

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Director, Product Development Division, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 6501 Beacon Drive, Kansas City, MO 64133.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dave Clauser, Supervisory Insurance Management Specialist, Research and Development, Product Development Division, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, at the Kansas City, MO address listed above, telephone (816) 926-7730.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Multiple Peril Crop Insurance.

OMB Number: 0563-0053.

Expiration Date of Approval: April 30, 2001.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: FCIC is renewing the currently approved information collection package number 0563-0053. It is currently up for renewal and extension for three years. FCIC is conducting a thorough review of information collections associated with its crop insurance policies. FCIC is using data elements in this renewal package instead of form standards. The information collected by FCIC allows it to provide an actuarially sound insurance program for producers and increases producers' risk management options. The information is collected by insurance companies reinsured by FCIC, crop insurance agents, and FCIC. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation requires several data elements to be reported to them. This information comes from the producer applying for crop insurance, the insurance company accepting and issuing crop insurance policies and determining insurance coverage, premiums, the amount of production and loss, and indemnities. This data is used to administer the Federal crop insurance program in accordance with the Federal Crop Insurance Act, as amended.

The collections identified in this notice also provide FCIC with data for establishing new and different types of insurance coverage or crop options to increase insurance protection. Policy provisions and options permit producers to personalize their insurance coverage through written agreements which allow deviations from the written policy. Producer may elect exclusion for hail and fire or high risk land, etc.

Since crops differ significantly, FCIC customizes its required information collections for each crop that it insures. The type and amount of information

determined by FCIC as necessary to establish and maintain the crop insurance program must also be reasonable, and FCIC must take into consideration the time and cost to producer, insurance providers, insurance agents, and loss adjusters. FCIC is reviewing the burden calculation in preparation of applying for renewal of OMB approval of its information collections.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to extend its approval of our use of this information collection activity for an additional 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public concerning this information collection activity. These comments will help us:

(1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, and other collection technologies, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.4 hours per response.

Respondents/Affected Entities: Parties affected by the information collection requirements included in this Notice are producers, insurance companies reinsured by FCIC, and insurance agents.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 1,304,390.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 2.6.

Estimated annual number of responses: 3,345,415.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 1,194,316.

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.

Signed in Washington, D.C., on March 29, 2001.

Phyllis W. Honor,

Acting Manager, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

[FR Doc. 01-8417 Filed 4-4-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-08-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

McCaslin Project; Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Oconto and Forest Counties, WI

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; Intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to document the analysis and disclose the environmental impacts of proposed land management activities, and corresponding alternatives, within the McCaslin project area.

The purpose of the McCaslin project is to implement land management activities that are consistent with direction in the Nicolet National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and respond to specific needs identified in the project area. The project-specific needs include addressing: forest age and composition, stand tending and reforestation, road closures, erosion control, fish and wildlife habitat maintenance and improvement, and archaeological evaluation and interpretation.

The McCaslin project area is located primarily on National Forest System lands, administered by the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District, north of Lakewood, Wisconsin. The legal description for the project area is: Township 33 North, Range 15 East, sections 1-3, 11-14, and 24-25; Township 33 North, Range 16 East, sections 1-11, 14-23, and 27-30; Township 33 North, Range 17 East, sections 5 and 6; and Township 34 North, Range 16 East, Sections 16, 17, 20-29, and 32-36; Fourth Principal Meridian.

DATES: Comments concerning the proposed land management activities should be received on or before May 7, 2001 to receive timely consideration in the preparation of the draft EIS.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments concerning the proposed land management activities or requests to be placed on the project mailing list to: Edward C. Wenger, District Ranger, Lakewood/Laona Ranger District, 15085 State Rd. 32, Lakewood, Wisconsin 54138.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Lampereur, Project Leader/NEPA Coordinator, Lakewood/Laona Ranger District, 15085 State Rd. 32, Lakewood, Wisconsin 54138, phone (715) 276-6333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The information presented in this notice is included to help the reviewer determine if they are interested in or potentially affected by the proposed land management activities. The information presented in this notice is summarized. Those who wish to provide comments, or are otherwise interested in or affected by the project, are encouraged to obtain additional information from the contact identified in the For Further Information Contact section.

Proposed Actions

The proposed land management activities (proposed actions) include the following, with approximate acreage and mileage values: (1) Forest Age and Composition—selection harvest 4,758 acres, thin 2,672 acres, clearcut harvest 1,113 acres, overstory removal harvest 231 acres, shelterwood harvest 28 acres, and seed tree harvest 2 acres (other actions needed include 2.9 miles of road construction, 23.4 miles of road reconstruction, and 6.0 miles of temporary road reopening); (2) Stand Tending and Reforestation—hand release 314 acres of young plantations, prescribe burn 222 acres, plant 277 acres of white pine, white spruce, and eastern hemlock in the understories of existing stands, thin the overstory of 160 acres, and temporary fence the thinned area; (3) Road Closures—close and reclassify 1.2 miles of roads as Class 2 System Roads, and close and remove from the Forest's classified road system 21.9 miles of roads; (4) Erosion Control—reconstruct 50 feet of trail in the area of the dispersed campsite at Lincoln Lake, reconstruct 100 feet of trail in the area of the dispersed campsite at Knowles Dam, and stabilize 100 feet of bank on the North Branch Oconto River; (5) Fish and Wildlife Habitat Maintenance and Improvement—fell approximately 25 trees along the shorelines of Lincoln Lake and the North Branch Oconto River, remove in-stream debris (½ mile) and place brush bundles (500 feet) in portions of the North Branch Oconto River, construct an osprey nesting platform in an existing snag adjacent to Bluegill Creek Impoundment, hand release 141 acres in 97 wildlife openings using brush cutters, mow 31 acres in 26 wildlife openings, prescribe burn 16 acres in 2 wildlife openings (these acres are included in #2), and plant fruit-bearing shrubs in 7 acres of wildlife openings; (6) Archaeological Evaluation and Interpretation—evaluate 26 sites, protect the sites from project activities until evaluation is complete, nominate sites that appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historical

Places, and develop public interpretive opportunities at 4 identified sites by constructing interpretive signs, benches, and 50 feet of trail.

Responsible Official

The District Ranger of the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District, Ed Wenger, is the Responsible Official for making project-level decisions from the project.

Decision Space

Decision-making will be limited to specific activities relating to the proposed actions. The primary decision to be made will be whether or not to implement the proposed actions or another action alternative that responds to the project's purpose and needs.

Project History

In April of 2000, the Deer Island Project was presented to the public for comment (scoping) prior to undertaking preparation of an Environmental Assessment. During the summer of 2000, the Forest Service was developing a proposal for the adjacent McCaslin Opportunity Area. These two efforts have since been combined into one planning effort, the McCaslin Project, for which an EIS will be prepared. Years of experience have shown that the effects of implementing similar activities in the area are not significant. We therefore do not feel that an EIS is required. However, due to the increase in appeals and litigation and for wise fiscal efficiency, an EIS will be prepared for the McCaslin Project. Comments previously received for the Deer Island Project will be brought forward into the McCaslin Project.

Preliminary Issues

Comments from American Indian tribes, the public, and other agencies were considered in identifying the following preliminary issues: effects to Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species; effects to Management Indicator Species; effects from road construction and road closures; effects to motorized recreational access.

Public Participation

The Forest Service is seeking comments from Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as local Native American tribes and other individuals or organizations that may be interested in or affected by the proposed actions. Comments received in response to this notice will become a matter of public record. While public participation is welcome at any time, comments on the proposed actions received within 30 days of this notice will be especially useful in the preparation of the draft

EIS. Timely comments will be used to identify: potential issues with the proposed actions, alternatives to the proposed actions that respond to the identified needs and significant issues, and potential environmental effects of the proposed actions and alternatives considered in detail. In addition, the public is encouraged to contact and/or visit Forest Service officials at any time during the planning process.

Relation to Forest Plan Revision

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is in the process of revising and combining the existing Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) for the Chequamegon National Forest and the Nicolet National Forest, which were administratively separate at the time the Forest Plans were developed. A Notice of Intent to revise and combine the Forest Plans was issued in 1996. As part of this process, various inventories and evaluations are occurring. Additionally, the Forest is in the process of developing alternative land management scenarios that could change the desired future conditions and management direction for the Forest. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be published in the near future that will disclose the consequences of the different land management direction scenarios considered in detail. As a result of the Forest Plan revision effort, the Forest has new and additional information beyond that used to develop the existing Forest Plans. This information will be used where appropriate in the analysis of this project to disclose the effects of the proposed activities and any alternatives developed in detail.

The decisions associated with the analysis of this project will be consistent with the existing Forest Plan, unless amended, for the Nicolet. Under regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1506.1), the Forest Service can take actions while work on a Forest Plan revision is in progress because a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement—the existing Forest Plan Final EIS, already covers the actions. The relationship of this project to the proposed FP revision will be considered as appropriate as part of this planning effort.

Estimated Dates for Filing

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and available for public review in August 2001. A 45-day comment period will follow publication of a Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. Comments

received on the draft EIS will be used in preparation of the final EIS, expected in January 2002. A Record of Decision (ROD) will also be issued at that time along with the publication of a Notice of Availability of the final EIS and ROD in the **Federal Register**.

Reviewer's Obligation To Comment

The Forest Service believes it is important at this early stage to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of the draft EIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal in such a way 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, 513 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final EIS 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 of the draft EIS in order that substantive comments and objections are available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS. To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. 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: March 29, 2001.

Lynn Roberts,

Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 68 S. Stevens St., Rhinelander, WI 54501.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Shoreline Outfitter/Guide Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revision of the notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the saltwater shoreline-

based outfitter-guide capacity previously published in **Federal Register** (65 FR 2575-2576, Jan. 18, 2000). This revision is in response to public comment and includes changes in the title, proposed action, and project schedule. The project area has been expanded to include the Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to authorize commercial outfitter/guide activities within the Admiralty Island National Monument and Juneau, Hoonah and Sitka Ranger Districts of the Tongass National Forest including the Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness. The analysis will consider shoreline-based commercial recreation use. The decision to prepare an EIS is a result of initial public involvement that began with public scoping in October 1998. The Record of Decision will disclose how the Forest Service has decided to allocate shoreline-based recreation capacity for commercial and noncommercial recreation uses.

The recreation capacity of the study area has been determined in a previous analysis of available shoreline recreational capacity based on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, Tongass Forest Plan standards and guidelines dealing with social encounters, and physical conditions such as anchorages, shoreline facilities, and resource concerns. Proposed commercial allocations are based on a percentage of the total recreation carrying capacity of individual Use Areas, or subunits within the Use Areas. Under the Proposed Action, allocation to commercial guided use would range from 10 to 40 percent of the total recreation carrying capacity within each Use Area and would depend on considerations such as season, distance from communities, subsistence use and potential impacts to resources. Areas would be identified for large group use. The Proposed Action no longer allocates commercial recreation capacity specifically to brown bear hunting guides; they are included in the general commercial allocation. The Proposed Action provides for limited commercial allocations in the spring and fall season to provide more opportunities for a primitive recreation experience. A No Action alternative and other alternatives which respond to significant issues will be developed, analyzed and compared in the Draft EIS (DEIS).

DATES: To be most useful in this analysis scoping comments should be received by May 1, 2001; however scoping comments will be accepted at

any time. Comments received in response to the original Notice of Intent are included in this analysis.

ADDRESSES: Please send written comments to: Sitka Supervisor's Office, Tongass National Forest, 204 Siginaka Way, Sitka, AK 99835 Attention: Shoreline Outfitter/Guide EIS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Dalrymple, Planning Team Leader, or Mary Beth Nelson, Recreation Specialist, at the Sitka Supervisor's Office, Tongass National Forest, 204 Siginaka Way, Sitka, AK 99835 telephone (907) 747-6671.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service will continue to seek information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State and local agencies, tribal organizations, individuals, and organizations that may be interested in, or affected by the proposed activities. Comments received as a result of both the earlier public involvement and the current scoping will be included in this analysis. All comments will be analyzed to identify issues to be considered in the EIS. Tentative issues for analysis in the EIS identified from previous scoping include potential effects of the allocation to economic opportunities, conflicts between commercial operations, and effects on noncommercial resident users. Impacts to wildlife habitat and other forest resources, and the effect on subsistence uses will be included in the analysis. Based on the results of scoping and the resource capabilities within the study area, alternatives including a no-action alternative will be developed, analyzed, and compared. The DEIS is projected to be filed with the EPA in May 2001. The comment period on the DEIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**. Comments on the DEIS will be considered and responded to in the Final EIS (FEIS), anticipated by July 2001.

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 the DEIS 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 DEIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the FEIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803