

Dated: August 28, 1998.

**Enrique E. Figueroa,**

*Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee Meeting Notice

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, September 17, 1998, in Stevenson, Washington, at the Rock Creek Center (Rock Creek Drive) in the auditorium. The meeting will begin in 10 a.m. and continue until 5 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information on (1) the Status of Watersheds on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, (2) Social and Economic Factors, and (3) Public Open Forum. All Southwest Washington Provincial Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. The "open forum" provides opportunity for the public to bring issues, concerns, and discussion topics to the Advisory Committee. The "open forum" is scheduled as part of agenda item (3) for this meeting. Interested speakers will need to register prior to the open forum period. The committee welcomes the public's written comments or committee business at any time.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Direct questions regarding this meeting to Linda Turner, Public Affairs Specialist, at (360) 891-5195, or write Forest Headquarters Office, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, 10600 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver, WA 98682.

Dated: August 27, 1998.

**Thomas Mulder,**

*Administrative Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Northern Goshawk Habitat Management

**ACTION:** Proposal to prepare interim direction for Northern Goshawk habitat

management in the Intermountain Region, (R4) U.S. Forest Service.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Regional Forester (R4), in cooperation with Bureau of Land Management and the USDI-Fish and Wildlife Service, is reviewing Utah state-wide information (Habitat Assessment and Management Recommendations for the Northern Goshawk in the State of Utah (in press) and USDI-FWS 12-month finding on a petition to list the northern goshawk (FR, June 29, 1998, Volume 63, Number 124, pages 35183 to 35184)) relating to the sustainability of habitat for the northern goshawk. A Conservation Strategy and Agreement for the Management of Northern Goshawk Habitat in Utah is being developed based on the Assessment. The Forest Service is proposing to amend regional direction, Regional Guides, and Forest Plans to incorporate interim direction in the form of goals and objectives, desired habitat conditions, standards and guidelines, and monitoring requirements based on the information in the Assessment and the Strategy. The interim direction will apply to National Forest System Lands throughout Utah.

The purpose and need for the proposed action is to provide state-wide consistency in future project design, implementation and monitoring that will insure long-term goshawk habitat sustainability throughout the state of Utah. The proposed amendment to the Regional Guide and six national forests in Utah would be prospective only, and would not apply to projects that have been approved prior to the effective date of the amendments. This action will provide interim direction to protect habitat and populations of northern goshawks until existing forest plans are revised or suitably amended. Specifically, the proposed action will include National Forest System Lands on the Wasatch-Cache, Uinta, Ashley, Manti-LaSal, Fishlake and Dixie National Forests in the Intermountain Region.

The Forest Service serves notice that the agency is seeking information and comments from federal, state, and local agencies, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested or affected by the proposed action for the sustainability of northern goshawk habitat in Utah. This input will be used in preparing regional direction, Forest Plan amendments and/or Guides, and accompanying environmental analyses.

Written comment should be sent to the agency within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Forest Service, in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 1604 and 36 CFR parts 219 et seq., develops Land and Resource Management Plans to provide for multiple use and sustained yield of products and services including outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish, and wilderness. At its discretion, the Forest Service may amend Regional Guides (36 CFR 219.8) and/or Forest Plans based on the results of monitoring and evaluation (36 CFR 219.10(f), 219.12(k)). Review of research reports, published professional papers and agency assessments indicates that additional long term programmatic habitat management direction may be warranted for the northern goshawk in Utah. This long-term approach is being developed through the Conservation Strategy and Agreement for the Management of Northern Goshawk Habitat in Utah (to be released in the fall of 1998). This interim direction is being proposed to preserve options for long term management that will be developed during Forest Plan revision. Once the conservation strategy is released that information plus the current policy direction to use the 1992 Reynolds et al., report will be used during project level design and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and disclosure of effects.

A range of alternatives will be considered. One of these will be the "no action" alternative in which current management would continue. Other alternatives could examine the effect of varying approaches to the interim direction.

The Forest Service is seeking information and comments from federal, state and local agencies, and other individuals and organizations who may be interested or affected by the proposed action. This information will be used in determining the scope of the amendments to the Regional Guide, direction, and Forest Plans. Prior to completing these amendments, the Forest Service will publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the **Federal Register** to describe the specific proposal and type of NEPA documentation. At the time such a Notice is published, there will be additional opportunities for public comment.

The responsible official will be the Regional Forester for the Intermountain Region; Intermountain Region, Federal Building, 324 25th Street, Ogden, Utah 84401.

The determination of proposed amendments is expected to be completed and available for public review by November 30, 1998. At that time an improved estimate of time for