

Timber Economy of the Southern Appalachians).

Public comment on the SAA process began with a series of open town hall meetings held in Asheville, NC; Gainesville, GA; and Roanoke, VA in August 1994. In addition, interested members of the public were asked for further written comments to be received by September 15. As the Assessment progresses, continued public involvement will be facilitated through additional meetings and newsletters.

2. Beginning of the Forest Plan Revision Efforts for the National Forests in Alabama, the Chattahoochee-Oconee, the Cherokee, and the Sumter National Forests

This notice announces that the National Forests in Alabama, the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, the Cherokee National Forest, and the Sumter National Forest either have already started or are beginning efforts to revise their Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP). These Forests are each in the process of preparing their Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), one of the first steps in the revision process. This step includes updating resource inventories, defining the current situation, estimating supply capabilities and resource demands, and determining the "Need for Change" (36 CFR 219.12(e)(5)).

3. Public Involvement in Developing the "Need for Change" in an AMS

Determining the concerns and expectations of National Forests constituents and getting public input on how well current forest plans are working, or not working, are critical elements of describing the "need to change" a forest plan. An integral part of determining the need for change is public involvement. Each of the National Forests described above either have already, or will soon contact their interested public to solicit their participation in this step of the forest plan revision process.

4. Relationship Between the AMS and a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

In the past, a "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement" (NOI) was issued at the beginning of the forest planning process, including before the development of the AMS.

This time, we are first defining the current situation and an initial "need for change" in a Draft AMS, and then issuing a NOI prior to developing alternatives. This will allow us to

incorporate a more definable "Proposed Action" and "Purpose and Need" into our NOIs, which will begin the formal NEPA process of preparing the Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) that will accompany the Revised Land and Resource Management Plans.

5. Relationship Between the Southern Appalachian Assessment and the Process for Revising the Southern Appalachian National Forests' LRMPs

The public has expressed concern that the Southern Appalachian Assessment will "delay" revising National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans in the Southern Appalachians. However, the SAA is being conducted concurrently, and in support of, the forest plan revisions.

Many of the information needs for the Forest AMSs and for the SAA are the same. The Assessment will support the revision of the LRMPs by determining how the lands, resources, people and management of the National Forests interrelate within the larger context of the Southern Appalachian area. The SAA, however, will not be a "decision document" and it will not involve the NEPA process. As broad-scale issues are identified and addressed at the sub-regional level in the Assessment, the individual National Forest's role in resolving those broad-scale issues will become a part of the "need for change" at the Forest level.

6. Issuing the Notice of Intent To Prepare an EIS

The National Forests identified above will issue their NOIs when enough information from the SAA is available for them to develop the "Need for Change" section of their Draft AMS. The Draft AMSs are scheduled to be completed between October 1995 and January 1996. Their NOIs are also scheduled to be issued during this same time period.

Each NOI will include a description of a preliminary "Proposed Action" and of some preliminary alternatives. Scoping to receive public comments on the preliminary proposed action and preliminary alternatives will begin following the publication of the NOIs. These public comments will be used to further refine the "Proposed Action" and the preliminary alternatives, to possibly identify additional alternatives, and to finalize the AMS and the "Need for Change."

7. Status of the Jefferson, George Washington, and Nantahala-Pisgah National Forests

The Jefferson National Forest, which is also currently working on its Revised

LRMP, previously issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its Revised LRMP on June 28, 1993. A Revised NOI for the Forest will be issued between October 1995 and January 1996, to coincide with the NOIs issued for the other National Forests in the Southern Appalachians.

The George Washington National Forest completed its Final Revised Forest Plan on January 21, 1993, and the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forests completed a significant amendment, Amendment 5 to their Land and Resource Management Plan on March 18, 1994. These two forests are not currently involved in the revision process. However, if information from the Southern Appalachian Assessment identifies conditions requiring additions or changes to these plans to ensure consistency between the National Forests in the Southern Appalachians, then amendments to these plans could be considered.

8. The Responsible Official

The Responsible Official for the Revised Land and Resource Management Plans for the National Forests in the Southern Appalachians is Robert C. Joslin, Regional Forester, Southern Region, 1720 Peachtree Road NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30367.

Dated: January 18, 1995.

Lynn C. Neff,

Acting Regional Forester.

[FR Doc. 95-4570 Filed 2-23-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Forest Products Laboratory Wood Utilization Research

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin, will host a meeting March 27-30, 1995, to brief industry and the public on Forest Service programs in wood utilization research. The Forest Service will be presenting the status and description of pending research initiatives and programs. Advice and recommendations to the Forest Service will not be solicited or accepted during the meeting; rather, input as a result of reviews may be submitted in writing after the meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held March 27-30, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (M-Tu); 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. (W); 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. (Th).

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, Wisconsin.

Send written comments to Diann L. Campbell, Meeting Coordinator, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53705-2398.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diann Campbell, telephone: (608) 231-9244.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service conducts major research in the area of wood utilization at its Forest Experiment Stations and in Madison at the Forest Products Laboratory. Current research programs focus on: Wood properties, engineering, and improved design procedures; softwood and hardwood lumber; construction technologies; wood drying, processing, preservation, and finishing; adhesives; composites and panels. Forest Service scientists will provide presentations on research at the forefront of wood manufacturing and utilization technology. Members of the American Forest & Paper Association, Committee on Research and Evaluation (AF&PA-CORE) will chair panel discussions on nine selected topics related to wood utilization.

Dated: February 17, 1995.

Kenneth R. Peterson,
Deputy Director.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

Changes in Hydric Soils of the United States

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of change.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 7 CFR 12.30(a)(4), Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service), United States Department of Agriculture gives notice of a change in the wording of the criteria used to generate the list of hydric soils of the United States as published in the third edition of Hydric Soils of the United States, Miscellaneous Publication 1491, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, June 1991.

For further information contact: Craig A. Ditzler, Chair, National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils, National Soil Survey Center, NRCS, Room 152, Mail Stop 33, Federal Building, 100 Centennial Mall North, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-3866, Telephone (402) 437-5353.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The list of hydric soils was created by computer

using criteria that were developed by the National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils. The criteria are selected soil properties that are documented in Soil Taxonomy and were designed primarily to generate a list of hydric soils from the national database of Soil Interpretations Records. Criteria 1, 3, and 4 serve as both database criteria and as indicators for identification of hydric soils. Criterion 2 serves only to retrieve soils from the database.

The wording of criterion 2 has been changed to incorporate recent changes in Soil Taxonomy and delete references to water-table frequency and duration. Until all soils have been reclassified, the computer program will continue to select soils under their former classification. The water-table frequency and duration data are not contained on the Soil Interpretations Records and, therefore, were not selection criteria.

The wording of criterion 2 also has been changed to clarify the way in which water-table data were used to select soils from the Soil Interpretations Records database. Because the water-table depths on the Soil Interpretations Records are entered in 0.5 ft. increments, previous versions of criterion 2 used water tables at less than 0.5, 1.0, and 1.5 ft. in order to extract hydric soils from the database with actual recorded water tables of 0.0, 0.5, and 1.0 ft.

It is important to note that these changes do not cause any soils to be added or deleted from the list.

Criteria for Hydric Soils

1. All Histosols except Folists, or
2. Soils in Aquic suborders, great groups, or subgroups, Albolls suborder, Aquisalids, Pachic subgroups, or Cumulic subgroups that are:
 - a. somewhat poorly drained with a water table equal to 0.0 foot (ft) from the surface during the growing season, or
 - b. poorly drained or very poorly drained and have either:
 - (1) water table equal to 0.0 ft. during the growing season if textures are coarse sand, sand, or fine sand in all layers within 20 inches (in), or for other soils, or
 - (2) water table at less than or equal to 0.5 ft. from the surface during the growing season if permeability is equal to or greater than 6.0 in/hour (h) in all layers within 20 in, or
 - (3) water table at less than or equal to 1.0 ft. from the surface during the growing season, if permeability is less than 6.0 in/h in any layer within 20 in, or
3. Soils that are frequently ponded for long duration or very long duration during the growing season, or

4. Soils that are frequently flooded for long duration or very long duration during the growing season.

Dated: January 26, 1995.

Richard W. Arnold,

Director, Soils Division.

[FR Doc. 95-4604 Filed 2-23-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-M

Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service

Inviting Applications for Rural Technology Development Grants

AGENCY: Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service (RBCDS) announces the availability of approximately \$1.75 million in competing Rural Technology Development Grant (RTDG) funds for fiscal year (FY) 1995. The intended effect of this notice is to solicit applications for FY 1995, notify applicants of RBCD's objectives for FY 1995, and award grants before May 25, 1995. The purpose of the grant program is to establish and operate centers for rural technology or cooperative development.

DATES: The deadlines for receipt of a preapplication is April 10, 1995. Preapplication received after the date will not be considered for FY 1995 funding.

ADDRESSES: Entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact Rural Economic and Community Development (RECD) State Offices to receive further information and copies of the preapplication package. The program will be operated by RECD at the State level.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Barton, Loan Specialist, Community Facilities Division, Room 6304, South Agriculture Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-0700, Telephone: (202) 720-1504.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Refer to 7 CFR part 4284-F, published in the **Federal Register** on August 12, 1994 (59 FR 41429) for the information collection requirements of the RTDG program. The RTDG program was previously administered by the former Rural Development Administration. Under the reorganization of the Department of Agriculture, the responsibility for administering this program was transferred to RBCDS. Part 4284-F of title 7 of the Code of Federal