

statement is expected to be released in the Fall of 1996. The UCRB final environmental impact statement is scheduled for release in the fall of 1997 (61 FR 47859). The scientific assessment documents and the UCRB EIS are anticipated to include information relevant to the management issues on the Flathead National Forest regarding old growth habitat and associated species.

The purpose of preparing a revised supplemental EIS for the Flathead National Forest LRMP is to amend LRMP goals, objectives and standards, as well as LRMP monitoring requirements, for timber and wildlife pending completion of the UCRB process and revision of the Flathead National Forest LRMP. To avoid confusion with the previous proposed action, the current proposal is labeled as Amendment 21.

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 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). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement 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 environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement 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 environmental impact statement 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.

Dated: November 18, 1996.

Rodd E. Richardson,

*Acting Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 96-30815 Filed 12-3-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 2200-00-M

### Comprehensive Management Plans for the Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Ozark National Forest

**AGENCY:** Forest service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of the availability of comprehensive management plans for Wild and Scenic Rivers.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service, USDA has prepared comprehensive management plans for the following designated Wild and Scenic Rivers located on the Ozark National Forest in Arkansas: Big Piney Creek, Buffalo, Hurricane Creek, Mulberry, North Sylamore Creek, and Richland Creek. These plans may be reviewed at the USDA Forest Service, Southern Regional Office, 1720 Peachtree Road, NW, Atlanta, Georgia and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, 605 West Main, Russellville, Arkansas. Information may be obtained by contacting Richard Bowie, Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, 605 West Main, Box 1008, Russellville, AR 72811-1008, (501) 968-2354.

Dated: November 26, 1996.

R. Gary Pierson,

*Acting Deputy Regional Forester for Natural Resources.*

[FR Doc. 96-30841 Filed 12-3-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

### Rural Telephone Bank, USDA

#### Staff Briefing for the Board of Directors

*Time and Date:* 2 p.m., Tuesday, December 10, 1996.

*Place:* Room 5066, South Building, Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC.

*Status:* Open.

*Matters to be Discussed:* General discussion involving privatization planning; update on legislative issues affecting the Bank and RUS telecommunications loan programs; interest rates for Bank funds advanced during FY 1996; proposed changes to loan policies; and status of State Telecommunications Modernization Plans.

*Action:* Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors.

*Time and Date:* 9 a.m., Wednesday, December 11, 1996.

*Place:* Williamsburg Room, Jamie L. Whitten Building, Department of Agriculture,

1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC.

*Status:* Open.

*Matters to be Considered:* The following matters have been placed on the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting:

1. Call to Order.
2. Report on election results.
3. Swearing in newly elected Board members.
4. Election of Board Officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.
5. Action on Minutes of August 22, 1996, Board Meeting.
6. Report on loans approved fourth quarter of FY 1996.
7. Report on requests for waiver of prepayment premium.
8. Summary of financial activity for fourth quarter FY 1996.
9. Report of ad hoc committee on privatization of the Bank.
10. General discussion regarding proposed changes to loan policies.
11. Consideration of resolutions to replace lost stock certificates.
12. Establish date and location of next regular Board meeting.
13. Adjournment.

*Contact Person for More Information:*

Barbara L. Eddy, Deputy Assistant Governor, Rural Telephone Bank, (202) 720-9554.

Dated: November 27, 1996.

Wally Beyer,

*Governor, Rural Telephone Bank.*

[FR Doc. 96-30863 Filed 12-3-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-M

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 960828234-6331-03]

RIN 0690-AA25

#### Guidelines for Empowerment Contracting

**AGENCY:** Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; extension of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** On September 13, 1996, the Department of Commerce issued proposed Guidelines for Empowerment Contracting and requested public comments to be submitted on or before October 15, 1996, (61 FR 48463). On October 28, 1996, the Department reopened the comment period and extended the deadline for receiving comments to December 1, 1996, (61 FR 55616). Pursuant to public request, this notice serves to extend the deadline for receipt of comments through January 6, 1997.

The guidelines set forth proposed policies and procedures intended to promote economy and efficiency in Federal procurement by granting