

*Estimate of Burden:* The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .2596531 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Meat and poultry establishments.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 7,374.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 62.153919.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 119,005 hours.

Copies of this information collection assessment and comments can be obtained from Lee Puricelli, Paperwork Specialist, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, 300 12th Street SW, Room 109, Washington, DC 20250-3700, (202) 720-0346.

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of FSIS's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of FSIS' estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques, or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: November 10, 1997.

**Thomas J. Billy,**  
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 97-30320 Filed 11-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Expansion of the Bill Williams Ski Area

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Expansion of the Bill Williams Mountain Ski Area.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA, FS), Region 3, Kaibab National Forest, announces its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

pursuant to Sec. 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Quality requirements for implementing NEPA. This Environmental Impact Statement will evaluate potential impacts from expanding the Bill Williams Mountain Ski area, Coconino County, Arizona. The USDA, FS invites the general public, local governments, Indian tribes, other Federal agencies, and states to submit written comments or suggestions concerning the scope of the issues to be addressed, alternatives to be analyzed, and the environmental impacts and cultural impacts to be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The public is invited to participate in scoping activities including an open house in which comments and suggestions will be received. Oral and written comments will be considered equally in preparation of the DEIS.

**DATES:** All comments must be received or postmarked by December 22, 1997, to be considered in the preparation of the DEIS. To the extent practicable, the USDA, FS will consider comments received or postmarked after the deadline. An open house will be conducted at the Williams Holiday Inn (950 N. Grand Canyon Blvd., Williams, AZ) on December 4, 1997, between 4:30 and 8:00 P.M. The date, time, and specific location of the scoping meeting will be announced at least 15 days before the meeting in the local media.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Please direct written comments/suggestions on the scope of the DEIS or questions concerning the project to: Teri Cleeland at USDA, FS Williams/Chalander Ranger District, 501 W. Route 66, Williams, AZ 86046, 520/635-2676 or Dave Brewer at Kaibab National Forest, 800 S. 6th St., Williams, AZ 86046, 520/635-8331.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Purpose and Need:* The proposed ski expansion area is located in the Kaibab National Forest approximately four miles south of Williams, Arizona on Bill Williams Mountain. A comparison of the existing and desired conditions for this management area outlined in the Kaibab National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan indicates a need to improve not only the existing ski facilities but also expand on the 16 acres of the skiable terrain to promote a quality alpine skiing experience. The current vertical drop, ski run length, and ski run configuration do not provide for a good cross-section for the various experience levels of skiers. Provision of higher elevation runs and snowmaking will increase the season of

use through enhanced snow cover on runs.

The proposed expansion of the Bill Williams Ski Area will satisfy the following needs:

- improve the quality of recreation experience in the Williams area,
- diversify the local economic base for the City of Williams
- increase skier capacity to accommodate unmet skier demand in the region,
- provide better and more consistent skiing conditions by increasing reliability of skiable snow cover, particularly at the beginning of the season when skiing is frequently delayed,
- encourage efficient use of facilities by expanding use into the summer months,
- satisfy Forest Service management objective (see below).

The expansion of the Bill Williams Ski Area will meet the following Forest Service management objectives:

- It is Forest Service policy to provide, under special-use authorization, suitable facilities and services that supplement or complement those provided by the private sector on private lands on National Forest System land to meet public needs. In addition, it is Forest Service policy to facilitate the use, enjoyment, and appreciation of the National Forests in a natural resource setting (FSM 2340.2).
- Update and modify the previous approved Environmental Impact Statement which authorized a new ski area on the north slopes of Bill Williams Mountain (USDA-Kaibab National Forest 1986).
- To provide a diversity of recreation activities that emphasize the forest setting and rustic, natural resource based recreation opportunities (FSM 2343.02).

*Decision to be Made:* Based on public response to the DEIS, a decision will be made regarding expansion of the Bill Williams Ski Area. Possible decisions include the following: 1.) implement the proposed action as defined; 2.) take no action at all; or 3.) take action to some other degree, based on issues generated through public scoping.

*Proposed Action:* The USDA—Kaibab National Forest, proposes to authorize Alpine Recreation Company LLC., to incorporate the existing Bill Williams ski area and construct, operate, and maintain an expansion of current facilities. Under the proposed action, the skiable terrain would increase from 16.4 acres to 62.6 acres. The total number of skiers that could be

accommodated at one time would increase from 250 to 1,130.

Specific expansions proposed by Alpine Recreation include the following: additional ski runs (43 acres); a triple chair lift (approximately 5,600 feet in length); three new handle tows (ranging from 400 to 600 feet in length); a maintenance building (2,400 square feet); construction of a new Top Vista Lodge with composting restrooms (800 square feet); new parking facilities (75,000 square feet); construction of a new bases lodge (4,600 square feet) with additional outside deck seating (2,500 square feet); three new water impoundments (capacity of 24 acre-feet); infrastructure for snowmaking (2,000 subsurface distribution system for snowmaking on 7 acres); a new septic system; a summer trail which would generally follow runs 18, 18A, 12 and 7; a picnic area along the edge of run 12; implementation of a sky ride program during the summer recreation period; and expansion of the permit area from the current 37 acres to approximately 200 acres.

*Preliminary Identification of Environmental and Cultural Issues:* The USDA, FS has identified the following preliminary issues for analysis for alternative actions in the DEIS. Additional issues may be identified as a result of the scoping process. Issues include impacts of the action alternatives on:

- Water quality and quantity,
- Water rights,
- Soil erosion and disturbance,
- Threatened, endangered, and sensitive species and their habitat,
- Visual quality,
- Fire occurrence,
- Cultural resources,
- Traditional uses of the area by American Indians,
- Rights of American Indians for which the area has religious and cultural significance,
- Socioeconomic resources of local communities,
- Demand for additional skiing facilities in Northern Arizona.

*Cooperating Agencies and Groups Involved in the Preparation of the DEIS:* United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Region 3, Kaibab National Forest; Alpine Research Company, LLC., and SWCA, Inc., Environmental Consultants.

Dated: November 12, 1997.

**Bruce J. Higgins,**

*Acting Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 97-30326 Filed 11-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

#### Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

**AGENCIES:** Rural Housing Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Proposed collection: comments request.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Housing Service (RHS) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of compliance with applicable acts for planning and performing site and other development work.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by January 20, 1998 to be assured consideration.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Samuel J. Hodges III, Architect, Program Support Staff, RHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 0761, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-0761, Telephone (202) 720-9653.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* 7 CFR 1924 Subpart C, "Planning and Performing Site Development Work."

*OMB Number:* 0575-0164.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* January 31, 1998.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved information collection.

*Abstract:* The information collection under OMB Number 0575-0042 enables RHS to effectively administer the policies, methods and responsibilities in planning and performing site development work for the related construction programs.

Section 501 of Title V of the Housing Act of 1949, as amended, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to extend financial assistance to construct, improve, repair, replace or rehabilitate dwellings, farm buildings and/or related facilities to provide decent, safe and sanitary living conditions and adequate farm buildings and other structures in rural areas.

The Agency makes direct and guaranteed loans to applicants of up to 100 percent of the appraised value of the property, therefore, the site and its development are an integral part of the building construction and related facilities being financed. The information collection required by this regulation is necessary to assure orderly

development of rural areas leading to economically stable communities that consider the impact of the environment and protection of the borrower and Government security interests.

Other information collection is required to conform to numerous Public Laws applying to all federal agencies, such as: Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, Historic Preservation Act, Environmental Policy Act; and to conform to Executive Orders governing use of federal funds. This information is cleared through the appropriate enforcing Agency or other executive Department.

The Agency provides forms and/or guidelines to assist in the collection and submission of information. The information is usually submitted via hand delivery or U.S. Postal Service to the appropriate Agency office.

The information is used by the Agency to determine whether a loan can be approved, to ensure that the Agency has adequate security for the loans financed, to provide for sound construction and site development work and to determine that the requirements of the applicable Acts have been met. The information is also used to monitor compliance with the terms and conditions of the Agency loans and to monitor the prudent use of federal funds.

If the information were not collected and submitted, the Agency would not have control over the type and quality of construction and site development work planned and performed with federal funds. The Agency would not be assured that the security provided for loans is adequate, nor would the Agency be certain that decent, safe and sanitary dwelling or other adequate structures were being provided to rural residents as required by the different Acts.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.138 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Individuals or households, business or other for-profit, non-profit institutions, and small businesses or organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 30,000.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.5.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 6210 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Renita Bolden, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 690-1766.

#### Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information