCP World." These workshops will assist those involved in livestock production to better understand the complex issues associated with the implementation of the FSIS Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Systems (HACCP)/Pathogen Reduction final rule in slaughter establishments and its potential effects on the animal production community. The intended audience includes animal producers and those who communicate regularly with producers, especially small producers, to provide information regarding the potential effects of the FSIS HACCP/Pathogen Reduction rule on the marketing of livestock.

The one-day workshops will include discussions on: the Advent of HACCP and its Impact on Food Animal Production; an Overview of HACCP Implementation; Interpreting the Consumer Response to Food Safety; Achieving Buyer Expectation; Creating State-Level Partnerships for Producer Food Safety Programs; and Applying Good Management Practices in Food Animal Production. A registration fee will be charged—\$125.00 pre-registration and \$150.00 on site.

To pre-register contact the LCI at: LCI Food Safety Workshops, 1910 Lyda Drive, Bowling Green, KY 42104. Telephone: (502) 782-9798, FAX: (502) 782-0188, E-mail: lci@premiernet.net.

The one-day workshops will be held as follows:

August 25, 1998

Columbus, Ohio, Radisson Airport Hotel & Conference Center, 1375 N. Cassady Avenue, Phone (614) 475-7551.

August 26, 1998

Omaha, Nebraska, Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market, 555 10th Street, (402) 346-9000.

August 27, 1998

Denver, Colorado, Doubletree Hotel Denver, 3203 Quebec Street, (303) 321-3333.

LCI has reserved rooms for the workshop. The cutoff for room reservations is August 10, 1998 in Columbus and Omaha and August 12, 1998 in Denver.

Done in Washington, DC on: July 28, 1998.

Thomas J. Billy,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-20695 Filed 8-4-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Loon Mountain Ski Area Improvements and Expansion

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a Supplement to the Loon Mountain Ski Area South Mountain Expansion Project Final Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service will prepare a Supplement to the Loon Mountain Ski Area South Mountain Expansion Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Loon Mountain Recreation Corporation's proposal to improve and expand recreational facilities at Loon Mountain Ski Area. The project area is located on the Pemigewasset Ranger District of the White Mountain National Forest, Grafton County, New Hampshire. The agency invites written comments that are specific to new information or changed conditions that pertain to the proposed action in respect to the issues, affected environment, and environmental effects as they were disclosed in the original FEIS.

DATES: Written comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received on or before September 15, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Beth LeClair, Eastern Region Winter Sports Team Leader, U.S. Forest Service, RR 2, Box 35, Rochester, Vermont 05767. Donna Hepp, Forest Supervisor, White Mountain National Forest, Federal Building, 719 Main Street, Laconia, New Hampshire 03246 is the Responsible Official for this Supplement to the FEIS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jay Strand, Project Coordinator, U.S. Forest Service, RR 2, Box 35, Rochester, Vermont 05767; voice and TTY phone (802) 767-4261; FAX (802) 767-4777; E-mail, jstrand/r9_gmfl@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Loon Mountain Recreation Corporation (LMRC) operates Loon Mountain Ski Area, a portion of which is under a special use permit on the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). The total acres under the existing 1976 special use permit on National Forest lands is 785 acres. In 1986, LMRC submitted a proposal to develop and

expand the existing ski area to meet the demand for additional skiing on the WMNF, and meet the demand for more capacity at Loon Mountain Ski Area. The environmental effects on the proposal and five alternatives were disclosed and documented in the Loon Mountain Ski Area South Mountain Expansion Project FEIS which was completed in late 1992. The Record of Decision (ROD) was issued on March 1, 1993 and authorized the implementation of Alternative 6 to meet the stated purpose and need.

The 1993 ROD was litigated and the subsequent court ruling found that parts of the FEIS analysis were inadequate. Specifically, the court found that: (1) The public did not have an opportunity to review and comment on Alternative 6 before its selection in the ROD; and (2) the FEIS did not include a reasonable range of alternatives in the analysis, in particular the alternative that water storage ponds be used for snowmaking needs. A court order dated May 5, 1997 invalidated the 1993 ROD and prohibited any further activities related to Alternative 6 pending the outcome of a new analysis and ROD that addresses the identified FEIS inadequacies. The No Action Alternative for this analysis would include the removal of all approved and constructed improvements related to the 1993 ROD.

The purpose and need for LMRC's current proposal is essentially the same as the original purpose and need for the expansion activities disclosed in the 1992 FEIS. However, the original preferred alternative (Alternative 6) has been modified in order for the proposal to: (1) Meet the intentions of the May 5, 1997 Court Order; (2) respond to current conditions at Loon Mountain Ski Area; (3) reflect changed ski market demands; (4) reflect changed ski industry technology; and (5) include new information that is available for this analysis.

Change ski market expectations and new ski industry technology have created market conditions that are different than those existing when the 1993 ROD was released. Destination ski resorts such as Loon Mountain Ski Area compete in a skier market that expects a quality skiing experience. Ski resorts need a proper mixture and variety of ski terrain that caters to all ability levels with support facilities (i.e. lifts, lodges and parking) that provides a multiple day destination resort opportunity. Additionally, the amount of snow coverage and depth needed on ski terrain has changed to meet today's desired skier demands necessitated by developments such as snowboards and shaped skis. New England area

destination ski resorts need the ability to make machine-made snow that ensures an initial coverage of ski trails before the December holiday season, and additional coverage to respond to thawing and trail wear. Currently, Loon Mountain Ski Area is not able to provide the skiing product necessary that will secure the market share needed to remain an economically viable destination ski resort. The proposal as modified from the original Alternative 6 provides the complete development and expansion activities needed to improve the efficiency and function of the existing resort facilities. This will provide the quality winter recreation experience visitors have grown to expect at Loon Mountain Ski and on National Forest lands, while meeting both the original and current purpose and need.

On January 26, 1998, LMRC submitted a proposal to improve and expand the Loon Mountain Ski Area, and on May 14, 1998 amended to proposal. The scope of their proposal includes ten categories: (1) Expansion of the existing special use permit (SUP) area by 581 acres of a total of 1,366 acres; (2) construction of six new ski trails and a free style jump (30.9 acres), widening of many existing ski trails (20.1 acres), and reconfiguration of the Lower Speakeasy Trail system within the existing SUP area, and construction of six new trails (73.2 acres) within the expanded SUP area; (3) construction of one new J-bar lift on private land, realignment of two existing lifts, and upgrade of all existing lifts within the existing SUP area, and the construction of two new chairlifts within the expanded SUP area; (4) expansion of existing buildings on private land and within the existing SUP area, and construction of a base area and lodge for the expanded SUP area on private land; (5) expansion of existing parking lots and construction of new parking facilities on private land; (6) provision to meet a snowmaking water demand target of 435 million gallons in 85% of the years for complete coverage for 382.3 acres of ski terrain on both the existing and expanded SUP areas; (7) provision to continue water withdrawals within levels currently authorized from the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, Boyle Brook, and Loon Pond for snowmaking needs; (8) installation of a 20-inch diameter pipeline, pumps and facilities to serve the expanded SUP area, and expansion of the existing pipelines and facilities on private land and the existing SUP area for complete snowmaking coverage of the entire Loon Mountain ski terrain; (9) construction of multiple water

storage ponds with a total capacity of 220 million gallons on private land to supplement snowmaking water needs; and (10) increasing the existing skier comfortable carrying capacity from 5,800 to 9,000. The Forest Service assumes that category nine may necessitate a provision to authorize the withdrawal of water from the Main Stem of the Pemigewasset River, if certain pond sites are included in this analysis.

The proposal is needed to achieve the following objectives: (1) Meet the intention of the May 5, 1997 Court Order; (2) provide the proper mixture of ski terrain, support facilities, and snowmaking coverage that meets current and anticipated skier market demands; (3) ensure Loon Mountain Ski Area remains a viable destination ski resort; and (4) achieve Forest Service goals by providing a unique and quality recreation experience for National Forest visitors. The site-specific environmental analysis provided by the Supplement to the FEIS will assist the Responsible Official in determining whether the proposal, or alternatives to the proposals, best meet the objectives of the proposal while addressing public concerns and issues.

The proposed actions within the existing SUP area are within Management Area (MA) 7.1 as described in the WMNF Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Actions within the proposed expanded SUP area are within MA 9.2. All actions meet the objectives for these MA's, and are fully consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines. The lands within the expanded SUP area would be redesignated as MA 7.1 if this proposal is implemented.

Potential permits and licenses required to implement the proposal may include the following: (1) Special Use Permit from the Forest Service; (2) Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; (3) National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit and Stormwater Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and (4) Significant Alteration of Terrain Permit, Section 401 Permit, Dam Permit, and Stormwater Permit from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Any additional permits needed from other Local, State, or Federal agencies will be identified during the analysis process. In addition, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and any assistance and cooperation from other agencies will be conducted if necessary.

Tentative issues related to the proposal which have been identified are: (1) Water demand target for snowmaking needs; (2) configuration and options of water sources for snowmaking; (3) wetland impacts from water storage pond construction; (4) impacts to various resources (i.e. soils, water quality, wildlife and aquatic habitat, threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants and animals, visual, and cultural sites); and (5) socioeconomic impacts to the local community (i.e. dependent businesses, traffic congestion, infrastructure demands). In preparing the Supplement to the FEIS, the Forest Service will consider the proposal against a range of feasible and practicable alternatives including the No Action Alternative. Alternatives to the proposal may be developed to address issues based on public comments.

Public participation will be incorporated into the preparation of the Supplement to the FEIS under the provisions of NEPA. Although scoping is not required in the preparation of a supplement to an EIS, the Forest Service will be seeking new or additional information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, and Local agencies, as well as other individuals or groups who may be interested or affected by the proposed action. Comments will be invited that are specific to new information or changed conditions that pertain to the proposed action in respect to the issues, affected environment, and environmental effects as they were disclosed in the original FEIS. This information will be used to help further define the limits of the analysis of the proposal while preparing the Supplement to the FEIS. Public meetings will be held to assist the public involvement process. The exact locations and dates of these meetings will be published in the local newspapers at least two weeks in advance.

The State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have been invited to be cooperating agencies. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been invited to be a participating agency. The New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, and the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock, New Hampshire have been invited to assist in the analysis process.

The Draft Supplement to the FEIS is expected to be filed with the EPA in the Winter of 1998-1999. The Forest Service will seek comments on the Draft

Supplement to the FEIS for a period of at least 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. Public meeting dates during the public comment period will be advertised in the media. Please note that comments in response to this NOI and in response to the draft supplement will be regarded as public information.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements (in this case a draft supplement to the environmental impact statement) 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 supplement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final supplement 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 they can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final supplement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action and alternatives, comments on the draft supplement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft supplement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft supplement 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.

After the comment period ends on the Draft Supplement to the FEIS, the comments will be analyzed and considered by the Forest Service in preparing the Final Supplement to the FEIS. The Final Supplement to the FEIS is scheduled to be completed by the Spring of 1999. The Forest Service is required to respond to the comments

received in the Final Supplement to the FEIS (40 CFR 1503.4).

The Responsible Official will consider the comments, responses, and environmental consequences discussed in the Final Supplement to the FEIS, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies when making a decision regarding this proposal. The Responsible Official will document the decision and reasons for the decision in the Record of Decision. The decision will be subject to appeal under 36 CFR 217 and 36 CFR 251.

Dated: July 28, 1998.

Donna Hepp,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 98-20744 Filed 8-3-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Intergovernmental Advisory Committee Subcommittee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Intergovernmental Advisory Committee will meet on August 6, 1998, at the Double Tree Hotel, Columbia River, Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the meeting is to continue discussions on the implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan. The meeting will begin at 9:15 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. Agenda items to be discussed include, but are not limited to: continued discussion of future agenda topics; review ongoing and potential activities for the coming year; and progress reports on effectiveness monitoring and information issues. The IAC meeting will be open to the public and is fully accessible for people with disabilities. Interpreters are available upon request in advance. Written comments may be submitted for the record at the meeting. Time will also be scheduled for oral public comments. Interested persons are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions regarding this meeting may be directed to Don Knowles, Executive Director, Regional Ecosystem Office, 333 SW 1st Avenue, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208 (Phone: 503-808-2180).

Dated: July 29, 1998.

Donald R. Knowles,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 98-20718 Filed 8-3-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Notice of Intent

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to hold scoping meeting and prepare an Environmental Assessment and/or Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and RUS Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1794) proposes to prepare an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for its Federal action related to a proposal by Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., to construct two, 100 megawatt simple cycle electric turbines in Northwest Missouri.

MEETING INFORMATION: RUS will conduct a scoping meeting in an open house forum on Tuesday, September 8, 1998, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the headquarters of United Electric Cooperative in Maryville, Missouri. The headquarters is located on Highway 136 East approximately 2.5 miles east of Maryville.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Quigel, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Rural Utility Service, Stop 1571, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-1571, telephone (202) 720-0468. Bob's E-mail address is bquigel@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., proposes to construct the plant at one of two potential sites. These sites are in the Nodaway County, Missouri. One site is approximately 5.5 miles southeast of Maryville about 0.5 miles south of the intersection of County Highways N and F along County Highway N. The other site is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Graham along County Highway A then 1 mile north up a gravel road.

The proposed project will be composed of two nominal 100 megawatt simple cycle combustion turbines. They will be primarily gas-fired combustion turbines with the option to burn fuel oil. The combustion turbines will be used for peaking capacity. The hours of operation of the combustion turbines will be limited. The number of operating hours will depend on the emission rates ultimately guaranteed by