

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 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: July 17, 2002.

**Bert Kulesza,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 02-18513 Filed 7-22-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Couverden Timber Sale Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to harvest timber for the Couverden Timber Sale(s) project on the south end of the Chilkat Peninsula north of Icy Strait and west of Lynn Canal on the Juneau Ranger District, Tongass National Forest. The proposed action provides for: (1) Timber harvest on approximately 1500 acres of forested land resulting in the production of an estimated 25 million board feet of sawlog and utility timber volume, (2) construction of approximately 5 miles of new specified road and 3 miles of temporary road, and (3) reconstruction of 19 miles of existing specified road. The Record of Decision will disclose how the Forest Service allocates timber harvest in the project area using the existing transportation infrastructure including existing roads and the permitted log transfer facility known as Homeshore LTF.

**DATES:** A public mailing that outlines the project timeline and public involvement opportunities is planned for distribution in Summer 2002. Individuals who want to receive this mailing should contact us within 30 days of the publication of this NOI. To be most useful, comments concerning the scope of this project should be received by September 15, 2002. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected in Winter 2003 and will begin a 45-day public comment period. The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are expected Fall 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Please send written comments to: District Ranger, Juneau Ranger District, ATTN: Couverden EIS, 8465 Old Dairy Road, Juneau, AK 99801.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Stan McCoy, Project Team Leader, telephone (907) 790-7431 or Dave Carr, Timber Management Assistant, telephone (907) 790-7402. Juneau Ranger District, 8465 Old Dairy Road, Juneau, AK 99801.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The proposed timber sale is located about 30 air miles west of Juneau, Alaska, 20 air miles southeast of Gustavus, Alaska and 10 air miles northeast of Hoonah, Alaska on the south end of the Chilkat Peninsula north of Icy Strait and west of Lynn Canal. The project is within townships 41 and 42 south, Ranges 61, 62 and 63 west, Copper River Meridian. The Juneau Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest, Juneau, Alaska, administers the project area. The project area contains Value Comparison Units 1170, 1180, 1190, and 1200 as designated by Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. The project area includes approximately 66,486 acres. It includes portions of Homeshore, Humpy, and Swanson river drainages within the developed timber management land use designation. The project area includes one medium old growth reserve as designated in Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan. Another medium old growth reserve is located north of the project area near the community of Excursion Inlet. A Forest Plan amendment may be required to modify the old growth reserve boundaries associated with this project. Inventoried roadless area #304, Chilkat-West Lynn Canal, lies north and east of the project area and encompasses 198,525 acres. This inventoried roadless area is currently managed for semi-remote recreation and old growth habitat. The proposed action does not

include timber harvest or road construction in the adjacent inventoried roadless area.

The purpose and need for the Couverden Project is: (1) To implement the direction contained in the 1997 Tongass Land Management Plan and the 1997 ROD, including goals, objectives, management prescriptions, and standards and guidelines; (2) to maintain wood production from suitable timber lands, providing a continuous supply of wood to meet societies needs; (3) to help provide a stable supply of timber from the Tongass National Forest which meets existing and potential market demand and is consistent with sound multiple use and sustained yield objectives; and (4) to help meet the desired future condition of the landscape as described by the 1997 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan.

#### Public Participation

Opportunities for the public to participate in the development of the Couverden Timber Sale Environmental Impact Statement will be provided throughout the process. The Forest Service will use a combination of methods to engage and involve the public, including public mailings, postings on the Tongass National Forest internet web page, public meetings and the news media. The comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact statement will be a minimum of 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**. The Draft EIS is projected to be filed with the EPA in Fall 2004.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings 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). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2nd 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *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 received by the Forest Service at a

time when it can meaningfully consider and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns with regard to the proposed action, comments during scoping and on the Draft Supplemental EIS should be as specific as possible. It is helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the document. Comments may also address the adequacy of the Draft Supplemental EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed. 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. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR parts 215. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Requesters should be aware that, under FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within seven days.

*Permits:* required for implementation include the following.

1. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - Approval of discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;
  - Approval of the construction of structures or work in navigable waters of the United States under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899;
2. Environmental Protection Agency
  - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (402) Permit;
3. State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources
  - Tideland Permit and Lease or Easement;
4. State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation

- Solid Waste Disposal Permit;
- Certification of Compliance with Alaska Water Quality Standards.

#### Responsible Official

The Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest, Federal Building, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901, is the responsible official. The responsible official will consider the comments, responses, disclosure of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies in making the decision, and state the rationale for the chosen alternative in the Record of Decision.

Dated: July 16, 2002.

**Thomas Puchlerz,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will meet on August 19, 2002 in Weaverville, California. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the selection of Title II projects under Public Law 106-393, H.R. 2389, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, also called the "Payments to States" Act.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on August 19, 2002 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Trinity County Office of Education Conference Room, 201 Memorial Drive, Weaverville, California.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joyce Anderson, Designated Federal Official, USDA, Shasta Trinity National Forests, P.O. Box 1190, Weaverville, CA 96093. Phone: (530) 623-1709. Email: [janderson@fs.fed.us](mailto:janderson@fs.fed.us).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The meeting will focus on prioritizing and selecting Title II projects for fuels treatment and sediment reduction. The meeting is open to the public. Public input opportunity will be provided and individuals will have the opportunity to address the committee at that time.

Dated: July 16, 2002.

**S.E. "Lou" Woltering,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### National Agricultural Statistics Service

#### Notice of Intent To Revise a Currently Approved Information Collection

**AGENCY:** National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of revision.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to revise a currently approved information collection, the Agricultural Surveys Program.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rich Allen, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-4333.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Agricultural Surveys Program.

OMB Control Number: 0535-0213.

Expiration Date of Approval: January 31, 2004.

*Type of Request:* Intent to revise a currently approved information collection.

*Abstract:* The National Agricultural Statistics Service is responsible for collecting and issuing State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, grain stocks, farm numbers, land values, on-farm pesticide usage, and pest crop management practices. The Agricultural Surveys Program contains a series of surveys that obtains basic agricultural data from farmers and ranchers throughout the Nation for preparing agricultural estimates and forecasts. The Program is being revised to discontinue the September small grain forecast. NASS will no longer forecast acreage, yield, and production in the September Crop Production report for durum wheat, other spring wheat, all wheat, and barley. Final acreage, yield, and production estimates will continue to be published for these crops—along with winter wheat, oats, and rye—in the annual Small Grains report, released on the last working day of September.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response.

*Respondents:* Farms.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 547,000.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 139,000 hours.

These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a).