

# Notices

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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

### Office of the Secretary

#### National Monitoring Plan for Native Bees: Stakeholder and Public Listening Session

**AGENCY:** National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Office of the Secretary, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of listening session and request for stakeholder input.

**SUMMARY:** On behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Pollinator Health Working Group, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) will host a Listening Session to discuss a strategy to monitor native bees in the United States.

**DATES:** The session will occur on Wednesday, June 28, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (EST). Regardless of attendance, anyone interested may submit written comments. Those comments are due to Andrew Clark at [Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov) by July 6, 2017.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place at the USDA South Building Café Conference Center A–C located at 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250. All participants must report to the Independence Avenue and 12th Street entrance and must present a valid government-issued I.D. (e.g., state driver's license or identification card) for admission.

**RSVP and Registration:** Individuals wishing to attend the event must RSVP no later than June 14, 2017 by emailing Andrew Clark at [Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov). In-person participation is limited to the first 100 individuals who register. Everyone is welcome to participate in the listening session by webinar. A few days before the event, NIFA's Web site will include details about the webinar at <https://nifa.usda.gov/>

[resources?f%5B0%5D=field\\_resource\\_type%3A18](#).

Onsite participants may provide a five-minute oral presentation addressing the following:

- Why is a national monitoring plan for native bees important;
- What kind of information/data is needed; and
- How would the information be used?

Registrants wishing to provide an oral presentation must provide a two to three sentence overview of the questions above. PowerPoint presentation are allowed but not required. If interested, please email your overview and PowerPoint to Andrew Clark at [Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov) by 2:00 p.m., EST on June 23. Individuals scheduled to provide an oral presentation will receive notification of an assigned time by June 28. A written transcript of each presentation is required by July 6.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Andrew Clark, Program Specialist, NIFA at (202) 401–6550 or by email at [Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.P.Clark@nifa.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** *Background and Purpose:* Several species of animal pollinators in the United States have experienced significant population declines. The most economically important pollinators include managed bees (e.g., European honey bee, bumble bees, alfalfa leafcutter bee, etc.) as well as wild native bees. Numerous biotic and abiotic causes are responsible for these declines. Frequently reported factors include:

- Invasive pests, parasites, and diseases;
- Increased exposure to pesticides, pollutants or toxins;
- Nutritional deficits;
- Extreme weather events;
- Agricultural intensification and habitat loss;
- Reduced genetic diversity; and
- Changes in pollinator or crop management practices.

The loss of both managed and wild bees would have severe impacts on crops that depend on pollinators, and would ultimately impact food security. This loss would also negatively impact natural ecosystem services dependent on pollinators.

In June 2014, a Presidential memorandum directed the formation of

a National Pollinator Task Force chaired by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Task Force released a Pollinator Research Action Plan in May 2015. The Plan included actions needed to assess native bee populations, including developing baseline data, assessing trends in pollinator populations, expanding bee identification capacities, and expanding collaboration between government and university scientists.

During 2015, Senators Barbara Boxer, Kristen Gillibrand, and Diane Feinstein asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review USDA and EPA efforts to protect bee health.

In their 2016 report, a key GAO findings was,

“USDA has increased monitoring of honey bee colonies managed by beekeepers to better estimate losses nationwide but does not have a mechanism in place to coordinate the monitoring of wild, native bees.”

The GAO Report recommended that USDA coordinate with members of the Pollinator Task Force to develop a monitoring plan that would:

- Establish roles and responsibilities of lead and support agencies;
- Establish shared outcomes and goals; and
- Obtain input from relevant stakeholders, such as states.

A first step towards developing a national monitoring plan, the listening session will gather input from a diverse range of people who are interested in native bee diversity, abundance, and large scale national monitoring strategies.

*Prospectus:* The morning portion of the listening session will include brief introductions and opening remarks by USDA leaders and relevant federal agencies followed by five-minute oral presentations. Approximately 15 minutes of questions and discussion will follow every fifth presentation. After lunch, public presentations will continue, followed by closing remarks. The NIFA Web site ([www.nifa.usda.gov](http://www.nifa.usda.gov)) will include a link to a detailed schedule approximately a week before the listening session.

Done at Washington, DC, May 30, 2017.

**Sonny Ramaswamy,**

*Director, National Institute of Food and Agriculture.*

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BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Notice of Updated Information Concerning the Atlantic Coast Pipeline Project and Supply Header Project and the Associated Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plan Amendments

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; updating information.

**SUMMARY:** The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) is participating as a cooperating agency with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in the preparation of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and Supply Header Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). On January 6, 2017, the Forest Service published in the **Federal Register** (82 FR 1685) a Notice of Availability of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and Supply Header Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Draft of Amendments to the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests' Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) to allow for the ACP to cross through these National Forests. Since that publication, the Forest Service determined there is a need to disclose the following: New information relating to the proposed LRMP amendments; a change in the Responsible Officials for the amendments; and the substantive provisions in the planning regulations that are likely to be directly related to the proposed amendments. In addition, a proposed change to one of the LRMP amendments will result in a change to the administrative review procedures as outlined in the January 6, 2017 **Federal Register** Notice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Information about the ACP Project is available from the FERC's Office of External Affairs at 866-208-FERC (3372), or on the FERC Web site ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)). On the FERC's Web site, go to "Documents & Filings," click on the "eLibrary" link, click on "General Search" and enter the docket number CP15-554. Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov), or toll free at 866-208-3676, or for TTY, contact

202-502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the FERC such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

For information related specifically to the new information provided in this Notice, please contact Karen Overcash, Forest Planner, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, at 540-265-5175 or [kovercash@fs.fed.us](mailto:kovercash@fs.fed.us).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

This Notice is specific to the Forest Service. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline route would cross 5.1 miles of lands managed by the Monongahela National Forest (MNF), in Pocahontas County, West Virginia and 15.9 miles of lands managed by the George Washington National Forest (GWNF), in Highland, Bath, and Augusta Counties, Virginia. The Supply Header Project would not affect the Monongahela or George Washington National Forests.

The FERC is the NEPA Lead Federal Agency for the environmental analysis of the construction and operation of the proposed ACP and Supply Header Project. The Forest Service is the Federal agency responsible for authorizing this use and issuing special use permits for natural gas pipelines across National Forest System (NFS) lands under its jurisdiction. As a condition of issuing a Special Use Permit (SUP) for ACP to construct, operate, maintain, and eventually decommission a natural gas transmission pipeline that crosses NFS lands, the Forest Service would include such terms and conditions deemed necessary to protect Federal property and otherwise protect the public interest.

The Forest Service intends to adopt FERC's EIS for its decision to authorize the construction and operation of ACP, along with the necessary project-specific amendments to the LRMPs, if the analysis provides sufficient evidence to support those decisions and the Forest Service is satisfied that its comments and suggestions have been addressed.

**Planning Rule Requirements for LRMP Amendments**

On December 15, 2016 the Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment issued a final rule that amended the 36 CFR 219 regulations pertaining to National Forest System Land Management Planning (the planning rule) (81 FR 90723, 90737). The amendment to the 219 planning rule clarified the Department's direction for amending LRMPs. The Department also added a requirement for amending

a plan for the responsible official to provide notice "about which substantive requirements of §§ 219.8 through 219.11 are likely to be directly related to the amendment" (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2), 81 FR at 90738). Whether a rule provision is directly related to an amendment is determined by any one of the following: The purpose of the amendment, a beneficial effect of the amendment, or a lessening of plan protections by the amendment.

The following descriptions of the proposed or potential LRMP amendments that are anticipated to be addressed in the Final EIS include a description of the "substantive requirements of §§ 219.8 through 219.11" likely to be directly related to each amendment.

**New Information for LRMP Amendments and Relationship to Substantive Requirements in the Planning Rule**

The FERC's Draft EIS for the ACP and the Notice of Availability published in the **Federal Register** on January 6, 2017 included the consideration of a Forest Service authorization for construction and operation of the ACP across NFS lands and the associated Forest Service LRMP amendments that would be needed to make the project consistent with the respective LRMPs if the Forest Service were to approve the authorization (36 CFR 219.15).

The Draft EIS identified "project-specific plan amendments" that would be needed for the construction and operation of the ACP that otherwise could not, or potentially could not, meet certain standards in the MNF or GWNF LRMPs. These amendments are considered project-specific amendments because they would apply only to ACP and would not change LRMP requirements for other projects.

Since the Draft EIS, the Forest Service has reconsidered whether a project-specific amendment would still be necessary to ensure the ACP was consistent with some of the LRMP standards, has identified the need for a project-specific amendment with respect to several other LRMP standards, and has determined that a management prescription reallocation would not be necessary to approve the project.

**Monongahela National Forest**

The following potential amendment to the MNF LRMP would be a project-specific amendment, applicable only to the ACP Project. This amendment would not change the applicability of