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

Dated: December 15, 1997.

Robert C. Keeney,

Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

[FR Doc. 97–33166 Filed 12–18–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Consumer Service [1]

Food Stamp Program: Quality Control Provisions of the Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act

AGENCY: Food and Consumer Service, USDA.

ACTION: Request for comments on proposed collection of information.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this action invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on proposed information collections. Requirements in changes to the Food Stamp Program regulations based on the Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act are the basis for information collection in the areas of arbitration and good cause. This action revises the information collection burden that currently includes the Quality Control (QC) sampling plan by adding to it the burdens for the QC arbitration and good cause processes. While these processes have existed since 1981, they have not been included in the burden previously. A notice for the development of the QC sampling plan, as required by Food Stamp Program regulations, was published March 4, 1997 and has been approved through July 31, 2000. The Department of Agriculture published a final rule on June 2, 1997, entitled Food Stamp Program: Quality Control Provisions of the Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act, which implements changes to the arbitration and good cause processes.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before February 17, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments and requests for copies of this information collection to: Retha Oliver, Chief, Quality Control Branch, Program Accountability Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's 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 the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this action will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record. The Food and Consumer Service (FCS) will publish a document in the rules section of the **Federal Register** announcing the effective and implementation dates of the provisions contained in 7 CFR §§ 275.3(c)(4) and 275.23(e)(7) of the Leland Rule after the approval of the provisions by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Retha Oliver, (703) 305–2474.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Food Stamp Program Regulations, Part 275—Quality Control.

OMB Number: 0584–0303.

Expiration Date: July 31, 2000.

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved collection of information.

Abstract: Pursuant to Section 13951 of the Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act (Pub. L. 103–66), the final rule entitled Quality Control Provisions of the Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act, (''The ''Leland Rule''), published June 2, 1997 (62 FR 29652), contains information collections which are subject to review by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3507). The reporting and recordkeeping burden associated with the Food Stamp Program QC sampling plan is approved through July 31, 2000, under OMB No. 0584–0303. This notice proposes to add the burdens for the QC arbitration and good cause processes to the burden that currently includes the QC sampling plan. The burden approved for the QC sampling plan is 266 hours per year. The annual burdens associated with the QC arbitration and good cause processes are estimated to total 1647 and 1917 respectively. The total annual burden for the QC sampling plan, arbitration and good cause processes is estimated to be 3630 hours. The increase of 3564 hours is solely the result of adding the arbitration and good cause processes to the burden.

The QC system contains procedures for resolving differences in review findings between State agencies and FNS. This is referred to as the arbitration process. The QC system also contains procedures which provide relief for State agencies from all or a part of a QC liability when a State agency can demonstrate that a part or all of an excessive error rate was due to an unusual event which had an uncontrollable impact on the State agency's payment error rate. In the past, information collections associated with the QC arbitration or good cause processes have not been included in the reporting and recordkeeping burden. However, since the good cause and arbitration processes have been implemented since 1981, in practice State agencies will not notice an actual increase in burden from current practice.

Quality Control Burden Associated With the Sampling Plan, Arbitration, and Good Cause

1. Sampling Plan

Affected Public: State agencies.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 53.

Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Time Per Response: 5.0236 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 266.

2. Arbitration Process

Affected Public: State agencies.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 53.

Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent: 3.1.

Estimated Time Per Response: 10.0236 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 1647.

3. Good Cause Process

Affected Public: State agencies.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 53.

Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent: 0.226.

Estimated Time Per Response: 160 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 1917.

4. Combined Quality Control Burden Associated With the Sampling Plan,

[1] The agency name of the Food and Consumer Service was changed to the Food and Nutrition Service by order of the Secretary of Agriculture on November 25, 1997.

Arbitration and Good Cause: 3830 hours.

Dated: December 15, 1997.

Yvette S. Jackson,

Administrator, Food and Consumer Service.

[FR Doc. 97–33190 Filed 12–18–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–30–U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Fatty-Piper Access Requests Project, Flathead National Forest, Swan Lake Ranger District, Lake County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Flathead National Forest, Swan Lake Ranger District, will prepare an environmental impact statement on a proposal to grant easements and authorize construction of roads across National Forest System lands in the Cedar Creek, Fatty Creek, and Piper Creek watersheds. The action is proposed in response to an applicant seeking permanent, roaded access to approximately 1,760 acres of non-federal land located within the Flathead National Forest boundary. The requested easements are located roughly 20 miles south of Swan Lake, Montana. The non-federal land to be accessed is located in sections 9, 15, and 23, Township 22 North, Range 18 West and section 35, Township 23 North, Range 18 West, Lake County, Montana. The easements are requested on National Forest System lands in sections 4, 10, and 14, Township 22 North, Range 18 West and section 34, Township 23 North, Range 18 West. The proposed project will be in compliance with the direction in the Flathead National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (December, 1985), which provides the overall guidance for management of the area. The agency gives written notice of this analysis so that interested and affected people are aware of how they may participate and contribute to the final decision.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing at the address shown below by January 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Charles E. Harris, District Ranger, Swan Lake Ranger District, 200 Ranger Station Road, Bigfork, Montana 59911.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions about this environmental impact statement should be directed to Dennis McCarthy, Planning Team Leader, Swan Lake Ranger District, 200 Ranger Station Road, Bigfork, Montana 59911; phone (406) 837–7500.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Swan Lake Ranger District is initiating this action in response to four applications filed by Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P. (Plum Creek). Plum Creek requested rights-of-way across Forest Service lands for the purpose of establishing permanent, roaded access to approximately 1,760 acres in four sections of Plum Creek land. The applications involve requests for five segments of road totaling approximately three miles across Forest Service land. Plum Creek has stated that it intends to manage these sections of land for long-term timber production using conventional ground-based logging systems and build roads on the permitted rights-of-way, sufficient to support timber production.

Plum Creek has no roaded access to two of the sections of land, which are surrounded by National Forest System lands. Plum Creek has limited access to the other two sections and has requested additional roaded access to them. Plum Creek seeks permanent, roaded access pursuant to federal regulations at 36 CFR part 251 (subpart D—Access to Non-Federal Lands), 36 CFR part 212 (Ingress and Egress) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and its implementing regulations.

Swan Lake Ranger District personnel invited comments on the environmental analysis for this project in September, 1996, by sending a scoping notice to people on the District's mailing list. Subsequently, District personnel determined that they should prepare an environmental impact statement. The comments received in response to the September, 1996 scoping will be taken into consideration along with comments received on the draft environmental impact statement. Some of the issues identified include impacts to: Water quality; soils and slope stability; air quality; proximity to the Mission Mountains Wilderness; threatened, endangered, and sensitive animal, plant, and fish species and habitat (i.e., grizzly bear, bull trout, water howellia); old-growth forests; roadless area; and recreational experiences.

Swan Lake Ranger District personnel 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 actions. The scoping period for the draft environmental impact statement will extend to January 23, 1998. This information will be used in preparation of the draft environmental impact statement.

The draft environmental impact statement will be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and will be made available for public review in February, 1998. At that time, copies of the draft environmental impact statement will be distributed to interested and affected agencies, organizations, and members of the public for their review and comment. The Environmental Protection Agency will publish a notice of availability of the draft environmental impact statement in the **Federal Register**. The comment period will be no less than 45 days from the date that appears in the **Federal Register**.

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 Corporation* 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. *City of Angoon* v. *Hodel,* 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (8th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc.* v. *Harris,* 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wisconsin, 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 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 environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages of chapters 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.