Signed in Washington, DC on June 13, 2003.

James R. Little,

Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

[FR Doc. 03–16140 Filed 6–25–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–05–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

National Survey on Recreation and the Environment

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent: request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, is seeking comments from all interested individuals and organizations on an extension of a previously approved information collection for a National Survey on Recreation and the Environment.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing on or before August 25, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to H. Ken Cordell, USDA Forest Service, 320 Green Street, Athens, GA 30602–2044. The public may inspect comments in Research Work Unit SRS–4901, USDA Forest Service, 320 Green Street, Athens, GA 30602–2044.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: H. Ken Cordell at (703) 559–4264, or email *kcordell@fs.fed.us.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Description of Information Collection

OMB Number: 0596–0127.

Expiration date: 10/31/2003.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission. Renewal of previously approved collection.

Affected Public: American civilians, age 16 and older, living in U.S. households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 75,000 total, 25,000 per year over 3 years.

Estimated Time Per Response: 15 minutes average response time.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 6,250.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: $0.

Abstract: The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) was established through a multi-agency partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the lead agencies. The NSRE 2005 is the eighth edition of this survey administered since 1960. The survey is used: (1) To measure the outdoor recreation demands the public makes on the Nation's land, water and other natural resources ; (2) to identify the public's perceptions of accessibility to recreational sites, especially persons with disabilities; (3) to gain public feedback about the management of public recreation sites and natural resources; (4) to request public opinion regarding how public agencies can improve management of public recreation areas and natural resources; (5) to understand public attitudes about the environment and preferences of visitors for public and private recreational sites; and (6) to keep abreast of shifts in recreational demands that might influence delivery of recreational services.

Method of Collection

The NSRE 2005 will be conducted via telephone to a representative sample population of 75,000 American civilians (25,000 per year over a three year period), age 16 or older, living in U.S. households. The data collected will be used to conduct a stratified random sample based on geographic subgroups including urban, rural, and near urban locations.

The NSRE 2005 consists of 15 versions, each made up of sets of questions called modules. Activity participation and demographics modules constitute the core of each version of the survey. A nationally representative sample of approximately 5,000 people will be surveyed for each version. Some over-sampling will be done to ensure a minimum sample size of 500 per State across all versions or for some modules that focus on rural outdoor recreation use (*i.e.*, over-sampling of people living in rural areas). All versions are tested in advance to ensure a 15-minute average completion time. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census data is used to construct post-sample weights to correct for over-sampling.

Both English and Spanish versions of the questionnaires are used and interviews are conducted bilingually to overcome language barriers.

Request for Comments

The agency invites comments on the following: (a) The necessity of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of agency functions, including the practical utility of the information; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) the enhancements of the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) the minimization of the burden of collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Use of Comments

All comments, including name and address when provided, will become a matter of public record. Comments received in response to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: June 13, 2003.

Robert Lewis, Jr.,

Deputy Chief, Research & Development.

[FR Doc. 03–16100 Filed 6–25–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Grasshopper Fuels Management Project, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forests, Beaverhead County, MT

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (FS) and the Dillon Area Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will prepare an environmental impact statement to document the analysis and disclose the environmental impacts of a proposed action to reduce hazardous fuels that pose a risk of wildfire on about 3900 acres administered by both agencies in the Grasshopper Valley, 35 miles northwest of Dillon, Montana. The purpose of the ''Grasshopper Fuels Management'' project is to: ''Provide an increased margin of safety to the public; reduce threats to dwellings, structures, and improvements in the Grasshopper Valley, and create areas of defensible space providing a safer environment for firefighters when fires do occur.'' The decisions to be made are the location, design, and scheduling of the proposed hazardous fuel reduction activity, and associated silvicultural practices; the

estimated timber volume, if any, to make available from the project area; any access management measures (road construction, reconstruction, area restrictions and closures if connected to fuels reduction), mitigation measures and monitoring requirements.

Alternatives: This EIS will evaluate alternative methods to meet the designated Purpose and Need for action. The ''Proposed Action'' Alternative 1 (3900 acres) is essentially the proposed action that was identified in the scoping letter to the public in May 2002. It includes hazardous fuels reduction on 1700 acres of FS and BLM lands to reduce stand density, remove ladder fuels, and treat fuels buildup using a combination of mechanical treatments and prescribed fire. Thinning, Group Selection, Salvage and Sanitation are treatments proposed, using commercial timber harvest where appropriate to remove and utilize merchantable trees. On another 700 acres, a combination of cutting encroaching conifers and applying prescribed fire would maintain non-forest vegetation types and provide areas of defensible space. On 1500 acres located in an Inventoried Roadless Area, a combination of chainsaw felling of small diameter trees and prescribed fire would be used to remove ladder fuels and treat fuels buildup. Over 8,000 acres in the western and southwestern portion of the project area are part of an inventoried roadless area. No commercial timber harvest, permanent or temporary road construction is proposed within the inventoried roadless area. No permanent road construction is proposed in the project area; however, approximately 5 miles of temporary road and 1–2 miles of private land road maintenance are proposed for access purposes. Helicopter yarding to remove merchantable trees is proposed on a small BLM tract in the southern portion of the project area. As required by NEPA, ''No Action'' Alternative 2 will be analyzed as a baseline for gauging the potential impacts of action alternatives. Alternative 3 (2300 acres) will exclude any treatments within the inventoried roadless area and use less temporary road. Alternative 4 (3400 acres) will be the prescribed fire alternative, utilizing the felling of small diameter trees; ladder fuels and brush reduction, followed by low intensity underburns, broadcast or jackpot burning (of fuels concentrations). No temporary road construction is proposed in Alternative 4.

DATES: Initial comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing no later than 30 days from the publication of this notice of intent.

ADDRESSES: The responsible official is Bradley Powell, Regional Forester-Northern Region. Please send written comments to Thomas D. Osen, Dillon District Ranger, 420 Barrett Street, Dillon, Montana 59725. Comments may also be electronically submitted to *rl_b-d_coments@fs.fed.us.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Greg Clark, project leader, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, 420 Barrett Street, Dillon, Montana 59725 or phone (406) 683–3935 or by e-mail to *giclark@fs.fed.us.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM is a cooperating agency in the development of the EIS for the Grasshopper Fuels Management project. The project area is located in the upper Grasshopper Creek watershed within the Pioneer Mountains in southwestern Montana (Townships 4, 5, 6 South, Range 12 West and Townships 5, 6 South, Range 13 West, Big Hole Guide Meridian). The scope of this proposal is limited to the analysis area covering approximately 17,000 acres. The analysis area abuts 3,100 acres BLM, 4,600 acres State and over 23,000 acres of country and privately owned lands.

Public participation is important to this analysis. Part of the goal of public involvement is to identify additional issues and to refine the general, tentative issues. In March 2002 a postcard providing project information was mailed to 525 individuals and groups. A total of 50 responses to this initial mailing were received. From the initial mailing, a scoping notice describing the proposed action and purpose/need was mailed in May 2002 to 65 individuals, organizations, Native Americans groups, federal and state agencies. Key issues for the Grasshopper Fuels Management project were identified through public and internal scoping. The following key issues were used in the development of alternatives to the proposed action:

(1) Analyze alternative effects on potential lynx habitat and habitat connectivity.

(2) Consider alternative effects on various resource values and roadless characteristics in inventoried roadless areas.

A number of other resource issues or concerns were identified during scoping and will be considered during the development of the draft EIS. The analysis will consider all reasonably foreseeable activities.

People may visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. Two periods are specifically designated for comments on the analysis: (1) During the scoping process, and (2) during the draft EIS period.

During the scoping process, the Forest Service seeks additional information and comments from individuals or organization that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action, and Federal, State and local agencies. The Forest Service invites written comments and suggestions on this action, particularly in terms of identification of issues and alternative development.

The draft EIS is anticipated to be available for review in August 2003. The final EIS is planned for completion in December 2003.

The Environmental Protection Agency will publish the Notice of Availability of the draft Environmental Impact Statement in the **Federal Register.** The Forest will also publish a Legal Notice of its availability in the Montana Standard Newspaper, Butte, Montana. A 45-day comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will begin the day following the Legal Notice.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice 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. *City of Angoon* v. *Hodel,* 803 F.2d 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 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. The responsible official will make the decision on this proposal after considering comments and responses, environmental consequences discussed in the final EIS, applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The decision and reasons for the decision will be documented in a Record of Decision.

Dated: June 19, 2003.

Thomas K. Reilly,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03–16151 Filed 6–25–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Jarbidge Rangeland Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Jarbidge Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposal to authorize continued livestock grazing in the project area under updated grazing management direction in order to move existing rangeland, riparian, and forest resource conditions toward a set of desired conditions. The project area includes all Forest System lands managed by the Jarbidge Ranger District.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by August 26, 2003. The draft environmental impact statement is expected December 2003 and the final environmental impact statement is expected September 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to James Winfrey, Project Manager, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 2035 Last Chance Road, Elko, Nevada 89801.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, mail correspondence to or contact James Winfrey, Project Manager, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 2035 Last Chance Road, Elko, Nevada 89801. The telephone number is 775–778–0229. E-mail address is *jwinfrey@fs.fed.us.*

Purpose and Need for Action

The Jarbidge Rangeland Project was identified to address livestock grazing and its effects on the overall diversity of fish, wildlife, vegetation species, and rangeland, riparian and watershed condition. While wildlife and natural resource management direction has been evolving over the last decade, livestock management direction and practices have been slower to change. This project is an opportunity to align the livestock management practices in the Jarbidge Rangeland project area with the specific management direction for the other resources in the project area.

The purpose of the Jarbidge Rangeland project is to evaluate current livestock grazing practices in relation to their effects on other resources and, where necessary, adjust those practices to maintain or move toward the desired environmental conditions.

Proposed Action

The Jarbidge Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, is proposing to authorize continued livestock grazing in the project area under updated grazing management direction in order to move existing rangeland, riparian, and forest resource conditions toward a set of desired conditions. After scoping and during the analysis phase of this project the interdisciplinary team (IDT) will use the existing rangeland condition and other resources to identify where and how livestock grazing management practices may need to be adjusted to meet the desired conditions.

Possible Alternatives

In addition to the proposed action we have tentatively identified two additional alternatives that will be analyzed in the EIS.

(1) No Action Alternative: This would be continuation of the current grazing management.

(2) No Grazing Alternative: This would be not issuing new grazing permits when existing permits expire.

Responsible Official

Robert L. Vaught, Forest Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, Nevada 89431

Nature of Decision To Be Made

Based on the environmental analysis and disclosure in the EIS, the Forest Supervisor will decide whether or not to continue grazing on the allotments within the Jarbidge Rangeland Project area, and, if the decision is made to continue grazing, then he will also decide which standards, mitigation measures, monitoring criteria, and modifications, should be applied.

Scoping Process

The Forest Service will use a mailing of information to interested parties. Public involvement will be ongoing throughout the analysis process and at certain times public input will be specifically requested. There are currently no scoping meetings planned.

Preliminary Issues

The following are some potential issues identified through internal Forest Service scoping based on our experience with similar projects:

- Livestock grazing has the potential to adversely affect water quality and aquatic habitat.
- Livestock grazing has the potential to adversely affect soils and vegetation, which may result in a decline in condition of wildlife habitats, the long-term availability of forage, and the diversity of species.
- Livestock grazing has the potential to adversely affect riparian habitat conditions and ecologic function.

The list is not considered all-inclusive, but should be viewed as a starting point. We are asking you to help us further refine these issues and identify other issues or concerns relevant to the proposed project.

Comment Requested

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**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice 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. *City of Angoon* v. *Hodel,* 803 F.2d 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 made