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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

Farm Service Agency

Request for Revision and Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection; Servicing Minor Program Loans

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intent of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to request renewal of the information collection currently approved and used in support of the FSA Farm Loan Programs (FLP).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before June 12, 2006, to be assured consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mel Thompson, USDA, Farm Service Agency, Loan Servicing and Property Management Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0523, Washington, DC 20250-0523; Telephone (202) 720-7862; Electronic mail: mel.thompson@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Servicing Minor Program Loans.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0230.

Expiration Date: November 30, 2006.

Type of Request: Revision and Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: Section 331 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 7 U.S.C. 1981, ("CONACT") in part, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to modify, subordinate and release terms of security instruments, leases, contracts, and agreements entered into by FSA. That section also authorizes transfers of security property, as the Secretary deems necessary, to carry out the purpose of the loan or protect the Government's financial interest. Section 335 of the CONACT (7 U.S.C. 1985),

provides servicing authority for real estate security; operation or lease of realty; disposition of property; conveyance of real property interest of the United States; easements; and condemnations. The information collection relates to a program benefit recipient or loan borrower requesting action on security they own, which was purchased with FSA loan funds, improved with FSA loan funds or has otherwise been mortgaged to FSA to secure a Government loan. The information collected is primarily financial data not already on file, such as borrower asset values, current financial information and public use and employment data.

Estimate of Annual Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .52 hours per response.

Respondents: Individuals, associations, partnerships, or corporations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 226.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 117.5 hours.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the 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 burden 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. These comments should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503 and to Mel Thompson, Senior Loan Officer, USDA, FSA, Farm Loan Programs, Loan Servicing Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0523, Washington, DC 20250-0523.

Comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the

information collection. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed in Washington, DC, on April 6, 2006.

Teresa C. Lasseter,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. E6-5466 Filed 4-12-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest; California; Freds Fire Reforestation Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The USDA, Forest Service, Eldorado National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to restore, reforest, and reduce fuels on approximately 4,300 acres that burned in the Freds Fire of 2004. The Freds Fire Reforestation project area is located in El Dorado County, California, on the Eldorado National Forest, Placerville and Pacific Ranger Districts. The project area is located immediately north of U.S. Highway 50, near the town of Kyburz. The legal description is: Township 11 North, Range 14 East, Sections 13, 14, 23, 24, 25; Township 11 North, Range 15 East, Sections 14-23, 27-30; Township 11 North, Range 16 East, Sections 17-20, 30, MDM.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by May 19, 2006. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in July 2006 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in October 2006.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Kathryn D. Hardy, Placerville Ranger District, 4260 Eight Mile Road, Camino, CA 95709, Attention: Freds Fire Reforestation Project.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Carroll, Project Leader, Placerville Ranger District, 4260 Eight Mile Road, Camino, CA 95709, or by telephone at 530-647-5386.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

On areas impacted by the Freds Fire of 2004 the purpose of the project is to:

1. Reestablish a forested landscape and promote its survival and growth; 2. incorporate fuel treatments to reduce wildfire spread and intensity or interrupt fire spread; and 3. restore aquatic and riparian habitats to improve water quality and provide for the native plant and animal species associated with these ecosystems. The Freds Fire resulted in adverse effects to forest resources such as soil, riparian areas, and wildlife habitat, and caused extensive tree mortality. Removal of most of the fire-killed trees occurred in 2005. Live and dead trees remain, distributed across the landscape as described in the Freds Fire Restoration FEIS. Without additional treatment to restore the fire area, additional impacts are likely over the short and long term. The goal of this project is to move the project area more quickly toward desired future conditions for the land allocations within the fire area, as defined by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFP). These land allocations are threat zone, defense zone, general forest, protected activity centers for spotted owls, spotted owl home range core areas, and riparian conservation areas adjacent to perennial, seasonal and ephemeral streams.

Proposed Action

The proposed action would consist of combinations of site preparation, reforestation, release, noxious weed, and fuel treatments. Site preparation treatments would be by chemical methods, utilizing ground-based herbicide applications (glyphosate or triclopyr). Reforestation treatments would include planting and re-planting if needed. Release treatments would include hand grubbing and ground-based herbicide (glyphosate, triclopyr, or hexazinone) applications. Noxious weed treatments would include hand treatments by manual and chemical (glyphosate and clopyralid) methods. Fuel treatments would include manual and chemical methods. No road construction is proposed.

The proposed action is consistent with the 1989 Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision (2004).

Possible Alternatives

Other alternatives will be developed based on significant issues identified during the scoping process for the environmental impact statement. All alternatives will need to respond to the specific condition of providing benefits equal to or better than the current

condition. Alternatives being considered at this time include: (1) The Proposed Action and (2) No Action.

Responsible Official

Kathryn D. Hardy, District Ranger, Placerville Ranger District, Eldorado National Forest, is the responsible official. As the responsible official she 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).

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision to be made is whether to adopt and implement the proposed action, an alternative to the proposed action, or take no action to plant trees, take steps to promote their survival and growth, or conduct fuel treatments.

Scoping Process

Public participation will be especially important at several points during the analysis. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from the Federal, State, and local agencies and other individual or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. To facilitate public participation, information about the proposed action will be mailed to all who express interest in the proposed action and notification of the public scoping period will be published in the Mountain Democrat, Placerville, CA.

Comments submitted during the scoping process should be in writing and should be specific to the proposed action. The comments should describe as clearly and completely as possible any issues the commenter has with the proposal. The scoping process includes:

- (a) Identifying potential issues;
- (b) Identifying issues to be analyzed in depth.
- (c) Eliminating nonsignificant issues or those previously covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis;
- (d) Exploring additional alternatives;
- (e) Identifying potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives.

A public meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2006, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the County Fire Station 16, Kyburz, California.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. 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 at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not 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.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section

21) The final EIS is scheduled to be completed in June, 2005. In the final EIS, The Forest Service is required to respond to substantive comments 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.

Dated: April 6, 2006.

Judie L. Tartaglia,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 06-3539 Filed 4-12-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Oregon and Washington; Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Invasive Plants Treatment

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest proposes to treat approximately 25,000 acres of invasive plants located across the 2.4 million acre National Forest. The Forest anticipates to treat approximately 4,000 acres of invasive plant sites annually. The proposed treatment methods include: manual pulling and hand tools, mechanized hand tools, herbicides, and biological controls. The method proposed for a given site would depend largely on the protection of resources and the effectiveness of the method on the target invasive plant species.

DATES: Comments regarding the proposed action must be received by May 17, 2006. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in March, 2007 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in September, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Please address written comments about this project to Steven A. Ellis, Forest Supervisor, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, P.O. Box 907, Baker City, OR 97814. Electronic comments can be mailed to: comments-pacificnorthwest-wallowa-whitman@fs.fed.us.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gene Yates, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, PO Box 907, Baker City, OR 97814. Phone: 541-523-1390 or e-mail gyates@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Proposed and Need for Action

Using a technologically modern approach to control or eradicate

invasive plants, the purpose of this action is to maintain or improve the diversity, function, and sustainability of desired native plant communities and other natural resources that can be adversely impacted by invasive plant species. Specifically, there is an underlying need on the Forest to: (1) Implement treatment actions to contain and reduce the extent of invasive plants at existing inventoried sites, and (2) rapidly respond to new or expanded invasive plant sites as they may occur in the future.

Proposed Action

A detailed project description can be requested by using the information request form at this Internet address: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/w-w/contact/feedback.shtml> or by contacting the person listed above.

In 2005 the Pacific Northwest Region completed an FEIS and ROD for *Preventing and Managing Invasive Plants*, which provided new direction to Forests for preventing and managing invasive plant sites including an updated list of herbicides that are approved for use. These new herbicides offer many advantages over the more limited set previously allowed, including greater selectivity for invasive plants, less harm to desired vegetation, reduced application rates, and lower toxicity to wildlife and people. The proposed invasive plant treatments will be guided by this FEIS.

Various methods would be used to contain, control or eradicate invasive plants including herbicides, manual or power tools and biological control. The approximate cumulative area of invasive plant sites that would be treated by these methods are: (a) Herbicides: 19,950 acres; (b) biological control: 4,975 acres; (c) manual or mechanical methods: 300 acres. A description of each method follows.

Herbicide Treatments: Chemical herbicides would be applied in accordance with USDA Forest Service regulations, policies, Forest Plan Standards and the manufacturer's product label requirements. Herbicides approved for use in the *Pacific Northwest Region Invasive Plant Program Preventing and Managing Invasive Plants FEIS* (Regional Invasive Plant EIS), April 2005 and *Record of Decision*. These herbicides include: chlorosulfuron, clopyralid, glyphosate, imazapic, imazapyr, metsulfuron methyl, picloram, sethoxydim, sulfometuron methyl, and triclopyr. The application rates and methods will depend on the target invasive plant species and environmental conditions, such as soil type; depth to the water

table; the distance to open water sources; wetland or upland status; proximity to sensitive, rare or endemic plants; and the requirements of the herbicide manufacturer's label. Follow-up treatments may be needed depending on the effectiveness of level of control attained by the initial treatment.

Ground based or aerial application methods would be chosen based on the accessibility, topography and size of a given treatment area. The following are examples of the proposed methods of application:

- Spot spraying—The applicator sprays individual plants usually from a backpack sprayer, but the method can also be used with a hose originating from a tank mounted on a truck or ATV.
- Wicking—The applicator wipes an herbicide-saturated sponge or cloth over the target plant. This is often used in sensitive areas, such as near water, to avoid herbicide drift or contact with the soil and non-target vegetation.
- Stem injection—A new hand application technique currently being used on Japanese knotweed in western OR & WA. A tool is used to inject herbicide directly into a plant.
- Broadcast application—Herbicide is applied to a broad area of ground rather than individual plants. This method is used when the target invasive plant is so large and dense that spot spraying becomes impractical. Broadcast application is normally accomplished with a boom apparatus mounted on a truck or ATV.
- Aerial application—a boom is mounted on a helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft. This method is used where invasive plant sites are too large, remote, or steep to be reached by ground based equipment.

If needed, sites would be restored using native seed, where practical.

Manual Treatment Methods: These methods include non-mechanized approaches, such as hand pulling or using hand tools to dig or grub out plants or cut off seed heads. Handsaws, axes, shovel, rakes, machetes, grubbing hoes, mattocks, brush hooks, and hand clippers may all be used to remove invasive plant species.

Mechanical Treatment Methods: This method uses power tools and includes one or more of the following actions: mowing, weed whipping, road brushing, tilling or steaming.

Biological Control: Biological control is the release of insects, parasites, or disease pathogens which feed on or parasitize specific invasive plants. Presently, insects are the primary biological control agent in use. Mites, nematodes, and pathogens are occasionally used. Biological control