

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

Bull Lake Estates Access; Kootenai National Forest, Lincoln County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revised Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (original notice of intent was published February 3, 1995, 60 FR 6692).

SUMMARY: A Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Bull Lake Easement was published in the Federal Register (60 FR 6692) on February 3, 1995. The project analysis was deferred shortly thereafter pending further information on the proposed action. This notice is a revision of the original notice of intent as follows: The proposed action would be to grant an initial easement to the landowner and reconstruct the road to a width of 24 feet. The DEIS is expected to be filed with the EPA and available for public review in the spring of 1997.

The EIS will tier to the Kootenai National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and Final EIS of September 1987, which provides overall guidance for forest management of the area.

DATES: Written comments and suggestions should be received on or before January 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The Responsible Official is Robert L. Schrenk, Forest Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest. Written comments and suggestions concerning the scope of the analysis should be sent to Michael L. Balboni, District Ranger, Three Rivers Ranger District, 1437 N. Hwy 2, Troy, Montana 59935.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact Mark Natale, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Three Rivers Ranger District, 1437 N. Hwy 2, Troy, MT 59935. Phone: (406) 295-4693.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The private land lies on the west side of Bull Lake and vehicle access is via Forest Service road #398 and #8019. A portion of road #8019 is currently closed yearlong to motorized use. The decision area is located within the grizzly bear recovery area within the Cabinet Yaak Ecosystem.

Proposed Action: The Kootenai National Forest is proposing to grant an easement on approximately 1.0 mile of road #398 and 2.0 miles of road #8019 to access a subdivision on private land that has received conditional approval from Lincoln County, Mt. If approved, the road would then be reconstructed to meet current road standards. The roads would be upgraded where needed to provide a 24 ft. driving surface.

The Kootenai Forest Plan provides guidance for management activities within the potentially affected area through its goals, objectives, standards and guidelines, and management area direction. The area of the proposed easement would occur within Management Areas 6 and 11. Road reconstruction would occur in these two management areas. Below is a brief description of the applicable management direction.

Management Area 6—These are recreational areas (campgrounds, boat ramps, picnic areas, etc.). There is no restriction on easements within this management area.

Management Area 11—These are areas of big game winter range that allow for easement while including provisions for scheduling to prevent conflicts during periods of wildlife use.

The EIS will analyze the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of the alternatives. Past, present, and projected activities on both private and National Forest lands will be considered. The EIS will disclose the analysis of site-specific mitigation measures and their effectiveness.

Preliminary Issues: Several preliminary issues of concern have been identified by the Forest Service. These issues are briefly described below:

- How would the proposed action affect the water quality in Bull Lake?
- How would the proposed action affect threatened, endangered and sensitive species in the area?
- How would the proposed action affect big game winter range use?

- How would the proposed action affect dispersed recreation use including effects on cultural resource sites?

Other issues commonly associated with such activities include: effects on soils, old growth and visual resources. This list may be verified, expanded, or modified based on public scoping for this proposal.

Decisions To Be Made: The Kootenai Forest Supervisor will decide the following:

- Whether or not to grant the easement and allow road reconstruction to provide for access to the private land?
- What mitigation measures would be required for protection of National Forest resources?
 - If Forest Plan exception or amendments are necessary to proceed with the proposed action within the decision area?

Public Involvement and Scoping: Public participation is an important part of the analysis process, commencing with the initial scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7). Scoping will take place in December 1996 and January 1997. An Open House will be scheduled in January 1997 in Troy, MT. The public is encouraged to take part in the process. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments and assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in, or affected by, the proposed action. This input will be used in preparation of the draft and final EIS.

The scoping process will include:

- Identifying potential issues.
- Identifying major issues to be analyzed in depth.
- Identify alternatives to the proposed action.
 - Exploring additional alternatives which will be derived from issues recognized during scoping activities.
 - Identifying potential environmental effects of this project and alternatives (i.e. direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).

The analysis will consider a range of alternatives, including the proposed action, no action, and other reasonable action alternatives.

Estimated Dates for Filing: The draft Bull Lake Estates Access EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by April 1997. At that time EPA will publish a

Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in Federal Register. 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. It is very important that those interested in the management of this area participate at that time.

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed by July, 1997. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to 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.

Reviewer's Obligations: The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, 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). Also, environmental objections that could be 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*, 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 for the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider and respond to them in the final EIS.

To be most helpful, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible and may address the adequacy of the statement or the merit of the alternatives discussed. 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.

Responsible Official: Robert L. Schrenk, Forest Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest, 506 US Highway 2 West, Libby, MT 59923 is the Responsible Official. As the Responsible Official I will decide if the proposed project will be implemented. I will document the decision and reasons for the decision in the Record of Decision.

That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations.

Dated: December 5, 1996.
Robert L. Schrenk,
Forest Supervisor.
[FR Doc. 96-31915 Filed 12-16-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Rural Utilities Service

Municipal Interest Rates for the First Quarter of 1997

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.
ACTION: Notice of municipal interest rates on advances from insured electric loans for the first quarter of 1997.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service hereby announces the interest rates for advances on municipal rate loans with interest rate terms beginning during the first calendar quarter of 1997.

DATES: These interest rates are effective for interest rate terms that commence during the period beginning January 1, 1997, and ending March 31, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Dotson, Loan Funds Control Assistant, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, room 2234-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1522, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: 202-720-1928. FAX: 202-720-4120. E-mail: CDotson@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) hereby announces the interest rates on advances made during the first calendar quarter of 1997 for municipal rate electric loans. Pursuant to RUS regulations at 7 CFR 1714.4, each advance of funds on a municipal rate loan shall bear interest at a single rate for each interest rate term. Pursuant to 7 CFR 1714.5, the interest rates on these advances are based on indexes published in the "Bond buyer" for the four weeks prior to the first Friday of the last month before the beginning of the quarter.

In accordance with 7 CFR 1714.5, the interest rates are established as shown in the following table for all interest rate terms that begin at any time during the first calendar quarter of 1997.

Interest rate term ends in (year)	RUS rate (0.000 percent)
2018	5.500
2017	5.500
2016	5.375
2015	5.375
2014	5.375
2013	5.375

Interest rate term ends in (year)	RUS rate (0.000 percent)
2012	5.375
2011	5.250
2010	5.250
2009	5.125
2008	5.000
2007	4.875
2006	4.875
2005	4.750
2004	4.625
2003	4.500
2002	4.500
2001	4.375
2000	4.250
1999	4.125
1998	3.875

Dated: December 10, 1996.
Wally Beyer,
Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.
[FR Doc. 96-31886 Filed 12-16-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3410-15-M

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Hawaii Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 1997, at the Federal Building, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 5311, Honolulu, Hawaii 96850. The purpose of the meeting is to review current civil rights developments in the State, and plan future program activities.

Persons desiring additional information, or planning a presentation to the Committee, should contact Committee Chairperson Oswald Stender, 808-523-6203, or Philip Montez, Director of the Western Regional Office, 213-894-3437 (TDD 213-894-3435). Hearing-impaired persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact the Regional Office at least five (5) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission.

Dated at Washington, DC, December 9, 1996.
Carol-Lee Hurley,
Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.
[FR Doc. 96-31912 Filed 12-16-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 6335-01-P