

Tribes, or poultry owners and producers, USDA APHIS VS would provide technical guidance (*e.g.*, recommendations, issuance of guidance documents) about surveillance testing to owners and producers of commercial and backyard flocks that are not experiencing signs of clinical illness to determine if infections of the virus have occurred. USDA APHIS VS may provide indemnity and/or financial compensation.

Under the Federal Operational Assistance Alternative, USDA APHIS VS would conduct all activities as described under the No Federal Operational Assistance Alternative. In addition, upon request from State, local, or Tribal authorities, USDA APHIS VS would provide operational assistance through managing, overseeing, and/or actively participating in depopulation, carcass disposal, and transportation. Cleaning and disinfection would be the responsibility of States, Tribes, and poultry owners and producers, as USDA APHIS VS does not perform these activities. USDA APHIS VS would also provide tools upon request, such as machinery and contracted operators, for depopulation and disposal activities. The level of assistance USDA APHIS VS would provide will depend on the needs of the impacted State.

Under the Federal Operational Assistance with Biosecurity Incentive Alternative (Preferred Alternative), USDA APHIS VS would provide all the same support and assistance described under the Federal Operational Assistance Alternative. In addition, USDA APHIS VS may choose to incentivize poultry owners and producers, via qualifying their eligibility for indemnity or compensation, to implement biosecurity measures that may mitigate the risk of HPAI infection and reinfection on poultry premises within an outbreak Control Area. This alternative would incentivize compliance with the written biosecurity plan for all commercial poultry producers. Under this alternative, USDA APHIS VS may require various types of in-person or virtual audits to verify that appropriate biosecurity plans are in place as conditions for indemnity and/or compensation for HPAI.

The potential environmental impacts on the following resources are considered in the draft EIS: Soil, air, and water quality; vegetation health; humans (including effects on health and safety, the economy, equity and environmental justice, cultural and historic resources, children's health, and Tribes); wildlife health, including birds of conservation concern, eagles, and threatened and endangered species.

The draft programmatic EIS also considers the impacts of HPAI outbreak response activities on climate change, the impacts of climate change on HPAI outbreak response activities, and the cumulative impacts from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future related actions. The primary HPAI outbreak response activities that will be the focus of the impacts section under each alternative are depopulation and disposal, as well as some discussion concerning transportation and cleaning and disinfection.

In general, the potential environmental impacts from the Federal Operational Assistance and Biosecurity Incentive Alternative are expected to result in similar or less environmental impacts than impacts under the No Federal Operational Assistance Alternative. Direct assistance from USDA APHIS VS would mean an additional level of expertise when making decisions and implementing actions. With Federal, State, and local authorities, Tribes, and poultry owners and producers all working together, it is more likely that the disease will be eradicated as rapidly as possible. A rigorous Federal response should incentivize the rapid reporting of HPAI incidents because it achieves disease eradication while providing relief to the poultry owners and producers, States and Tribes that may lack the resources to deal with the outbreaks in a timely manner. The benefit of completing HPAI virus eradication activities as fast as possible is that it would decrease the risk of HPAI spreading to nearby premises or to wild birds that may infect other flocks thereby thus preventing additional environmental impacts from future HPAI outbreaks and HPAI outbreak responses. Under the Federal Operational Assistance and Biosecurity Incentive Alternative, poultry suffering from HPAI should be minimized due to effective and efficient depopulation procedures being implemented with USDA APHIS VS assistance. Additionally, the assistance of USDA APHIS VS under the Federal Operational Assistance and Biosecurity Incentive Alternative is also expected to allow poultry owners and producers to resume business as rapidly as possible and likely more rapidly than under the No Federal Operational Assistance Alternative.

Impacts under the Federal Operational Assistance and Biosecurity Incentive Alternative may see the greatest reduction in impacts of all the alternatives. Requiring certain biosecurity measures as part of the outbreak response in order to receive indemnity and/or compensation may

increase the chance of biosecurity measures being implemented by commercial poultry owners and producers. Under this alternative, increased biosecurity measures could decrease the chance of reinfections at the outbreak site or at surrounding premises resulting in a decrease in future HPAI outbreak response activities and their potential impacts over time.

Based on the draft programmatic EIS, USDA APHIS VS has concluded that the three alternatives will have minor impacts on soil, air, water quality, wildlife, and vegetation health if all appropriate Federal, State, and local laws and guidance are followed. Risk of HPAI infections to humans is low, with risks of injuries and psychological trauma to workers being a concern that is minimized by following appropriate guidelines. Under all alternatives, impacts to climate change would be relative to the biomass of poultry depopulated and carcasses disposed of, and the particular depopulation, disposal, and sanitation methods used.

After the public comment period ends, we will consider all comments received, revise the draft programmatic EIS to address these comments, as appropriate, and publish a notice of availability of the final programmatic EIS in the **Federal Register**.

The draft programmatic EIS was prepared in accordance with: (1) the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA-implementing regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), compliant with the July 2020 regulations, (3) USDA's NEPA-implementing regulations (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) USDA APHIS' NEPA-Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 5th day of August 2024.

Michael Watson,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2024–18156 Filed 8–15–24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. FSIS–2024–0019]

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Department of Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notification of public meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), FSIS is announcing a virtual meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI). The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on State and Federal meat and poultry inspection programs, food safety, and other matters that fall within the scope of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA). The committee will convene virtually on September 16 and 17, 2024. The Committee will review and advise FSIS on whether the Agency should change its definitions for establishment sizes to better assess and describe current business operations. The Committee will also offer input on ways technology could enhance FSIS' inspection activities.

DATES: The public meeting is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. EDT on September 16 and 17, 2024.

ADDRESSES: The meeting is virtual and will be viewable via a link provided by email when you register for the meeting. Attendees must pre-register for the meeting. See the pre-registration instructions under "Registration and Meeting Materials."

Public Comments: FSIS invites interested persons to submit comments on this meeting by September 16, 2024. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* This website provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.

- *Mail:* Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

- *Hand- or Courier-Delivered Submittals:* Deliver to 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Jamie L. Whitten Building, Room 350-E, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

Instructions: All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number FSIS-2024-0019. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Docket: For access to background documents or comments received, call

202-720-5046 to schedule a time to visit the FSIS Docket Room at 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Katrina Green, Director, Resource and Administrative Management Staff—Designated Federal Officer, Office of Policy and Program Development, by email at NACMPI@usda.gov or telephone at 202-205-0495 regarding specific questions about the Committee or this meeting. General information about the Committee can also be found at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/nacmpi>. For the hearing impaired, contact the Federal Information Relay Service: <https://www.federalrelay.us/> or 800-877-0996 (Voice, TTY, ASCII or Spanish).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The NACMPI was established in 1971 and is authorized under section 301(a)(4) of the FMIA (21 U.S.C. 661(a)(4)) to carry out the responsibilities imposed by 21 U.S.C. 607(c), 624, 645, 661(a)(3), and 661(c), and authorized under 21 U.S.C. 454(a)(4) of the PPIA, to carry out the responsibilities imposed by 21 U.S.C. 454(a)(3), 454(c), 457(b), and 460(e). The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice to the Secretary on meat and poultry inspection programs, food safety, and other matters that fall within the scope of the FMIA and PPIA. The current charter and other information about NACMPI can be found at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/advisory-committees/national-advisory-committee-meat-and-poultry-inspection-nacmpi>. Membership of NACMPI is drawn from consumers; public health and academic communities; state and local governments; and industry.

On September 16 and 17, 2024, NACMPI will review and advise FSIS on whether the Agency should change its definitions for establishment size categories (*i.e.*, large, small, and very small) to better assess and describe current business operations as well as to better determine the impact of FSIS policies on different size establishments.¹ The Committee will also offer input on ways technology could enhance FSIS' inspection activities. The two issues will be presented to the full Committee. The

¹ FSIS categorizes establishments using the following criteria: large establishments have 500 or more employees; small establishments have 10 or more employees, but fewer than 500; and very small establishments have fewer than 10 employees or annual sales of less than \$2.5 million (see 61 FR 38806).

Committee will then divide into two subcommittees to discuss the issues. Each subcommittee will provide a report of their comments and recommendations to the full Committee before the meeting concludes on September 17, 2024.

An agenda will be published online before the public meeting. FSIS will finalize the agenda on or before the meeting dates and post it on the FSIS website at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/meetings>.

Registration and Meeting Materials

There is no fee to register for the public meeting, but pre-registration is mandatory for participants attending. All attendees must register online at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/advisory-committees/nacmpi/meeting-registration>.

Public Comments and Participation in Meetings

Stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide oral comments during the public meeting. Stakeholders must notify FSIS during registration of their wish to speak at the meeting. Stakeholders who do not notify FSIS during registration of their wish to speak will not have the opportunity to comment on the day of the public meeting. Due to the anticipated high level of interest in the opportunity to make public comments and the limited time available to do so, FSIS will do its best to accommodate all persons who registered and requested to provide oral comments and will limit all speakers to three minutes. FSIS encourages persons and groups who have similar interests to consolidate their information for presentation by a single representative.

Transcripts

As soon as the meeting transcripts are available, they will be accessible on the FSIS website at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/advisory-committees/national-advisory-committee-meat-and-poultry-inspection-nacmpi>. The transcripts may also be viewed at the FSIS Docket Room at the address listed above.

Additional Public Notification

Public awareness of all segments of rulemaking and policy development is important. Consequently, FSIS will announce this **Federal Register** publication on-line through the FSIS web page located at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/federal-register>.

FSIS will also announce and provide a link to this **Federal Register** publication through the FSIS *Constituent Update*, which is used to

provide information regarding FSIS policies, procedures, regulations, **Federal Register** notices, FSIS public meetings, and other types of information that could affect or would be of interest to our constituents and stakeholders. The *Constituent Update* is available on the FSIS web page. Through the web page, FSIS can provide information to a much broader, more diverse audience. In addition, FSIS offers an email subscription service which provides automatic and customized access to selected food safety news and information. This service is available at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/subscribe>. Options range from recalls to export information, regulations, directives, and notices. Customers can add or delete subscriptions themselves and have the option to password protect their accounts.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at <https://www.usda.gov/forms/electronic-forms> and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant

Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410;

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. Equal opportunity practices in accordance with USDA's policies will be followed in all member appointments to the committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the committee consider the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people, including underserved communities.

Dated: August 12, 2024.

Cikena Reid,

USDA Committee Management Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Forest Service Manual 2470, Silvicultural Practices

AGENCY: Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notice of availability for public comment.

SUMMARY: The United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Agency), is revising its directive related to silvicultural practices on National Forest System lands. The proposed directive updates Forest Service Manual 2470, "Silvicultural Practices." This directive sets forth policy, responsibilities, and direction for several aspects of management and moves the agency closer to its goal of providing more current direction.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing by October 15, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted electronically to <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Project/Details/4178>. Written comments may be mailed to Stephanie Miller, Assistant Director for Future Forest, Denver Federal Center, Building 40, Lakewood, CO 80215. All timely received comments, including names and addresses, will be placed in the record and will be available for public inspection and copying. The public may inspect comments received at <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Project/Details/4178>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephanie Miller, Assistant Director for Future Forest, by phone at 720-354-6454 or by email to stephanie.miller2@usda.gov. Individuals who use telecommunications devices for the hearing impaired may call 711 to reach the Telecommunications Relay Service, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed directive reorganizes and eliminates redundant policies and procedures, deletes obsolete references, and updates agency policies and procedures. The intent of the updates is to amend the directive to reflect new authorities and more closely align with current and future forest restoration needs. An analysis of existing agency policy in Forest Service Handbooks and Manuals was conducted to identify revisions needed to support this initiative.

The Forest Service has determined that the changes to the manual formulate standards, criteria, or guidelines applicable to a Forest Service program and it is therefore publishing the proposed directive for public comment in accordance with 36 CFR part 216. The Forest Service is seeking public comment on the proposed directive, including the sufficiency of the proposed directive in meeting the stated objectives, ways to enhance the utility and clarity of information within the directive, or ways to streamline processes outlined.

Forest Service National Environmental Policy Act procedures exclude from documentation in an environmental assessment or impact statement "rules, regulations, or policies to establish servicewide administrative procedures, program processes, or instructions." 36 CFR 220.6(d)(2). The Agency's conclusion is that the proposed directive falls within this category of actions and that no extraordinary circumstances exist as currently defined that require preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

After the public comment period closes, the Forest Service will consider timely comments that are within the scope of the proposed directive in the development of the final directive. A notice of the final directive, including a response to timely comments, will be posted on the Forest Service's web page at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about>.