

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

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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

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). Also, environmental objections that could be raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement 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 on the proposed action, 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.

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed in June or July 1999. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making the decision regarding this proposal. The Responsible Official is Robert L. Vaught, Forest Supervisor, 765 South Main, Colville, WA 99114, phone: 509-684-7000, fax: 509-684-7280. As the responsible official he will document the decision and reasons for the decision in the Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest

Service Appeal Regulations, 36 CFR part 215.

Dated: December 14, 1998.

Robert L. Vaught,

Forest Supervisor, Colville National Forest.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Goodenough Vegetation Management Project; Caribou National Forest, Bannock County, ID

AGENCY: Forest Service.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA, Forest Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to document the analysis and disclose the environmental impacts of proposed actions to thin timber stands in the Goodenough and Mormon Canyons on the Westside Ranger District of the Caribou National Forest. The need for the proposal is to improve the condition of the vegetation and maintain other resource values. The trees in these standards are growing too close together, forcing them to compete for sunlight, moisture and nutrients. Thinning the live trees will free up needed moisture, nutrients and sunlight for the remaining trees which will allow them to better resist insect attacks and improve the condition of the vegetation. Opening up these stands and removing some of the merchantable dead trees will help reduce large wildfire potential and create stand conditions which better approximate timber stand conditions before fire prevention was practiced.

The Westside Ranger District of the Caribou National Forest proposes to thin stands of trees on the north facing slopes of Goodenough and Mormon Canyons. Commercial and precommercial thinning will be used to improve stand conditions and salvage high risk trees. Approximately 26 stands are proposed for treatment on approximately 500 acres. Because of steep slopes and identified resource concerns, helicopters will be used for commercial thinning, and hand crews will be used for precommercial thinning. No new roads are planned, although there may be some improvement to switchbacks on the existing road. Best Management Practices, Caribou Land and Resource Management Plan "Standards and Guides", and current management

direction will be met during project implementation.

DATES: Written comments concerning the scope of the analysis described in this Notice should be received by January 25, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Caribou National Forest, Westside Ranger District, 250 South Fourth Ave., Federal Building Suite 187, Pocatello, Idaho 83201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Questions concerning the proposed action and EIS should be directed to Michele Lawson, Project Leader, or Jerald Tower, Westside District Ranger, Caribou National Forest (Telephone: (208) 236-7500).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This EIS will tier to the final EIS for the Caribou National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Caribou National Forest Plan provides the overall guidance (Goals, Objectives, Standards, and Management Area direction) to achieve the Desired Future condition for the area being analyzed and contains specific management area prescriptions for the entire Forest. The current management prescription for the area is water yield. During the analysis it will be determined if the current management prescription is appropriate or if a different prescription is more appropriate.

Possible alternatives to the proposal are not to treat any timber stands or to treat only some of the stands at this time.

Public scoping letters have been sent to individuals, and published in the Idaho State Journal. Initial scoping comments indicated concerns about the project's impacts on water quality and roadless area characteristics. At this time, no public scoping meetings have been planned.

Preliminary issues and concerns identified to date are:

1. The proposed project is located in the Scout Mountain Roadless Area, #04152. The environmental analysis will need to determine how the proposed action may affect existing roadless characteristics.

2. Beneficial uses must be protected and regulatory water quality standards met.

3. Damage to existing roads in the project area could occur from logging truck traffic.

4. The project may affect wildlife habitat.

5. Snag and potential snags should be retained for cavity dependent species.

6. Without treatment, timber stands may have increased insects and disease occurrence.