

of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It makes mortgage loans and loan guarantees to finance telecommunications, electric, water and waste facilities in rural areas. RUS manages loan programs in accordance with the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.* (RE Act) and has a loan portfolio that totals approximately \$42 billion. Section 201 of the RE Act authorizes the Administrator to make loans to qualified telephone companies for the purpose of providing telephone service to the widest practicable number of rural subscribers.

Need and Use of the Information: RUS will collect information using several forms to determine an applicant's eligibility to borrow from RUS under the terms of the RE Act. The information is also used to determine that the Government's security for loans made by RUS are reasonably adequate and that the loans will be repaid within the time agreed. Without the information, RUS could not effectively monitor each borrower's compliance with the loan terms and conditions to properly ensure continued loan security.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 50.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 3,621.

Rural Utilities Service

Title: 7 CFR Part 1778, Emergency and Imminent Community Water Assistance Grants.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0110.

Summary of Collection: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is authorized under section 306A of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) to provide grants to rural areas and small communities to secure adequate quantities of safe water. Grants made under this program shall be made for 100 percent of the project cost can serve rural areas with population not in excess of 5,000 and household income should not exceed 100 percent of a State's non-metropolitan median household income. Grants under this program may be made to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations serving rural areas.

Need and Use of the Information: RUS will collect the information from applicants applying for grants under 7 CFR part 1778. The information is unique to each borrower and emergency situation. Applicants must demonstrate that there is an imminent emergency or that a decline occurred within 2 years

of the date the application was filed with Rural Development.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government; not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 100.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 400.

Sondra Blakey,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-28218 Filed 11-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Payette National Forest, Idaho; Lick Timber Sale

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of cancellation of an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: On July 10, 2002, the USDA Forest Service published in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 45699) a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Lick Timber Sale project on the Council Ranger District of the Payette National Forest. The Forest Service has conducted a scoping process, and as a result of initial environmental analysis, has reduced the scope and scale of the project. The reconfigured proposed action is appropriate for analysis in an environmental assessment (EA) instead of an EIS. Therefore, an EIS will not be prepared, and the NOI is hereby canceled.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions about the cancellation of the NOI should be directed to Bill Spoerer, Environmental Coordinator, Council Ranger District, Payette National Forest, P.O. Box 567, Council, Idaho, 83612, phone (208) 253-0100.

Dated: November 3, 2003.

Robert S. Giles,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-28154 Filed 11-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Baht Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to harvest timber in the Baht Timber Sale project area, Wrangell Ranger District, Tongass National Forest. The proposed action is to harvest an estimated 15 million board feet (31,000 ccf) on approximately 1150 acres with about 6 miles of new road construction. The range of alternatives being developed to respond to the significant issues, besides no-action, will likely be 8-33 million board feet (16,000-67,000 ccf) of timber on an estimated 500-1300 acres in one or more timber sales. The purpose and need of the timber sale is to: contribute to the production of a sustained yield of timber and mix of other resource activities from the Tongass National Forest, consistent with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines; seek to provide a timber supply sufficient to meet the annual and planning cycle market demand for Tongass National Forest timber; provide a diversity of opportunities for resource uses that contribute to the economies of Southeast Alaska; and support a wide range of natural resource employment opportunities within Southeast Alaska's communities. The Tongass Forest Supervisor will decide on whether or not to harvest timber from this area, and if so, how this timber would be harvested. The decision will be documented in a Record of Decision based on the information disclosed in the EIS and the goals, objectives and desired future conditions as stated in the Forest Plan.

DATES: Opportunities for comment are available throughout the process. Individuals interested in receiving a scoping package should contact us within 30 days of the publication of this NOI. Comments will be most helpful if received by December 12, 2003. Additional opportunities for comment will be provided after release of the Draft EIS, anticipated in early spring of 2004.

ADDRESSES: Please send written comments to Wrangell Ranger District; Attn: Baht EIS; PO Box 51, Wrangell, AK 99929.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chip Weber, District Ranger, or Linda Christian, IDT Leader, Wrangell Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, P.O. Box 51, Wrangell, AK 99929 telephone (907) 874-2323.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed action is to harvest an estimated 15 million board feet (31,000 ccf) on approximately 1150 acres with about six miles of new road

construction. The range of alternatives being developed to respond to the significant issues, besides no-action, will likely be 8–33 million board feet (16,000–67,000 ccf) of timber on an estimated 500–1300 acres in one or more timber sales. The purpose and need of the timber sale is to: Contribute to the production of a sustained yield of timber and mix of other resource activities from the Tongass National Forest, consistent with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines; seek to provide a timber supply sufficient to meet the annual and planning cycle market demand for Tongass National Forest Timber; provide a diversity of opportunities for resource uses that contribute to the economies of Southeast Alaska; and support a wide range of natural resource employment opportunities within Southeast Alaska's communities.

The proposed timber harvest is located within Tongass Forest Plan Value Comparison Units 456, 457, 458 and 459 on Zarembo Island, Alaska, Wrangell Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest. This proposed project is fully compliant with the Roadless Area Conservation rule (Roadless Rule, January 12, 2001) as all harvest and roads are proposed in previously developed areas. The sale is currently listed on the Tongass 10-year action plan to be sold in 2006. The repercussions of delaying the project planning process regarding road building and timber harvest, even for a relatively short period, can have a significant effect on the amount of timber available for sale on the Tongass over the next few years. The Baht Timber Sale Project is consistent with the 1997 Tongass Land Management Plan.

Public participation will be an integral component of the study process and will be especially important at several points during the analysis. The first is during the scoping process. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Tribal Governments, Federal, State, and local agencies, individuals and organizations that may be interested in, or affected by, the proposed activities. The scoping process will include: (1) Identification of potential issues; (2) identification of issues to be analyzed in depth; and, (3) elimination of insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a previous environmental review. Written scoping comments are being solicited through a scoping package that will be sent to the project mailing list. For the Forest Service to best use the scoping input, comments should be received by

December 12, 2003. Tentative issues identified for analysis in the EIS include the potential effects of the project on and the relationship of the project to: old-growth ecosystem management and the maintenance of habitat for viable populations of wildlife species, timber sale economics, road construction/ access management and water quality.

Based on results of scoping and the resource capabilities within the project area, alternatives including a "no action" alternative will be developed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS). The Draft EIS is projected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in early spring of 2004. The Final EIS is anticipated by January 2005.

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

The Forest Service believes 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). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage 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*, 4900 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 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 of the proposed action, comments during scoping and comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be 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 drafts environmental impact statements or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discusses 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 in response to this solicitation, 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 part 215. 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. Requesters should be aware that, under 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 7 days.

Permits: Permits required for implementation include the following:

1. U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
 - Approvals of discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;
 - Approval of the construction of structures or work in navigable waters of the United States under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899;
2. Environmental Protection Agency
 - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (402) Permit;
 - Review Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan;
3. State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources
 - Tideland Permit and Lease or Easement;
4. State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation
 - Solid Waste Disposal Permit;
 - Certification of Compliance with Alaska Water Quality Standards (401 Certification)

Responsible Official: The Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest, Federal Building, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901, is the responsible official. The responsible official will consider the comments, response, disclosure of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and

policies in making the decision and stating the rationale in the Record of Decision.

Dated: November 3, 2003.

Forrest Cole,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-28159 Filed 11-07-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Olympic Provincial Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Olympic Province Advisory Committee (OPAC) will meet on Friday, December 5, 2003. The meeting will be held at the Olympic National Forest Headquarters, 1835 Black Lake Blvd., SW., Olympia, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at approximately 3 p.m. Agenda topics are: Current status of key Forest issues; Year-end Accomplishments; NW Forest Plan Monitoring Review; Five-Year Programmatic Agreement; Update on Storm Damage to Olympic National Forest and Park roads, trails and facilities; NW Forest Plan Action for FY2004; Open forum; Public comments.

All Olympic Province Advisory Committee Meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Ken Eldredge, Province Liaison, USDA Olympic National Forest Headquarters, 1835 Black Lake Blvd., Olympia, WA 98512-5623, (360) 956-2323 or Dale Hom, Forest Supervisor, at (360) 956-2301.

Dated: November 4, 2003.

Dale Hom,

Forest Supervisor, Olympic National Forest.

[FR Doc. 03-28157 Filed 11-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Idaho Panhandle Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure

Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393) the Idaho Panhandle National Forest's Idaho Panhandle Resource Advisory Committee will meet Friday, November 21, 2003 at 9:30 a.m. in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho for a business meeting. The business meeting is open to the public.

DATES: November 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The meeting location is the Idaho Panhandle National Forests' Supervisor's Office, located at 3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83815.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ranotta K. McNair, Forest Supervisor and Designated Federal Official, at (208) 765-7369.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting agenda will focus on reviewing project proposals for fiscal year 2004 and recommending funding for projects during the business meeting. The public forum begins at 1 p.m.

Dated: November 4, 2003.

Ranotta K. McNair,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-28158 Filed 11-7-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Library

Notice of Intent To Seek Approval to Collect Information

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, National Agricultural Library, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the National Agricultural Library's intent to request approval for a new information collection from the Information Services Division to obtain an evaluation of user satisfaction with NAL Internet sites.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by January 14, 2004, to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments concerning this notice to John Gladstone, Project Manager, 10301 Baltimore Ave., Room 011; Beltsville, MD 20705. Submit electronic comments to jgladsto@nal.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Gladstone, Phone: 301-504-5462; Fax: (301) 504-7473.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: "Evaluation of User Satisfaction with NAL Internet Sites."

OMB Number: Not yet assigned.

Expiration Date: N/A.

Type of Request: Approval for new data collection.

Abstract: This is a request, made by the National Agricultural Library (NAL) Office of the Director (OD), Office of the Associate Director of Information Services, that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approve, under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a three year generic clearance for the NAL to conduct user satisfaction research around its Internet sites. This effort is made according to Executive Order 12862 (Attachment A, ppl-2), which directs federal agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services.

The National Agricultural Library Internet sites are a vast collection of Web pages created and maintained by component organizations of the NAL, and is visited by 3.4 million people per month on average. All seven of the NAL Information Centers and a dozen special interest collections have established a Web presence with a home page and links to sub-pages that provide information to their respective audiences.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response.

Respondents: The agricultural community, USDA personnel and their cooperators, and including public and private users or providers of agricultural information.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1200 per year.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1003 hours.

Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed 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 the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and the 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 those who respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technology. Comments should be sent to the address in the preamble. All