

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

Economic Research Service

Notice of Intent To Seek Approval To Collect Information

AGENCY: Economic Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub.L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Economic Service's (ERS) intention to request Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for a new information collection of the study entitled "Re-engineering the Welfare System."

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by February 22, 1999 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831, 202-694-5466.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Study of Re-engineering the Welfare System.

Type of Request: Approval to collect information on the re-engineering of the welfare system.

Abstract: The proposed data collection will provide the Economic Research Service with descriptive data regarding the nature and extent of States' efforts to "re-engineer" their State Food Stamp programs as a result of enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The study will collect and synthesize information describing State re-engineering efforts.

Categories will include eligibility determination, operating procedures, client tracking and accountability systems, organizational structures, program monitoring, and changes in the role of the caseworker. The information will be collected in three stages. First, descriptive information will be collected from the Food Stamp Agencies in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia through a written request for existing information regarding current and proposed re-engineering efforts occurring in the State. Second, follow-up telephone interviews will be conducted to clarify the documents provided by States and collect additional information, when necessary. Finally, six States will be selected for in-depth case studies to examine processes and methods used to plan and implement re-engineering efforts. These data will be collected for a qualitative analysis of planning and implementation issues, as well as descriptions of specific agency practices.

Estimates of Burden: Public reporting burden is estimated to average 60 minutes per State to review the initial request for materials, collect relevant materials, and mail them to the contractor. An additional 45 minutes will be required for telephone interviews to clarify materials and request additional information. In addition, in the six States selected for case studies, 90 minutes will be required for each key informant, on-site interview.

Respondents: State personnel responsible for overseeing State food stamp policy or their designee will respond to the initial request for written information. The same person will likely be responsible for responding to the follow-up telephone survey. State and local food stamp officials, as well as directors of private agencies involved in assisting the States re-engineering efforts, will respond to in-person interviews.

Estimated Number of Respondents: One or two State Food Stamp Program officials will respond from each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia to the initial request for written information and the follow-up telephone survey. Two State officials will be interviewed in those States where one official does not make policy decisions about all aspects of the Food

Stamp Program's administration. An estimated 24 key informants will respond to the on-site interviews.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 125 hours. Copies of the information to be collected can be obtained from David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831, 202-694-5466.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (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 utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency'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; (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 David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831 202-694-5466. 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: November 30, 1998.

Betsey Kuhn,

Director, Food and Rural Economy Division.

[FR Doc. 98-34147 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-18-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC)

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Request for nominations of people to serve on the California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY: The interagency groups responsible for implementing the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) in the California Coast Province are seeking nominations for persons to fill two vacant positions on the California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee (CCPAC)—one to represent the large forest products industry, and one to represent the following interests: fish, wildlife or forestry organizations; mining interests, grazing interests, and commercial fishing or charter fishing boat industry; or other interests that help achieve the implementation of the NWFP.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The CCPAC works with federal agencies to implement the NWFP on federal lands in the California Coast Province. The committee provides advice to the Province Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC) regarding implementation of a comprehensive ecosystem management strategy for federal lands within the province. While the boundary of the province includes whole river drainages for broad ecosystem planning, the purpose of the PAC is to assist in implementing the NWFP, which is limited to federal lands within the range of the northern spotted owl. Therefore, preference for positions on the committees will likely be to individuals most directly associated with those federal lands involved with the northern spotted owl. Advisory committee recommendations are not legally binding and will not supersede the legally established decision authority granted to the federal agencies involved. All advisory committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens may request time on the agenda to address the PAC. All papers and documents used by the committee, including meeting minutes, are available to the public.

Applicants must be United States citizens, at least 18 years old, and will be recommended for appointment based on their personal knowledge of local and regional resource issues, and understanding of public land uses and activities; willingness to work toward mutually beneficial solutions to complex issues; respect and credibility in local communities; and commitment to attending advisory committee meetings held for the province.

Advisory committee members must be willing to travel to meetings held throughout the province on two weekdays about every 10 weeks during the year. Members will serve without pay, but reimbursement of travel and per diem is allowed for attendance at

meetings called by the Chairperson of the advisory committee.

DATES: The due date for receipt of the nominations is January 26, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Individuals with questions about the process or wishing to submit nominations for one of the positions should contact one of the following for a nomination packet: Daniel Chisholm, USDA, Forest Supervisory, Mendocino National Forest, 825 N. Humboldt Avenue, Willows, CA, 95988, (530) 934-1100; or Phebe Brown, Province Coordinator, USDA, Mendocino National Forest, 825 N. Humboldt Avenue, Willows, CA, 95988, (530) 934-3316; TTY (530) 934-7724; FAX (530) 934-7384.

Dated: December 16, 1998.

Daniel K. Chisholm,
Forest Supervisor

[FR Doc. 98-34181 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Gardiner-Taco Ecosystem Restoration Projects, Colville National Forest, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties, Washington

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Forest Service, USDA, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose the environmental effects of proposed restoration projects including commercial timber harvest, pre-commercial thinning, prescribed fire, road construction, road reconstruction, road closures, road obliterations, range improvements, range allotment planning, and planting. All proposed projects are located on National Forest System lands in the Tacoma, Cusick, and Gardiner Creek watersheds of the Newport Ranger District. The proposal is in compliance with the 1988 Colville National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended by the Regional Forester's amendments and the Inland Native Fish Strategy. These proposals are tentatively planned for implementation in fiscal years 1999 through 2004. The proposed project area is approximately 25 miles northwest of Newport, Washington.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received no later than January 15, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments concerning the management of this area to Robert L. Vaught, Forest Supervisor, 765 South Main, Colville, WA 99114, phone: 509-684-7000, fax: 509-684-7280 or to Dan Dallas, District Ranger, 315 North Warren, Newport, WA 99156 (phone: 509-447-7300; fax: 509-447-7301).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Glines, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, 315 North Warren, Newport, WA 99156 (phone: 509-447-7300, fax: 509-447-7301).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed action includes commercial timber harvest, pre-commercial thinning, prescribed fire, road construction, road reconstruction, road closures, road obliteration, range improvements, allotment management planning, and planting. This project is not located in or adjacent to an inventoried roadless area.

Restoration of ecosystem function provides the underlying need for the project. The purpose is to restore ecosystem function wherever possible and to the greatest extent possible; to restore ecosystem form where function cannot be restored at this time; and to reduce adverse impacts where possible. When possible, we will accomplish these objectives with a commercial timber sale.

This project was initiated in January 1998. The Forest Service began the preparation of an environmental assessment including local public. This initial scoping yielded the following preliminary issues: roads and road management, noxious weeds, recreation use and U.S. Air Force use of the area, livestock uses, and vegetation management near streams.

The preliminary alternatives being considered are: (1) No action, (2) accomplishing the purpose and need with prescribed fire as the only tool, (3) accomplishing the purpose and need using all available tools, (4) accomplishing the purpose and need with special emphasis on minimizing the risk of the spread of noxious weeds, and with special mitigation for recreation users, (5) accomplishing the purpose and need while minimizing road construction, (6) accomplishing the purpose and need with no new road construction.

The Draft EIS should be available in February or March 1999, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement should be available in June or July 1999.

The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency