

issuance of this permit will provide information that will help the Forest Service identify the wilderness and special management areas that will be visited most frequently and will provide the agency with opportunities to encourage people to visit less popular sites.

To determine the estimate of burden, three Forest Service employees not familiar with the form were requested to individually complete Visitor's Permit Form FS-2300-30.

Estimate of Burden: 3 minutes.

Type of Respondents: Individuals and groups requesting use of National Forest System wilderness and special management areas.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 100,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 5,000 hours.

Description of Information Collection

The following describes the information collection to be reinstated:
Title: FS-2300-32, Visitor Registration Card.

OMB Number: 0596-0019.

Expiration Date of Approval: October 31, 1999.

Type of Request: This is a request for reinstatement of an information collection previously authorized by the Office of Management and Budget.

Abstract: The Visitor Registration Card FS-2300-32, like the Visitor Permit Form FS-2300-30, will provide the Forest Service with information that will help the agency identify National Forest System wilderness and special management areas most frequently visited and will provide the agency with opportunities to encourage people to visit less popular sites. Completing the Visitor Registration Card will be a voluntary exercise by visitors; it is not a requirement for visitation to a site.

Visitor Registration Cards will be available to visitors at field locations, such as trailheads. Visitors will complete the cards and place them in a container designed for that purpose.

To determine the estimate of burden, one Forest Service employee not familiar with the form was asked to complete the Visitor Registration Card FS-2300-32.

Estimate of Burden: 3 minutes.

Type of Respondents: Individuals and groups visiting National Forest System wilderness and special management areas.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 210,000 respondents.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 10,500 hours.

Comment is Invited

The agency invites comments on the following: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical or scientific 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; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Use of Comments

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will become a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: February 22, 2000.

Paul Brouha,

Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest Systems.

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BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Big Creek Resource Management Project, Flathead National Forest, Flathead County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement on a proposal to harvest trees; conduct prescribed burning; pre-commercially thin trees; reconstruct recreational trails and facilities; implement access management changes, including road reclamation; and conduct rehabilitation activities in aquatic habitat within the Big Creek watershed. The area is located 10 miles north of Columbia Falls, Montana.

The Forest Service is seeking further information and written comments from Federal, State and local agencies and

other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed actions. These comments will be used to prepare the draft EIS.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing by April 4, 2000. The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and made available for public review in September, 2000. No date has yet been determined for filing the final EIS.

The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date of the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to David Ondov or Jimmy DeHerrera, Glacier View Ranger District, P.O. Box 290340, Hungry Horse, Montana, 59919.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Ondov, Planning Team Leader, 406-387-3800.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Nature and Scope of the Proposed Action

This proposal is necessary to address resource conditions related to wildlife, forest health, fisheries and watershed, recreation use, and other human uses within the 58,000 acre Big Creek watershed which are outside desired ranges. There is also the desire to maintain resource conditions across the landscape that are similar to what fire and other natural disturbance processes would have created historically.

The purpose of the proposal is to restore landscape composition, structure, and patterns to conditions similar to that expected under natural disturbance and succession regimes, and to restore fire as an important ecological process in this watershed; to reduce existing populations of selected invasive (noxious) weeds; to improve diversity of viewing opportunities into Glacier National Park and the east facing slope of Demers Ridge; to protect human and environmental values in this watershed from the effects of catastrophic fire; to improve the quality and quantity of ungulate winter and spring range forage; to improve grizzly bear security; to improve water quality and fisheries habitat; to reconstruct the Smokey Range Trail to an acceptable standard for visitor use; to provide a developed trailhead and visitor information at the northern terminus of the Demers Ridge Trail; and to relocate a portion of the Canyon Creek Snowmobile Trail onto a route that is suitable for grooming.

The proposed action includes approximately 3,700 acres of vegetation treatment (fuels reduction through slashing or tree thinning, prescribed burning, tree harvest along with associated fuels treatments and reforestation activities, and pre-commercial thinning), 70 miles of road reclamation and yearlong closure of other roads, placement of large woody debris in streams, stabilization or removal of several log jams in streams, review and rehabilitation of old skid roads on 20–25 acres, repair of 7 streamside slumps, reconstruction of a trail, construction of a new trailhead facility, and improvement and relocation of 6 miles of a groomed snowmobile trail system.

This EIS will tier to the Flathead National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and EIS of January, 1986, and its subsequent amendments, which provide overall guidance of all land management activities on the Flathead National Forest.

Decision To Be Made

Should the Forest Service implement the proposed action or any action to meet the purpose and need established for the project, or defer any action at this time within the Big Creek watershed? The deciding official for the project is Jimmy DeHerrera, District Ranger, Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger Districts, Flathead National Forest.

Preliminary Issue and Alternatives

Preliminary scoping for the Big Creek project was conducted in November, 1999, through an open house and a field trip. The purpose of these public forums was to introduce a preliminary proposal which could be refined based on public comment. A public mailing is planned at the same time this notice of intent is published in the **Federal Register** to present the refined proposed action and purpose and need for the project. Based on public and internal comments, the following issues have emerged:

1. Economic feasibility of some proposed vegetation treatments.
2. Aquatic effects from vegetation treatments.
3. Sediment effect from road reclamation.
4. Effects of road management changes on human access and use of the area.

The interdisciplinary team has not yet developed any alternatives to the proposed action that respond to these issues.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at

this early stage 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. *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).

Dated: February 23, 2000.

Jimmy DeHerrera,

District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 00–4878 Filed 2–29–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

[00–A–W]

Designation of Springfield (IL) to provide Class X or Class Y Weighing Services

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: GIPSA announces the designation of Springfield Grain Inspection, Inc. (Springfield), to provide Class X or Class Y weighing services under the United States Grain Standards Act, as amended (Act), in the Springfield geographic area.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2000.

ADDRESSES: USDA, GIPSA, Janet M. Hart, Chief, Review Branch, Compliance Division, STOP 3604, Room 1647–S, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250–3604.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet M. Hart, telephone 202–720–8525.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866 and Departmental Regulation 1512–1; therefore, the Executive Order and Departmental Regulation do not apply to this action.

In the December 1, 1999, **Federal Register** (64 FR 67246), GIPSA announced the designation of Springfield to provide official inspection services under the Act, effective March 1, 2000, and ending December 31, 2002. Subsequently, Springfield asked GIPSA to amend their designation to include official weighing services. Section 7A(c)(2) of the Act authorizes GIPSA's Administrator to designate authority to perform official weighing to an agency providing official inspection services within a specified geographic area, if such agency is qualified under Section 7(f)(1)(A) of the Act. GIPSA evaluated all available information regarding the designation criteria in Section 7(f)(1)(A) of the Act, and determined that Springfield is qualified to provide official weighing services in their currently assigned geographic area.

Effective March 1, 2000, and terminating December 31, 2002 (the end of Springfield's designation to provide official inspection services), Springfield's present designation is amended to include Class X or Class Y weighing within their assigned geographic area, as specified in the July 1, 1999, **Federal Register** (64 FR 35586). Official services may be obtained by contacting Springfield at 217–522–5233.

Authority: Pub. L. 94–582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*).

Dated: February 4, 2000.

Neil E. Porter,

Director, Compliance Division.

[FR Doc. 00–4680 Filed 2–29–00; 8:45 am]

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