

Forest resource conditions as identified in the Cottonwood Plan Implementation Study.

Possible Alternatives

Alternative 2—No Action Alternative

Analysis of this alternative is required under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations. The No Action Alternative also serves as a baseline of information for comparison of other alternatives. Though this alternative does not respond to the purpose and need for action, it does address some issues.

Responsible Official

Greg Clark, District Forest Ranger, Big Piney Ranger District, P.O. Box 218, Big Piney, Wyoming 83113.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

This decision will be whether or not to implement specific vegetation management projects and associated road and trail head improvements, as allowed in the Bridger-Teton National Forest Plan and Cottonwood Plan Implementation Study. The decision will include any mitigation measures needed in addition to those prescribed in the Forest Plan.

Scoping Process

The Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from individuals, organizations, Tribal governments, and Federal, state, and local agencies interested in or affected by this project. Comments that were submitted during the May 14, 1999 scoping effort and during field trips of the project area will be used to prepare the Draft EIS, as will comments submitted through this public scoping request. Public participation will be solicited by notifying in person and/or by mail, known interested and affected publics. News releases will be used to give the public general notice. Public participation activities will include requests for written comments. The first formal opportunity to comment is to respond to this Notice of Intent, which initiates the scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7). Scoping includes: (1) Identifying potential issues, (2) narrowing the potential issues and identifying significant issues from those issues that have been covered by prior environmental review, (3) exploring alternatives in addition to the No Action Alternative, and (4) identifying potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives.

Preliminary Issues

The Forest Service has identified the following potential issues. In addition,

through the May 1999 scoping effort, issues have been refined. Your input is especially valuable here. It will help us determine which of these issues merit detailed analysis. It will also help identify additional issues related to the Proposed Action that may not be listed here.

Issue 1—Amount and/or types of vegetation treatments under the Proposed Action and the effects on old growth and mature vegetation for lynx, security cover for elk and other habitat, as well as Colorado cutthroat trout habitat.

Issue 2—Forest health, specifically the high proportion of older age-class conifer stands and declining tree growth, drawf mistletoe infection levels in lodgepole pine, and high fuel loadings from dead and down material.

Issue 3—Amount of aspen treatments.

Comment Requested

This Notice of Intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the Draft EIS.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

The Draft EIS is scheduled to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in late August 2004 and to be available for public comment in September 2004. At that time, the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA 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 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 [*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 on the Draft EIS. This ensures that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time

when the Forest Service 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 EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the Draft EIS. Comments may also address the adequacy of the Draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the Draft EIS. 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, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection. (Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, section 21).

Dated: December 17, 2003.

Gregory W. Clark,

District Forest Ranger.

[FR Doc. 03-31660 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee and the Yakima Provincial Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee and the Yakima Provincial Advisory Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 14, 2004, at the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests Headquarters Office, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 3 p.m. During this meeting we will discuss public comments on the Forest Plan revision, recreation management issues, and new developments in implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan. All Eastern Washington Cascades and Yakima Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are welcome to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Paul Hart, Designated Federal Official, USDA, Wenatchee National

Forest, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, Washington 98801, 509-662-4335.

Dated: December 17, 2003.

Paul Hart,

Designated Federal Official, Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests.

[FR Doc. 03-31661 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Lassen Resource Advisory Committee, Susanville, California, USDA Forest Service.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committees Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393) the Lassen National Forest's Lassen County Resource Advisory Committee will meet Thursday, January 8, 2004, in Susanville, California for business meetings. The meetings are open to the public.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting begins at 9 a.m. at the Forest Supervisor's Office, 2550 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA 96130. The meeting objectives are for RAC members and the public to hear project presentations from proponents. Agenda topics will include: Presentations of four proposed projects, continuation of selection of projects, develop February meeting agenda and meeting calendar for 2004. Time will be set aside for public comments at the end of the meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Andrews, Eagle Lake District Ranger and Designated Federal Officer, at (530) 257-4188; or RAC Coordinator, Heidi Perry, at (530) 252-6604.

Edward C. Cole,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-31636 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Mineral County Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393) the Lolo National Forest's Mineral County Resource Advisory Committee will meet on January 6, 2004 at 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. in Superior, Montana for a business meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: January 6, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Mineral County Courthouse, 300 River Street, Superior, MT 59872.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Harper, Designated Forest Official (DFO), District Ranger, Lolo National Forest, at (406) 822-4233.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda topics for this meeting include nominations and election of a new Committee Chairperson, review of Project Funding Criteria agreed to last year, and discussion or review about new project proposals, as authorized under title II of Public Law 106-393. If the meeting location is changed, notice will be posted in local newspapers, including the Mineral Independent and the Missoulian.

Dated: December 12, 2003.

Deborah L.R. Austin,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 03-31637 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Southwest Oregon Province Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Southwest Oregon Province Advisory Committee will meet on January 21, 2004 in Brookings, Oregon in the Best Western Beachfront Inn at 16008 Boat Basin Road. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 4 p.m. Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Development of Work Plan; (2) Public Forum; (3) Update on BLM Resource Management Plan revision process; (4) District and Forest Fire Plans; and (5) Future Agenda Items.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Jim Hays, Province Advisory Committee Coordinator, USDA Forest Service, Prospect Ranger District, 47201 Highway 62, Prospect, Oregon 97536, phone (541) 560-3432.

Dated: December 17, 2003.

Scott D. Conroy,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 03-31658 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Foreign-Trade Zones Board

[Docket 46-2003]

Pepsi-Cola Manufacturing International, Ltd.—Subzone 61J; Application for Expansion of Scope of Manufacturing Authority; Extension of Comment Period

The comment period for the application submitted by the Puerto Rico Exports Development Corporation (68 FR 54888, 9-19-2003), grantee of FTZ 61, on behalf of Pepsi-Cola Manufacturing International, Ltd. (PCMIL), operator of FTZ 61J, requesting an expansion of the scope of manufacturing authority to include additional finished products and manufacturing capacity under FTZ procedures at the PCMIL soft drink and juice beverage concentrate manufacturing plant in Cidra, Puerto Rico, has been extended to from the closing date of December 19, 2003, to January 23, 2004, to allow interested parties additional time in which to comment on the proposal.

Comments in writing are invited during this period. Submissions (original and three copies) shall be addressed to the Board's Executive Secretary at the following addresses:

1. *Submissions via Express/Package Delivery Services:* Office of the Executive Secretary, Foreign-Trade Zones Board, U.S. Department of Commerce, Franklin Court Building—Suite 4100W, 1099 14th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005; or,

2. *Submissions via the U.S. Postal Service:* Office of the Executive Secretary, Foreign-Trade Zones Board, U.S. Department of Commerce, FCB-4100W, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

Material submitted will be available for inspection at address No. 1 noted above.

Dated: December 16, 2003.

Dennis Puccinelli,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-31765 Filed 12-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P