

The proposed action includes approximately 3,700 acres of vegetation treatment (fuels reduction through slashing or tree thinning, prescribed burning, tree harvest along with associated fuels treatments and reforestation activities, and pre-commercial thinning), 70 miles of road reclamation and yearlong closure of other roads, placement of large woody debris in streams, stabilization or removal of several log jams in streams, review and rehabilitation of old skid roads on 20–25 acres, repair of 7 streamside slumps, reconstruction of a trail, construction of a new trailhead facility, and improvement and relocation of 6 miles of a groomed snowmobile trail system.

This EIS will tier to the Flathead National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and EIS of January, 1986, and its subsequent amendments, which provide overall guidance of all land management activities on the Flathead National Forest.

Decision To Be Made

Should the Forest Service implement the proposed action or any action to meet the purpose and need established for the project, or defer any action at this time within the Big Creek watershed? The deciding official for the project is Jimmy DeHerrera, District Ranger, Hungry Horse/Glacier View Ranger Districts, Flathead National Forest.

Preliminary Issue and Alternatives

Preliminary scoping for the Big Creek project was conducted in November, 1999, through an open house and a field trip. The purpose of these public forums was to introduce a preliminary proposal which could be refined based on public comment. A public mailing is planned at the same time this notice of intent is published in the **Federal Register** to present the refined proposed action and purpose and need for the project. Based on public and internal comments, the following issues have emerged:

1. Economic feasibility of some proposed vegetation treatments.
2. Aquatic effects from vegetation treatments.
3. Sediment effect from road reclamation.
4. Effects of road management changes on human access and use of the area.

The interdisciplinary team has not yet developed any alternatives to the proposed action that respond to these issues.

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 Corp 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. *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, 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: February 23, 2000.

Jimmy DeHerrera,

District Ranger.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

[00–A–W]

Designation of Springfield (IL) to provide Class X or Class Y Weighing Services

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: GIPSA announces the designation of Springfield Grain Inspection, Inc. (Springfield), to provide Class X or Class Y weighing services under the United States Grain Standards Act, as amended (Act), in the Springfield geographic area.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2000.

ADDRESSES: USDA, GIPSA, Janet M. Hart, Chief, Review Branch, Compliance Division, STOP 3604, Room 1647–S, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250–3604.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet M. Hart, telephone 202–720–8525.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866 and Departmental Regulation 1512–1; therefore, the Executive Order and Departmental Regulation do not apply to this action.

In the December 1, 1999, **Federal Register** (64 FR 67246), GIPSA announced the designation of Springfield to provide official inspection services under the Act, effective March 1, 2000, and ending December 31, 2002. Subsequently, Springfield asked GIPSA to amend their designation to include official weighing services. Section 7A(c)(2) of the Act authorizes GIPSA's Administrator to designate authority to perform official weighing to an agency providing official inspection services within a specified geographic area, if such agency is qualified under Section 7(f)(1)(A) of the Act. GIPSA evaluated all available information regarding the designation criteria in Section 7(f)(1)(A) of the Act, and determined that Springfield is qualified to provide official weighing services in their currently assigned geographic area.

Effective March 1, 2000, and terminating December 31, 2002 (the end of Springfield's designation to provide official inspection services), Springfield's present designation is amended to include Class X or Class Y weighing within their assigned geographic area, as specified in the July 1, 1999, **Federal Register** (64 FR 35586). Official services may be obtained by contacting Springfield at 217–522–5233.

Authority: Pub. L. 94–582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*).

Dated: February 4, 2000.

Neil E. Porter,

Director, Compliance Division.

[FR Doc. 00–4680 Filed 2–29–00; 8:45 am]

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