DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests; Santa Rosa Ranger District; Martin Basin Rangeland Management Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Santa Rosa Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest will prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on a proposal to authorize continued livestock grazing on National Forest System (NFS) lands within the boundaries administered by the Santa Rosa Ranger District. The Project Area is located in Humboldt County, Nevada.

The preparation of this SEIS is needed because the Record of Decision issued on October 30, 2009 for the Martin Basin Rangeland Management Project was appealed. Following review, the decision to authorize grazing on three of the allotments in the Project Area (the Buffalo, Granite Creek, and Rebel Creek Allotments) was reversed and the Forest Supervisor was instructed to complete additional analysis of the wilderness characteristics within the Santa Rosa Wilderness.

Background

Initiation of the Martin Basin Rangeland Project began in 2002 with the original Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2002 (Vol. 67, Number 250). The Draft EIS was released in May of 2004 for a 135-day comment period. The Final EIS was released in June of 2005 and a 45-day comment period was also provided at that time. The Record of Decision for this project was issued on June 2, 2006, by then Forest Supervisor Robert L. Vaught.

The Record of Decision for the Martin Basin Rangeland Project was appealed to the Intermountain Regional Forester. On September 6, 2006, the Regional Forester issued a decision on the appeal and remanded the decision back to the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest for additional analysis.

A Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2007 (Vol. 72, Number 37). That NOI estimated that the Draft Supplemental EIS would be released for review and comment on April 2007 and the Final Supplemental EIS would be completed by July 2007. A Corrected Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on October 16, 2008 (Vol. 73, No. 201). That Corrected NOI provided notice that a new EIS was being prepared, instead of a supplement to the 2005 Final EIS. That notice also updated the estimated dates for release of the new Draft and Final EISs, and provided additional information on the Proposed Action and Possible Alternatives. The new Draft EIS was released in January of 2009 for a 45-day comment period. The Final EIS was released in November of 2009. The legal notice of the Record of Decision for this project was published on November 23, 2009, by Forest Supervisor Edward C. Monnig.

Two appeals were filed against the 2009 Record of Decision. On February 22, 2010, the portion of the decision to implement the Martin Basin Rangeland Project with the Santa Rosa Wilderness was reversed and the Forest Supervisor was instructed to complete additional analysis of the wilderness characteristics within the Santa Rosa Wilderness.

Purpose and Need for Action

As stated in Final EIS released in 2009, the purpose and need for the proposed federal action is to contribute economic value to grazing permittees in a way that sustains the health of the land and protects essential ecosystem functions and values.

Proposed Action

As outlined in the Final EIS released in 2009, the Proposed Action would authorize domestic livestock grazing on the eight allotments in the Project Area. Under this alternative, proper use criteria (utilization) would be based on the current ecological conditions (functioning, functioning-at-risk or non-functioning) within each allotment. The ecological condition of the allotments would continue to be evaluated through a long-term monitoring process. If long-term monitoring indicates the ecological condition of the allotment has changed, then the set of proper use criteria associated with that ecological condition would be applied to the allotment.

Possible Alternatives

In addition to the Proposed Action, two additional alternatives have been identified for analysis in the SEIS:


2. No Grazing Alternative: Eliminate grazing in the Buffalo, Granite Creek, and Rebel Creek Allotments immediately.

Responsible Official

The responsible official is: Jeanne Higgins, Forest Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

Given the purpose and need, the deciding officer will decide whether or not to continue grazing on the Buffalo, Granite Creek, and Rebel Creek Allotments in the Martin Basin Rangeland Project area. If the decision is to continue grazing, then under what terms and conditions will livestock grazing be managed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, mail correspondence to or contact Vernon Keller, NEPA Coordinator, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431. The telephone number is: 775-355-5356. E-mail address is: vkeller@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

DATES: The Draft SEIS is expected to be released for public review and comment in March of 2010 and the new Final SEIS is expected to be released in July of 2010.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: Vernon Keller, NEPA Coordinator, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431.

The Draft SEIS is expected to be released in July of 2010.
COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Arkansas Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), that a planning meeting of the Arkansas Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene by conference call at 2 p.m. and adjourn at approximately 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2010. The purpose of this meeting is to continue planning a civil rights project.

This meeting is available to the public through the following toll-free call-in number: (866) 364–7584, conference call access code number 60378320. Any interested member of the public may call this number and listen to the meeting. Callers can expect to incur charges for calls they initiate over wireless lines, as the Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Callers will incur no charge for calls they initiate over land-line connections to the toll-free telephone number. Persons with hearing impairments may also follow the proceedings by first calling the Federal Relay Service at 1–800–977–8339 and providing the Service with the conference call number and contact name Farella E. Robinson.

To ensure that the Commission secures an appropriate number of lines for the public, persons are asked to register by contacting Corrine Sanders of the Central Regional Office and TTY/TDD telephone number, by 4 p.m. on April 2, 2010.

Members of the public are entitled to submit written comments. The comments must be received in the regional office by May 2, 2010. The address is U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 400 State Avenue, Suite 908, Kansas City, Kansas 66101. Comments may be e-mailed to frobinson@usccr.gov. Records generated by this meeting may be inspected and reproduced at the Central Regional Office, as they become available, both before and after the meeting. Persons interested in the work of this advisory committee are advised to go to the Commission’s Web site, http://www.usccr.gov, or to contact the Central Regional Office at the above email or street address.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission and FACA.


Peter Minarik, Acting Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Mississippi Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), that a meeting of the Mississippi Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at 2 p.m. and adjourn at approximately 4:30 p.m. (CST) at Mississippi Center for Public Policy, 520 George Street, Jackson, MS. The purpose of the meeting is to plan a future civil rights project.

Members of the public are entitled to submit written comments. The comments must be received in the regional office by April 25, 2010. The address is U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 400 State Avenue, Suite 908, Kansas City, Kansas 66101. Persons wishing to e-mail their comments, or to present their comments verbally at the meeting, or who desire additional information should contact Farella E. Robinson, Regional Director, Central Regional Office, at (913) 551–1400, or by e-mail to frobinson@usccr.gov.

Hearing-impaired persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact the Regional Office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

Records generated from this meeting may be inspected and reproduced at the Central Regional Office, as they become available, both before and after the meeting. Persons interested in the work of this advisory committee are advised to go to the Commission’s Web site, http://www.usccr.gov, or to contact the Central Regional Office at the above email or street address.

The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission and FACA.


Peter Minarik, Acting Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.