

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Forest Service

**Lemhi Pass Management Plan, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Beaverhead County, Montana, and Salmon-Challis National Forest, Lemhi County, Idaho**

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement on a proposal to develop recreation facilities at Lemhi Pass, and manage the Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing by October 15, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Dillon Ranger District, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, 420 Barrett St., Dillon, MT 59725.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Katie R. Bump, Lemhi Pass project coordinator, (406) 683-3900.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Lemhi Pass, on the Continental Divide between Idaho and Montana, is a National Historic Landmark, on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. With the approaching bicentennial of Lewis and Clark's expedition (2003-2006), the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Salmon-Challis National Forests are studying ways to preserve the historic, natural landscape of Lemhi Pass, and accommodate increased numbers of visitors. The decision to be made is selection of the facilities and management standards and guidelines appropriate to preserve the historic value of the site in the bicentennial years and for the long term, and accommodate visitors at Lemhi Pass. The general direction for management at Lemhi Pass comes from the two Forest Plans, and from the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Lewis and Clark Trail, developed by the National Park Service; this decision will determine specific management actions at the site.

Scoping will include a public meeting to be held at Lemhi Pass on September 25, 1999, at 10:30 am. The Forests will also use a mailing list of interested parties, and news releases to local media to ensure public involvement. The Forests are working to develop and analyze the effects of a range of alternatives. An initial alternative has been prepared, and is available for public review and comment. This initial alternative addresses proposed facilities

including parking areas, picnic sites, road and trail improvements, and interpretation, along with management standards for the site. Issues that have been identified include protection of the historic values associated with the natural landscape and scenic qualities of the area, accommodation for visitors including physically challenged people, concern for public safety, and effects on the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, Roadless area, recreation opportunities, livestock grazing, wildlife, fisheries and vegetation.

The joint lead agencies are the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Salmon-Challis National Forests, USDA Forest Service. The responsible officials are David Fallis, Dillon District Ranger, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, 420 Barrett St., Dillon, MT 59725, and Richard Ward, Leadore District Ranger, Salmon-Challis National Forest, P.O. Box 180, Leadore, ID 83464. Written comments and suggestions are invited.

The draft EIS is tentatively planned for filing in January 2000, with the final EIS filed by May 2000. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

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 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 draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy 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.).

Dated: September 2, 1999.

**David S. Fallis,**

*District Ranger.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Natural Resources Conservation Service

**BA-3c Naomi Siphon Outfall Management Project/PBA-12a Barataria Bay Waterway West Bank Protection Project; Jefferson and Plaquemines Parishes, LA**

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR part 1500); and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Guidelines (7 CFR part 650); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is not being prepared for the Naomi Siphon Outfall Management Project and the Barataria Bay Waterway East Bank Protection Project, Jefferson and Plaquemines Parishes, Louisiana.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 3737 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302; telephone (318) 473-7751.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The environmental assessment of the federally assisted action indicates that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, has determined that preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is not needed for this project.

The project will evaluate potential impacts attributed to management of the Naomi Siphons outfall and the evaluation of potential impacts attributed to bank protection measures along the east bank of Barataria Bay Waterway. The project area encompasses approximately 26,603 acres of marsh and open water habitat. Project features include the construction of a fixed crested weir with a boat bay on the Goose Bayou Canal, construction of a fixed crested weir with a barge bay on Bayou Dupont Canal, and construction of approximately 17,600 linear feet of rock bankline protection.

The Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency and to various federal, state, and local agencies and