

Notices

This section of the **FEDERAL REGISTER** contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Environmental Impact Statements: Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains; Vegetation Management in the Coastal Plain/Piedmont; and Vegetation Management in the Ozark/Ouachita Mountains

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare three supplemental environmental impact statements.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service, Southern Region, will prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for each of the three Vegetation Management EISs: (1) *Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains*; (2) *Vegetation Management in the Coastal Plains/Piedmont*; and (3) *Vegetation Management in the Ozark/Ouachita Mountains* to clarify management requirements contained in each on Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive (PETS) species and to amend the subject Forest Land and Resource Management Plans to clarify the same requirements. The existing requirements for Biological Evaluations (BEs) unnecessarily restrict analysis to population survey information and would require gathering population inventory information in cases where gathering the information is not technically feasible or necessary. If approved, the changes would provide for using widely accepted methods of biological analysis and would improve the efficiency of conducting BEs on National Forests in the Southern Region.

DATES: Comments concerning the proposals should be received on or before October 9, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to the Regional Forester, Attention: Mercedes Martin; USDA, Forest Service;

Suite 811N; 1720 Peachtree St., NW; Atlanta, GA; 30309-9102.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Co-team leaders Robert Wilhelm, (404) 347-7076 or David Purser (404) 347-5292.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service proposes to amend Forest Plans in the Southern Region and supplement the EISs for Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains, the Coastal Plains/Piedmont, and the Ozark/Ouachita Mountains to clarify Management Requirements for managing PETS species. The changes pertain to requirements for gathering population inventory information on PETS species when conducting a BE for proposed vegetation management projects.

The action is needed because the requirements for conducting BEs for vegetation management projects exclude accepted methods of analysis, overemphasize population inventory information, and, in some cases, require gathering population inventory information where it is unnecessary or is not technically feasible. The Records of Decision for the three EISs amended the Forest Plans in the Southern Region.

In a separate action, the Southern Region will supplement the Forest Service Manual to include regional policy requirements on conducting BEs. The Forest Service is inviting comment on that action under 36 CFR 216.

Decisions To Be Made

The Regional Forester will decide whether, and in what way, to modify the management requirements pertaining to population inventory information in BEs for projects covered in the three Records of Decision and EISs for Vegetation Management, and, through the Records of Decision, will amend the respective Forest Plans to make the corresponding changes in the standard on conducting BEs.

Responsible Official

Elizabeth Estill, Regional Forester, 1720 Peachtree St., NW; Atlanta, GA, 30309-9102 is the Responsible Official making the decisions on regional requirements on vegetation management and to amend the Forest Plans to make the corresponding changes.

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Preliminary Issues

One preliminary issue has been identified: whether PETS species will be adequately protected and managed.

Public Involvement

The Forest Service 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 action.

While public participation in these analyses is welcome at any time, comments received within 30 days of the publication of this notice will be especially useful in the preparation of the Draft Supplemental EISs. No public meetings are planned. The scoping process for each supplement will include identifying potential issues, significant issues to be analyzed, alternatives to the proposed action, and potential environmental effects of the proposal and alternatives.

Estimated Dates for Filing

The three Draft Supplemental EISs are expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review by December 2001. At that time, EPA will publish a Notice of Availability of each Draft Supplemental EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on each Draft Supplemental EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. It is important that those interested in the population inventory issue participate at that time.

The Final Supplemental EISs are scheduled to be completed by March 2002. In the Final Supplemental EISs, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in each Draft Supplemental EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making a decision regarding each proposal.

The Reviewer's Obligation To Comment

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 EISs 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 EIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final EIS 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 EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the Draft. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS 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: August 31, 2001.

Elizabeth Estill,
Regional Forester.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area (SRA) Advisory Council

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council meeting will convene in Stayton, Oregon on Monday, September 17, 2001. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m., and will conclude at approximately 8:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the South Room of the Stayton Community Center; 400 West Virginia Street; Stayton, Oregon.

The Opal Creek Wilderness and Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Act of 1996 (Opal Creek Act) (Pub. L. 104-208) directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council. The

Advisory Council is comprised of thirteen members representing state, county and city governments, and representatives of various organizations, which include mining industry, environmental organizations, inholders in Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area, economic development, Indian tribes, adjacent landowners and recreation interests. The council provides advice to the Secretary of Agriculture on preparation of a comprehensive Opal Creek Management Plan for the SRA, and consults on a periodic and regular basis on the management of the area. The tentative agenda includes:

(1) Discussion of written comments received from the public regarding the proposed management plan for Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area.

(2) Development of Alternative Proposals that address various elements presented in the written public comments.

A public comment period is tentatively scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. Time allotted for individual presentations will be limited to 3 minutes. Written comments are encouraged, particularly if the material cannot be presented within the time limits of the comment period. Written comments may be submitted prior to the September 17 meeting by sending them to Designated Federal Official Stephanie Phillips at the address given below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For more information regarding this meeting, contact Designated Federal Official Stephanie Phillips; Willamette National Forest, Detroit Ranger District, HC 73 Box 320, Mill City, OR 97360; (503) 854-3366.

DISCLAIMER: This meeting notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting to accommodate the required 45-day public comment period on the proposed SRA Management Plan. This late notice is authorized under 41 CFR 1016.1015(b)(2).

Dated: August 30, 2001.

Darrel L. Kenops,
Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 01-22501 Filed 9-6-01; 8:45 am]

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COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED

Procurement List; Proposed Addition

AGENCY: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

ACTION: Proposed addition to Procurement List.

SUMMARY: The Committee is proposing to add to the Procurement List a service to be furnished by nonprofit agency employing persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities.

COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE: October 8, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, Jefferson Plaza 2, Suite 10800, 1421 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22202-3259.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Louis R. Bartalet (703) 603-7740.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 47(a)(2) and 41 CFR 51-2.3. Its purpose is to provide interested persons an opportunity to submit comments on the possible impact of the proposed actions.

If the Committee approves the proposed additions, the entities of the Federal Government identified in this notice for each service will be required to procure the service listed below from nonprofit agency employing persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities. I certify that the following action will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. The major factors considered for this certification were:

1. The action will not result in any additional reporting, recordkeeping or other compliance requirements for small entities other than the small organizations that will furnish the service to the Government.

2. The action will result in authorizing small entities to furnish the service to the Government.

3. There are no known regulatory alternatives which would accomplish the objectives of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (41 U.S.C. 46-48c) in connection with the service proposed for addition to the Procurement List. Comments on this certification are invited. Commenters should identify the statement(s) underlying the certification on which they are providing additional information.

The following service is proposed for addition to Procurement List for production by the nonprofit agency listed:

Service

Grounds Maintenance
Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division,
Buildings 456 (N97) and 1438 (Main Post Area), White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico
NPA: Tresco, Inc., Las Cruces, New Mexico