

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

White Pine Creek EIS, Vegetation Management Analysis; Clearwater National Forest, Benewah and Latah Counties, Idaho

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Clearwater National Forest, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose effects of alternative decisions it may make to manage vegetation, restore watersheds, and analyze access management in the vicinity of White Pine, Blakes Fork and Meadow Creek drainages. The area is located approximately 25 miles northeast of the town of Potlatch Idaho, near North-South Ski Bowl. The purpose of the project is to implement the Clearwater Forest Plan within the context of ecosystem management principles; conserve biological diversity and integrity; restore fire's role within fire dependent communities; reduce the chance of spread of large fires; and, provide timber from suitable lands in response to human demands for wood products.

This project will tier to the Clearwater National Forest Environmental Impact Statement Land and Resource Management Plan and Forest Plan (1987), which provides overall guidance of land management activities on the Clearwater National Forest. Analysis will also be conducted in compliance with the Stipulation of Dismissal agreed to in the settlement of the lawsuit between the Forest Service and the Sierra Club, et. al. (Signed September 13, 1993).

The agency invites written comments and suggestions on the issues and

management opportunities for the area being analyzed.

DATES: Written comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received on or before May 22, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Carmine Lockwood, District Ranger, Palouse Ranger District, Route 2, Box 4, Potlatch, Idaho 83855.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Lay, Team Leader, at the same address, (208) 875-1131.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed action is designed to restore terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem health and to provide benefits to people within the capabilities of ecosystems. A significant factor in the decline of the health of the White Pine Creek project area ecosystem is the reduction of western white pine abundance caused by white pine blister rust. The blister rust has created large areas with heavy concentrations of standing dead and down fuels. Vegetation treatments designed to reintroduce western white pine in the forest cover type will be analyzed. Regeneration and intermediate harvest treatments intended to improve the structure composition and function of the forest matrix will be analyzed, along with the use of prescribed fire and mechanical methods to treat excessive fuel loadings. Intermediate treatments will be designed to improve forest health conditions by treating overstocked stressed sites while maintaining desirable seral species such as western white pine, ponderosa pine and western larch. These overstocked stands are highly susceptible to root rot pathogens, bark beetles, defoliators, and dwarf mistletoe. Restoration of the aquatic component will focus on eliminating sediment delivery sources to aquatic and riparian habitats, as well as improving the structural components in riparian areas by installing large woody debris where it is lacking. Other fish habitat improvement projects are also included in this analysis.

The Clearwater National Forest Plan provides guidance to management activities within the potentially affected area through its goals, objectives, standards and guidelines, and management direction. The areas of proposed timber harvest and reforestation would occur only on suitable timber land, Management Areas E1, A4, A5 and M2. Below is a brief

description of applicable management direction.

Management Area E1—Timber Management—Provide optimum sustained production of timber products in a cost effective manner while protecting soil and water quality.

Management Area A4—Visual Travel Corridor—Maintain or enhance an aesthetically pleasing, natural appearing Forest setting surrounding designated roads, trails, and other areas considered important for recreational travel use.

Management Area M5—Developed Recreation Sites—Manage developed recreation sites to meet public demands for facilities for camping and picnicking.

Management Area M2—Riparian Areas—Manage as areas of special consideration with distinctive values, and integrate with adjacent management areas to the extent that water and other riparian resources are protected.

The White Pine Creek study area lies along the divide between the Palouse River drainage and the Spokane River drainage. It is a roaded area with intermingled ownership on the interface between forest and farmland in the panhandle of Idaho. The planning area consists of approximately 8,000 acres located in T.42N., R.3W, T.43N., R3W., and T.44N., R.3W. The decision to be made is what, if anything, should be done in the White Pine Creek project area to (1) Restore terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem components, (2) provide multiple benefits to people within the capabilities of ecosystems. An environmental assessment for the White Pine Creek project area was prepared in 1994, and a Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact was signed in July of 1994. This Decision was appealed and reversed back to the District in October of 1994 with instructions to prepare an EIS if the project were to proceed. The recommendations included in the reversal related to: (a) cumulative effects for water and wildlife, (b) old growth, and (c) range of alternatives considered. All of these issues will be analyzed in the proposed EIS with an ecosystem management approach.

Public participation will be fully incorporated into preparation of the EIS. The first step is the scoping process, during which the Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, and local

agencies, the Nez Perce and Coeur D'Alene Tribes, and other individuals or groups who may be interested or affected by the proposed action. This information will be used in preparing the EIS. Interested individuals and organizations should contact the Palouse Ranger District and request to be placed on the project mailing list. Those doing so will receive future newsletters related to this project and notification of public meetings. Scoping will include: inviting participation, determining the project's scope and potential issues, eliminating from detailed study those issues which are not significant, and determining potential cooperating agencies and task assignments. The public will also be invited to participate in developing alternatives, and identifying and/or reviewing the potential environmental effects of the proposed action and its alternatives.

Public meetings will be held in the Potlatch Idaho area in the spring of 1995. Field trips will also be available if the public requests them. The exact dates and locations of these meetings will be published in local newspapers at least two weeks in advance.

Preliminary issues highlight the need to maintain biodiversity and biological integrity by providing habitat for a broad range of terrestrial and aquatic species. Management activities, primarily logging and road building and the introduction of white pine blister rust, have changed some of the natural disturbance processes such as insect and disease outbreaks and have altered the ecosystem composition, structure, and resiliency in the White Pine Creek project area. Management activities have affected the function and productivity of some riparian systems in the Meadow Creek area.

Aquatic ecosystem issues include sediment, temperature and peak flows. Human needs and desires and their effects on the ecosystem will also be a driving factor in the formulation of issues. The need for shelter, employment, aesthetics, recreation, cultural, and spiritual revitalization all play a major role in the forest ecosystem. The direct, indirect, cumulative, short-term, and long-term, aspects of impacts on national forest lands and resources, and those of connected or related effects off-site, will be fully disclosed.

Preliminary alternatives will likely include a range from a more passive approach of managing non-consumptive uses to a more active consumptive use approach to meet social demands. All alternatives will focus on maintaining or restoring ecological functions. This will

involve proposals with and without roads, different intensities and types of timber harvest, and various approaches to access management including motorized and non-motorized recreation. Most action alternatives will analyze riparian and aquatic habitat improvement.

Permits and licenses required to implement the proposed action may include the following: consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for compliance with Section 7 of the Threatened & Endangered Species Act; a permit from the Idaho Department of Water Resources for water removal for dust abatement; and clearance from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office.

The Forest Service predicts the Draft EIS will be filed in August of 1995 and the Final EIS in December of 1995.

The Forest Service will seek comments on the Draft EIS for a period of 45 days after its publication. Comments will then be summarized and responded to in the Final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action or the effects disclosure, comments on the DEIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the Draft EIS. Comments may also address the adequacy of the DEIS 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.)

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 DEIS's 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 final EIS 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 EIS.

As Forest Supervisor, I am the Responsible Official for this project. My address is Clearwater National Forest, 12730 U.S. Highway 12, Orofino, ID 83544 (208-476-4541).

Dated: March 28, 1995.

James L. Caswell,

Forest Supervisor.

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BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

ADAAG Review Advisory Committee; Meeting

AGENCY: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) gives notice, as required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. 2), of the dates and location of the meetings of its ADAAG Review Advisory Committee.

DATES: The ADAAG Review Advisory Committee will meet on April 26, 27, 28, and 29, 1995. The schedule of events is as follows:

Wednesday, April 26, 1995

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.—Communications Subcommittee
4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.—Editorial Subcommittee

Thursday, April 27, 1995

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.—Plumbing Subcommittee
4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.—Accessible Routes Subcommittee

Friday, April 28, 1995

9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.—Accessible Routes Subcommittee
12 Noon-6:00 p.m.—Special Occupancies Subcommittee

Saturday, April 29, 1995

9:00 a.m.-12 Noon—Full Committee
ADDRESSES: The meetings on April 26, 27, and 28, 1995 will be held at the Paralyzed Veterans of America, 801 18th Street, NW., Washington, DC. The meeting on April 29, 1995 will be held at the Washington Vista Hotel, 1400 M Street, NW., Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the meetings, please contact Marsha Mazz,