

discussed in the FEIS, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The decision and rationale for the decision will be documented in a Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to appeal under applicable Forest Service regulations. Notice is hereby given that we are requesting from the Chief of the Forest Service that the proposed 1997 aerial application of herbicides be considered a response to an emergency situation and this component of the Proposed Action should not be subject to a stay as described in 36 CFR 215.10(d).

Dated: December 17, 1996.

Jane Kollmeyer,

*District Ranger, Tally Lake Ranger District,
Flathead National Forest.*

[FR Doc. 96-32480 Filed 12-20-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 0870-00-M

Canal Hoya Timber Sale; Stikine Area Tongass National Forest Petersburg, Alaska; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Canal Hoya Timber Sale on the Wrangell Ranger District.

The proposed action would harvest approximately 20 MMBF of timber on about 1000 acres in both the Canal and Hoya Creek drainages using a variety of harvest methods that leave various densities of trees in harvested areas. Two log transfer sites would be constructed, one near Canal Creek and another east of Hoya Creek. The log transfer sites could utilize a floating, removable structure. Both helicopter and cable log yarding systems would be utilized and depend on approximately 12 miles of road to be constructed in both drainages.

The purpose and need for this project is to provide approximately 20 MMBF of timber from suitable timber lands to assist in providing a continuous wood supply to meet society's needs. Based on Forest Plan direction, a preliminary analysis suggests that timber could be harvested in the project area on up to 1000 acres to provide approximately 20 million board feet using a variety of harvest methods and silvicultural techniques across the landscape that promote industrial wood production and minimize the visibility of harvest units.

The desired landscape condition for this area is a multi-aged, multi-structured forest landscape which meets some of the requirements of wildlife and provides for long-term timber production and scenery. This is

consistent with the Tongass Land Management Plan direction for lands within the project area. Since it is anticipated that a new revision of the Tongass Land Management Plan will be signed during this planning process, we will strive to be consistent with the goals and objectives for the existing plan and the revised plan in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Canal Hoya timber sale.

A range of alternatives to the proposed action will be considered, which will respond in various ways to environmental issues. One of these alternatives will not harvest the area. Other alternatives will consider various levels of harvest in Hoya Creek, Canal Creek or both, along with alternative road locations and mitigation measures.

The decision required to be made is: (1) if, where and how much timber harvest should occur in the Canal Hoya area, and if so, (2) where should road and log transfer facility development occur to facilitate harvest and, (3) what mitigation measures and monitoring will be implemented.

Federal, State, and local agencies, potential contractors, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in, or affected by, the decision are invited to participate in the scoping process. This process will include:

1. Identification of potential issues.
2. Identification of issues to be analyzed in depth.
3. Determination of potential cooperating agencies and assignment of responsibility.
4. Examination of various alternatives.

The Forest Supervisor will hold public meetings during the planning process but these meetings have not been scheduled at this time. There will be frequent correspondence with individual persons who indicate an interest in this project by responding to initial scoping letters and/or the Stikine Area Project Schedule which is published quarterly.

The analysis is expected to take approximately 5 months. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement should be available for public review by April of 1997. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is scheduled to be completed by September 1997.

Abigail R. Kimbell, Forest Supervisor, Stikine Area, Tongass National Forest, is the responsible official.

Written comments, suggestions or questions concerning the analysis and Environmental Impact Statement should be sent to Scott Posner/John Stevens, ID Team Leaders, Wrangell Ranger District, Stikine Area, Tongass National Forest,

P.O. Box 51 Wrangell, Alaska, 99929, phone (907) 874-2323.

Dated: December 9, 1996.

Abigail R. Kimbell,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 96-32453 Filed 12-20-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Maximum Portion of Guarantee Authority Available for Fiscal Year 1996-97

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As set forth in the final rule under 7 CFR subpart B of part 4279, effective on December 23, 1996, each fiscal year the Agency shall establish a limit on the maximum portion of guarantee authority available for that fiscal year that may be used to guarantee loans with a guarantee fee of 1 percent and/or guaranteed loans with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent.

Allowing the guarantee fee to be reduced to 1 percent and/or exceeding the 80 percent guarantee on certain guaranteed loans that meet the conditions set forth in subpart B of part 4279 will allow for the targeting of projects in rural communities that remain persistently poor, experience long-term population decline and job deterioration, and other related criteria.

Not more than 7 percent of the Agency guarantee authority will be reserved for loan requests with a guarantee fee of 1 percent, and not more than 15 percent of the Agency guarantee authority will be reserved for guaranteed loan requests with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent. Once the above quarterly limits have been reached, all additional loans guaranteed during the remainder of that quarter will require a 2 percent guarantee fee and not exceed an 80 percent guarantee limit.

Written requests by the Rural Development State Office for approval of a guaranteed loan with a 1 percent guarantee fee and/or a guaranteed loan exceeding 80 percent must be forwarded to the National Office, Attn: Director, Business Programs Processing Division, for review and consideration prior to obligation of the guaranteed loan. The Administrator will provide a written response to the State Office confirming approval or disapproval of the request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth E. Hennings, Senior Loan Specialist, Business Programs

Processing Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, Stop 3221, Washington, DC 20250-3221, telephone (202) 690-3809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866.

Dated: December 13, 1996.

Wilbur T. Peer,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-32171 Filed 12-20-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Minority Business Development Agency; Notice

AGENCY: Minority Business Development Agency, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; solicitation of business development center applications for Baltimore.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Executive Order 11625 and 15 U.S.C. 1512, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is soliciting competitive applications to operate its Baltimore, Maryland Minority Business Development Center (MBDC).

The purpose of the MBDC Program is to provide business development assistance to persons who are members of groups determined by MBDA to be socially or economically disadvantaged, and to business concerns owned and controlled by such individuals. To this end, MBDA funds organizations to identify and coordinate public and private sector resources on behalf of minority individuals and firms; to offer a full range of client services to minority entrepreneurs; and to serve as a conduit of information and assistance regarding minority business.

In accordance with the Interim Final Policy published in the Federal Register on May 31, 1996, the cost-share requirement for the MBDC in this notice has been increased to 40%. The Department of Commerce will fund up to 60% of the total cost of operating an MBDC on an annual basis. The MBDC operator is required to contribute at least 40% of the total project cost (the "cost-share requirement"). Cost-sharing contributions may be in the form of cash, client fees, third party in-kind contributions, non-cash applicant contributions or combinations thereof. In addition to the traditional sources of an MBDC's cost-share contribution, the 40% may be contributed by local, state and private sector organizations. It is anticipated that some organizations may

apply jointly for an award to operate the center. For administrative purposes, one organization must be designated as the recipient organization.

The MBDC will provide service in the Baltimore, Maryland Metropolitan Area. The award number of the MBDC will be 03-10-97004-01.

DATES: The closing date for applications is February 18, 1997. Applications **MUST** be received in the MBDA Headquarters' Executive Secretariat on or before February 18, 1997.

PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE: A pre-application conference will be held. For the exact date, time and location, contact the New York Regional Office at (212) 264-3262. **PROPER IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED FOR ENTRANCE INTO ANY FEDERAL BUILDING.**

ADDRESSES: Completed application packages should be submitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency, MBDA Executive Secretariat, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 5073, Washington, DC 20230, Telephone Number: (202) 482-3763.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND AN APPLICATION PACKAGE, PLEASE CONTACT: Heyward Davenport, Regional Director at (212) 264-3262.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Contingent upon the availability of Federal funds, the cost of performance for the first budget period (13 months) from May 1, 1997 to May 31, 1998, is estimated at \$403,200. The total Federal amount is \$241,920 and is composed of \$236,160 plus the Audit Fee amount of \$5,760. The application must include a minimum cost share of 40%, \$161,280 in non-federal (cost-sharing) contributions for a total project cost of \$403,200.

The funding instrument for this project will be a cooperative agreement. If the recommended applicant is the current incumbent organization, the award will be for 12 months. For those applicants who are not incumbent organizations or who are incumbents that have experienced closure due to a break in service, a 30-day start-up period will be added to their first budget period, making it a 13-month award. Competition is open to individuals, non-profit and for-profit organizations, state and local governments, American Indian tribes and educational institutions.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria: the knowledge, background and/or capabilities of the firm and its staff in addressing the needs of the business community in general and, specifically, the special needs of

minority businesses, individuals and organizations (45 points), the resources available to the firm in providing business development services (10 points); the firm's approach (techniques and methodologies) to performing the work requirements included in the application (25 points); and the firm's estimated cost for providing such assistance (20 points). In accordance with Interim Final Policy published in the Federal Register on May 31, 1996, the scoring system will be revised to add ten (10) bonus points to the application of community-based organizations. Each qualifying application will receive the full ten points. Community-based applicant organizations are those organizations whose headquarters and/or principal place of business within the last five years have been located within the geographic service area designated in the solicitation for the award. Where an applicant organization has been in existence for fewer than five years or has been present in the geographic service area for fewer than five years, the individual years of experience of the applicant organization's principals may be applied toward the requirement of five years of organization experience. The individual years of experience must have been acquired in the geographic service area which is the subject of the solicitation. An application must receive at least 70% of the points assigned to each evaluation criteria category to be considered programmatically acceptable and responsive. Those applications determined to be acceptable and responsive will then be evaluated by the Director of MBDA. Final award selections shall be based on the number of points received, the demonstrated responsibility of the applicant, and the determination of those most likely to further the purpose of the MBDA program. Negative audit findings and recommendations and unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for award. The applicant with the highest point score will not necessarily receive the award. Periodic reviews culminating in year-to-date evaluations will be conducted to determine if funding for the project should continue. Continued funding will be at the total discretion of MBDA based on such factors as the MBDC's performance, the availability of funds and Agency priorities.

The MBDC shall be required to contribute at least 40% of the total project cost through non-Federal contributions. To assist in this effort, the