

International Plant Protection Convention	Issues identified for revision or proposals for review
5. The instruments of acceptance of amendments involving new obligations shall be deposited with the Director-General of FAO, who shall inform all contracting parties of the receipt of acceptance and the entry into force of amendments.	
ARTICLE XIV—Entry into force	
As soon as this Convention has been ratified by three signatory states it shall come into force between them. It shall come into force for each state ratifying or adhering thereafter from the date of deposit of its instrument of ratification or adherence.	Clarify the role of regional economic integration organizations.
ARTICLE XV—Denunciation	
1. Any contracting party may at any time give notice of denunciation of this Convention by notification addressed to the Director-General of FAO. The Director-General shall at once inform all signatory and adhering States.	Clarify the role of regional economic integration organizations.
2. Denunciation shall take effect one year from the date of receipt of the notification by the Director-General of FAO.	
ANNEX .....	Replace with standard for certification.
1. Model Phytosanitary Certificate .....	Continue to maintain annexes, replace or supplement with standards.
2. Model Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-Export .....	Amend certifying statements.

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### Commodity Credit Corporation

#### Notice and Request for Comment for an Approval of a New Information Collection

**AGENCY:** Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to revise procedures for accepting vendor bids to supply commodities for use under export donation programs. An Electronic Bid Entry System (EBES) will provide for electronic submission of bids via the Internet. This will replace the current system, which requires hard-copy bids and manual entry into CCC's system. The new procedure will be more reliable and more efficient than the current procedure.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received on or before April 25, 1997 to be assured consideration.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:** Comments regarding this information collection requirement may be directed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for USDA, Washington, DC 20503 and to Donna Ryles, Chief Planning and Analysis Division, Kansas City Commodity Office, 9200 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, telephone (816) 926-1505, fax (816) 926-6767.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Electronic Bid Entry System (EBES)—7 CFR 1496.

*OMB Number:* New submission.

*Expiration Date:* Not yet determined.

*Type of Request:* Approval of a new information collection.

*Abstract:* The United States donates agricultural commodities overseas under Title II of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (P.L. 480) to meet famine or other relief requirements to combat malnutrition and to promote economic development.

CCC issues invitations to purchase or process commodities for food donation programs monthly. Vendors respond by making offers using the CCC Commodity Bid Form (form PBI170). CCC verifies that the PBI170 is responsive and manually enters the information on the form into the bid evaluation program to determine the lowest landed cost and award data for the creation of contracts.

The current keypunching process requires entering hand-written data and then verifying the results. The sensitivity of the data and the high value of the contracts at stake requires a reliable and efficient system for capturing the bid data.

Regulations governing paperwork burdens on the public require that before an agency collects information from the public, the agency must receive approval from OMB. In accordance with those regulations, CCC is seeking approval for EBES to provide for the submission of bids through the Internet.

Under OMB regulations, comments concerning EBES must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of this notice's publication in the Federal Register. Within 60 days "after receipt of the proposed collection of information or publication of the notice" in the Federal

Register, whichever is later, OMB shall notify CCC of its decision to approve, require modifications to, or disapprove EBES.

#### Bid Process Modifications

In August 1996, the Export Operations Division, Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO), issued a survey to all active vendors requesting specifics about their computer capabilities. Based on the response to that survey, it was determined that a majority of vendors have IBM-compatible Personal Computers (PC's), and are currently involved in some form of electronic commerce. Therefore, this project will require IBM-compatible PC's. We anticipate having the final PC configuration requirements for this project by March 1997. In addition to meeting the PC specifications, each vendor will be required to obtain an Internet Service Provider to participate in the EBES.

KCCO will provide vendor training and offer hotline assistance for EBES. It is anticipated EBES will be put into operation in the summer of 1997. Vendor participation in the EBES shall be required to submit bids to CCC for the purchase of agricultural commodities intended for food donation programs for export distribution. The EBES will capture commodity vendor bid data for the regular monthly purchases of agricultural commodities for food donation programs for export distribution in a more reliable and efficient way than the current system. EBES provides the data in an electronic and linear format.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for collecting information under this notice is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions,

searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

*Respondents:* Business and other for profit.

*Respondents:* 60.

*Estimated Number of Annual*

*Responses per Respondent:* 24.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 720 hours.

*Proposed topics for comment include:*

(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; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected; or (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of the 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 regarding this information collection requirement may be directed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for USDA, Washington, DC 20503, and to Donna Ryles, Chief Planning and Analysis Division, Kansas City Commodity Office, 9200 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, telephone (816) 926-1505, fax (816) 926-6767.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on February 13, 1997.

Alan King,

*Acting Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.*

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## Forest Service, Eastern Region

### Waterville Valley Ski Area Ltd. Snowmaking Ponds; Notice of Availability for Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) issued on February 28, 1997 for the Waterville Valley Ski Area Snowmaking Pond Impoundments Project (Waterville Valley Impoundments Project), on the Pemigewasset Ranger District, White Mountain National Forest, Grafton County, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services participated as a cooperating agency. The U.S. Corps of

Engineers the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior and the Town of Waterville Valley provided assistance in the preparation of the document.

The DEIS is for the proposed action of the construction of five water impoundments (ponds) for the storage of approximately 130 million gallons of water for snowmaking purposes. In addition, the project would result in the change of the February Median Flow (FMF) from the presently approved 0.50 csm to 0.75 csm (recommended by the Fish and Wildlife FMF) for the Mad River. The project would be phased in over a five to ten year period. The DEIS describes alternatives to and environmental effects of the proposal on National Forest System lands where the ponds would be constructed.

The project area is located in the town of Waterville Valley, NH. Waterville Valley Ski Area operates under a Special Use Permit issued by the USDA Forest Service. Currently, Waterville Valley Ski Area withdraws water from the Mad River for the purposes of snowmaking on the mountain. They are allowed to withdraw water from the Mad River down to 0.50 csm, as identified in the White Mountain Land and Resource Management Plan. Given the small size of the watershed and periodic droughts that result in the availability of no water, the Mad River is an unreliable water source for snowmaking at Waterville Valley Ski Area. In addition, to utilizing the Mad River the ski area also uses Cochranes Pond, located in the town of Waterville Valley as a supplemental source of water. Cochranes pond only holds approximately 5 million gallons of water. This combination results in Waterville Valley only being able to provide adequate snowmaking coverage 68% of the time over the ski season. Water Valley would like to be able to provide adequate snowmaking so to be able to provide 100% coverage in 95% of the years.

In April 1996 the USDA Forest Service issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Environmental Impact Statement. At the same time a scoping letter was mailed to the public that requested if there were concerns to the proposed action that they submit their concerns to the Forest Supervisor of the White Mountain National Forest. During the 45-day comment period (April 26 to June 10, 1996) fifteen letters were received that brought forth issues/concerns to the proposal. The four main issues identified through scoping were; (1) Changes in Water Withdrawal from the Mad River, (2) Increase in Water Withdrawal Rates and Total Water Withdrawal Needed, and (3) Impacts to

Wetlands. Additional issues were identified that were important in the overall analysis and development of the alternatives, but were not the "driving issues" for the purposes of alternative development.

#### DISCUSSION ON PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE:

The agency gives notice that a complete DEIS is available for public review and requests input from the public to the Preferred Alternative. The analysis was completed by a third party contractor, Sno.Engineering (Sno.e) of Littleton, NH, and overseen by the USDA Forest Service. The Forest Supervisor has identified Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) as the "Preferred Alternative." Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) includes the construction of four ponds (Pond Sites 2, 3a, 3b and 5). This Alternative would allow for the storage of 130 million gallons (mg) of water, which would achieve coverage of 100% of the mountain, 91% of the time.

Alternative 2 is preferred because it would allow for the necessary storage and upgrade of facilities needed to provide for improved alpine skiing opportunities at Waterville Valley Ski Area. This alternative should allow Waterville Valley Ski Area to become more competitive with other New England ski areas that offer the same facilities to skiers. Aquatic resources should be improved by having a stepped increase of the February median flow over the 5 to 10 year implementation period. Loss of wetlands in the project area would be mitigated through the improvement, creation and preservation of wetlands outlined in Option 2 (described in Chapter IV Effects to Wetlands section).

Finally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has jurisdiction over portions of the project under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. A Corps permit is required under Section 404 for the placement of dredged or fill material, excavation, or mechanized land clearing in waters of the United States. Areas under Corps jurisdiction include wetlands associated with: the construction of the snowmaking ponds with wetlands (Pond Sites 2, 3a, 3b and 4), upgrade of the intake structure in the Mad River, upgrade of the piping from its present 10" diameter to 18", and the improvement, creation and preservation wetland projects as discussed in the environmental analysis.

**DATES:** The public comment period for the DEIS will end on April 14, 1997. If you would like to comment, please review the entire DEIS. You may receive a copy of the DEIS by writing to the Forest Service, 719 Main Street,