

maintain a source of large wood that will decay, helping contribute to soil productivity. Treatment of pre-commercial stands to remove fuels and re-establish seedlings is needed to return those stands to the productive forests that they were prior to the fire.

The proposed action timber sale related activities include: Salvage harvest on approximately 1,226 acres (retaining between 6 and 12 trees per acre for shade and large wood recruitment); reforestation and seedling protection (with species native to the site) on about 1,095 acres; slash treatment on about 1,171 acres (including grapple piling, underburning, hand pile burning, and yarding of tops attached); road work (culvert replacement and road stabilization of two sites) along Forest Service Road 4714 and construction and reconstruction (about 1.1 miles) of temporary spur roads; construct and reconstruct up to 39 landings; and use 2 existing rock pits and establish 6 stockpile sites along existing roads to store rock and excavated material. Connected actions that would be accomplished include: Felling of snags on salvage units; site preparation and reforestation; and road reconstruction and decommissioning work.

The acreage proposed for harvest is estimated to yield up to 50 million board feet of timber, which may result in 5 to 6 separate timber sales. This volume and acreage estimates are likely to decrease as a result of finalizing riparian reserves and unsuitable or unstable soils boundaries, and as the smaller diameter wood begins to decay. The areas prescribed for harvest will require a combination of helicopter, skyline and ground-based harvesting equipment. Alternatives may reflect different harvest equipment combinations. Alternatives to be considered include the No Action Alternative, the proposed action, and alternatives to the proposed action.

Preliminary issues, as identified by the Forest and by scoping that has been conducted to date, include the following related to the proposed action: The economic efficiency and viability; the potential affect on the late successional habitat and species within the Panther Creek Watershed; and the potential affect on water quality and aquatic conditions for aquatic and riparian dependent species.

The scoping effort is intended to identify issues, which may lead to the development of alternatives to the proposed action. One of the purposes of this notice of intent is to solicit input from the public as part of the overall scoping effort. In addition to this notice,

the public will be notified of the EIS through the Umpqua National Forest's April 2003 quarterly publication "Schedule of Proposed Actions".

Comments received in response to this notice and through scoping, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within a specified number of days.

Public comments are appreciated throughout the analysis process. The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and be available for public review by July 2003. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**. The final EIS is scheduled to be available October 2003.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice of this early stage of public participation and of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of a draft EIS 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 have been raised at the draft stage may be waived or dismissed by the court if not raised until after completion of the final EIS. *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 substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider 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 on the draft EIS 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 EIS 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 of 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.)

In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to substantive 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 a decision regarding the proposal. The Responsible Official is Carol Cushing, District Ranger of the North Umpqua Ranger District, Umpqua National Forest. The Responsible Official will document the decision and rationale for the decision in a Record of Decision. The decision will be subject to review under Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR part 215).

Dated: March 7, 2003.

James A. Caplan,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-6269 Filed 3-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Intergovernmental Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) will meet on April 1, 2003, at the Lloyd Center Double Tree Hotel, located at 1000 NE., Multnomah Street in Portland, Oregon, subject to the advance approval of the committee's Federal Advisory Committee Act charter by the Department of Agriculture. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. and

adjourn at approximately 5 p.m. In general, the purpose of the meeting is for the committee to continue with discussions related to Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) implementation. Particular meeting agenda items include, but are not limited to, a panel discussion on NWFP-related socio-economic issues, progress reports on several initiatives underway to improve the performance of the NWFP in satisfying the full range of its objectives, and a proposal for the interagency and intergovernmental organizational structure under the next Memorandum of Understanding. The meeting is open to the public and will be fully accessible for people with disabilities. Interpreters are available upon request at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Written comments may be submitted for the meeting record. The agenda also features a 15-minute time slot reserved for any public comments to be offered at the meeting. Interested persons are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding this meeting may be directed to Kath Collier, Management Analyst, Regional Ecosystem Office, 333 SW., First Avenue, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208 (Phone: 503-808-2165).

Dated: March 11, 2003.

Stephen J. Odell,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 03-6263 Filed 3-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Flathead County Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Flathead County Resource Advisory Committee will meet in Kalispell, Montana April 7th and April 14th. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss potential Title II projects for fiscal year 2004 funded by the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act.

DATES: The meetings will be held April 7th from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and April 14th from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Flathead National Forest Supervisors Office, Conference Rooms A & B, 1935 Third Ave East, Kalispell, Montana, 59901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kaaren Arnoux, Flathead National

Forest, Administrative Assistant, (406) 758-5251.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting is open to the public. Time will be available for public input on potential projects the committee may be discussing.

Allen Rowley,

Public Affairs Specialist.

[FR Doc. 03-6270 Filed 3-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.; Notice of Availability of a Record of Decision

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability of a record of decision.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Nucla-Telluride 115 kV Transmission Line Project. The decision of RUS is that the National Environmental Policy Act review process has been satisfied with respect to a potential request for financing assistance from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State), of Westminster, Colorado.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dennis E. Rankin, Environmental Protection Specialist, RUS, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Stop 1571, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1571 or e-mail: drankin@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Tri-State has proposed a 115 kV transmission line in order to improve the reliability of power to Telluride and other surrounding communities, as well as increase the capacity of the regional transmission grid to transfer bulk power through southwestern Colorado. The 115 kV transmission line would replace and potentially relocate an existing 69 kV line that is owned and operated by San Miguel Power Association. The U. S. Forest Service (FS) served as the lead Federal agency in the environmental review process. RUS and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are cooperating agencies in the process.

The RUS preferred alternative is the construction of an overhead 115 kV transmission line using the Nucla-Norwood Central Alternative and the Norwood-Sunshine Alternative corridors. Subalternative corridors C and D may also be used in the final line

route. Associated facilities include the expansion of the Norwood Substation at its current location; the modification of the Nucla, Species Mesa, Wilson Mesa and Sunshine Substations; and the dismantling of the Oakhill Substation. Modifications to sections of San Miguel Power Association's distribution system would also be required. The FS and BLM have previously issued their Records-of-Decision regarding the project.

Federal, State, and local agencies and the public who had previously requested copies of the Record-of-Decision will receive a copy of the ROD by direct mail. RUS' ROD is also available online at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

Dated: March 12, 2003.

Alfred Rodgers,

Acting Assistant Administrator, Electric Program, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 03-6346 Filed 3-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-570-880]

Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value and Postponement of Final Determination: Barium Carbonate From the People's Republic of China

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Preliminary determination of sales at less than fair value and postponement of final determination.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 17, 2003.

SUMMARY: We preliminarily determine that barium carbonate from the People's Republic of China (the PRC) is being sold, or is likely to be sold, in the United States at less than fair value (LTFV), as provided in section 733 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the Act). The estimated margins of sales at LTFV are shown below in the "Suspension of Liquidation" section of this notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

David Layton or Tisha Loeper-Viti at (202) 482-0371 or (202) 482-7425, respectively; AD/CVD Enforcement, Office 5, Group II, Import Administration, Room 1870, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.