

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

Frank Church—River Of No Return Wilderness Noxious Weed Treatments Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to the Frank Church—River Of No Return Wilderness (FC—RONR) Wilderness Noxious Weed Treatments Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Salmon-Challis national Forest, will prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to evaluate changed conditions since issuing the August 1999 FC—RONR Wilderness Noxious Weed Treatments EIS and Record of Decision (ROD). The inventoried number of sites and acreages to be treated within the FC—RONR Wilderness will be updated and analyzed. The EIS will also address a long-term integrated weed prevention strategy and use of an additional herbicide (Plateau).

DATES: The Forest Service expects to submit a draft Supplemental EIS by October 2003. The comment period on the Draft SEIS will be 45 days from the date the Notice of Availability is published in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments concerning this notice to Ken Wotring, Project Coordinator, Salmon-Challis National Forest, 50 Hwy 93 South, Salmon, Idaho, 83467.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ken Wotring at (208) 756-5131 or Howard Lyman at (208) 839-2211.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Bitterroot, Nez Perce, Payette and Salmon Challis National Forests administer the Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness. These National Forests chose to address several issues

relative to consistent management of the FC—RONR Wilderness. Most of the issues addressed were recreational in nature. The need for consistent management of noxious weeds within the Wilderness was also addressed. A Draft EIS was released in January 1998. Public comment was extremely polarized regarding the recreational issues. Many individuals and interests were concerned that the Alternatives displayed in the DEIS would institute excessively harsh measures to address management of recreational use. On the other hand, public support for an aggressive noxious weeds program was evident in the comments received on this issue.

The Forest Supervisors decided upon a two-prong approach in response to those public comments. (1) They would issue a Supplemental Draft to evaluate additional management actions to respond to public concerns prior to development of a FEIS for revision of the FC-RONRW Management Plan. (2) They would issue a Final Weeds EIS and ROD responsive to public support for a consistent noxious weeds program.

August 1999 FC—RONR Wilderness Noxious Weed Treatment Final Environmental Impact Statement (Weeds FEIS) and Record of Decision

The Weeds FEIS proposed action was to treat 300 sites encompassing 1,775 acres beginning in 1999 and up until the FEIS for revising the FC—RONRW Management Plan was completed. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the Weeds FEIS deferred addressing non-treatment practices, including coordination, education, prevention and inventory in the Management Plan Revision FEIS.

The Weeds ROD selected Alternative 2, which consisted of an Aggressive Integrated Weed Treatment Wilderness-wide. Specific actions included:

- Controlling weed populations through a combination of manual, chemical and biological methods;
- Implementing restoration following control methods; and
- Monitoring.

This decision was appealed, and while the Regional Forester upheld the Forests, direction to the Forests reaffirmed the earlier commitment to complete a Noxious Weeds Prevention Strategy as part of the non-treatment practices to be addressed in the revision of the Management Plan FEIS.

The Forests implemented an integrated weed management strategy and committed to readdress non-treatment practices, specifically the Prevention Strategy in the Management Plan FEIS.

Changed Conditions and a New Approach

The 1999 Weed FEIS analysis was based on nearly 300 inventoried sites encompassing 1,775 acres. The Weed FEIS evaluated, and the ROD adopted, an Adaptive Strategy for future treatment of new weed invasions and expansion of existing infestations. Extensive wildfires burned over ½ million acres in and adjacent to the FC—RONR Wilderness during the summer of 2000 and accelerated expansion of noxious weeds into those fire disturbed areas. Recent inventories document sites encompassing 5,204 acres. Therefore, a Supplemental analysis to the Noxious Weeds EIS will be prepared to address the changed conditions. The SEIS will also address an additional herbicide for use in Noxious Weed control (Plateau). Finally, the SEIS will address a Noxious Weed Prevention Strategy for the FC—RONR Wilderness.

Timelines

The Draft SEIS is expected to be available for public review in October 2003. The comment period on the Draft SEIS will be 45 days from the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in this analysis participate at that time. To be most helpful, comments on the DSEIS should be as specific as possible. The Final SEIS is scheduled for completion in January 2004. At that time, we will release the Final SEIS along with the Record of Decision (ROD). A 45-day appeal period will follow as required pursuant to 36 CFR 215. Implementation of the decision can occur 5 days following release of the ROD if not appealed or after a favorable appeal decision.

Submitting Comments

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. 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.

Authority

The Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor has determined that preparation of a Supplemental EIS (Draft and Final) is required in order to address changed conditions and prior agency commitments, under CEQ regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1501–1508). The Supplemental EIS will address a proposal by the Salmon-Challis, Bitterroot, Payette and Nez Perce National Forests to address weeds management as described above. That portion of the Boise National Forest that falls within the FC–RONRW is proposed and will be administered by the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

Responsible Official

I am the responsible official for release of the Notice of Intent to prepare this Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. My address is Salmon-Challis National Forest, 50 Hwy 93 South, Salmon, Idaho 83467. In addition to myself, Deciding Officials will include: Mark Madrid, Forest Supervisor Payette National Forest; Bruce Bernhardt, Forest Supervisor Nez Perce National Forest and Dave Bull, Forest Supervisor Bitterroot National Forest.

Dated: August 29, 2003.

Lesley W. Thompson,

Acting Forest Supervisor, Salmon-Challis National Forest.

[FR Doc. 03–22677 Filed 9–5–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by November 7, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Annan, Acting Director, Program Development & Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, USDA,

1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 720–0737. FAX: (202) 720–4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Title:* Seismic Safety of New Building Construction.

OMB Control Number: 0572–0099.
Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*) was enacted to reduce risks to life and property through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designated as the agency with the primary responsibility to plan and coordinate the NEHRP. This program includes the development and implementation of feasible design and construction methods to make structures earthquake resistant. Executive Order 12699 of January 5, 1990, Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction, requires that measures to assure seismic safety be imposed on federally assisted new building construction.

Title 7 Part 1792, Subpart C, Seismic Safety of Federally assisted New Building Construction, identifies acceptable seismic standards which must be employed in new building construction funded by loans, grants, or guarantees made by RUS or the Rural Telephone Bank (RTB) or through lien accommodations or subordinations approved by RUS or RTB. This subpart implements and explains the provisions of the loan contract utilized by the RUS for both electric and telecommunications borrowers and by the RTB for its telecommunications borrowers requiring construction certifications affirming compliance with the standards.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response.

Respondents: Small business or organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.2.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 800.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Dawn Wolfgang, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720–0812.

Comments are invited on (a) whether the collection of information is

necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumption used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques on other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Richard Annan, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Hilda Gay Legg,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 03–22753 Filed 9–5–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Business Development Mission to Brazil

AGENCY: Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice to Announce Business Development Mission to Brazil, November 9–13, 2003.

SUMMARY: Deputy Secretary of Commerce Samuel W. Bodman, and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance William Lash, will lead a senior-level business development mission to Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Recife, Brazil from November 9–13, 2003. The focus of the mission will be to help U.S. companies explore trade and investment opportunities in Brazil. The delegation will include approximately 10–15 U.S.-based senior executives of small, medium and large U.S. firms representing, but not limited to, technology, equipment, and services in the following key growth sectors: infrastructure (port, rail, construction), information technology, security, agribusiness and biotechnology.

DATES: Applications should be submitted to the Office of Business Liaison by October 3, 2003. Applications received after that date