

EIS. For most effective use, comments would be submitted to the Forest Service within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. Preparation of the EIS will include the following steps:

1. Define the purpose of and need for action.
2. Identify potential issues.
3. Eliminate issues of minor importance or those that have been covered by previous and relevant environmental analysis.
4. Select issues to be analyzed in depth.
5. Identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action.
6. Describe the affected environment.
7. Identify the potential environmental effects of the alternatives.

Steps 2, 3, and 4 will be completed through the scoping process.

Step 5 will consider a range of alternatives developed from the key issues and management needs. At a minimum, the "No Action" and "Propose Action" Alternatives will be analyzed. Other alternatives could involve modified tract boundaries (additions and/or reductions) and different sets of special lease stipulations for the protection of non-mineral resources. Alternatives may also be developed to include analysis of mining in the existing adjacent lease area and a potential modification of adjacent existing leases to add up to 160 acres/lease to prevent bypassing minable reserves.

Step 6 will describe the physical attributes of the area to be affected by this proposal, with special attention to the environmental factors that could be adversely affected.

Step 7 will analyze the environmental effects of each alternative. This analysis will be consistent with management direction outlined in the Forest plan. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of each alternative will be analyzed and documented. In addition, the site specific mitigation measures for each alternative will be identified and the effectiveness of these mitigation measures will be disclosed.

Agency representatives and other interested people are invited to visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the EIS process. Two specific time periods are identified for the receipt of formal comments on the analysis. The two comment periods are, (1) during the scoping process, the next 30 days following publication of this Notice in the **Federal Register**, and (2) during the formal review period of the Draft EIS.

The Draft EIS is estimated to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in September, 1998. At this time the EPA will publish an availability notice of the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**.

The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency's notice of availability appears in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate at that time. To be the most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be as specific as possible and may address the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed (See The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3).

In addition, Federal court decisions have established that reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewers' position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, (9th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). The reason for this is to ensure that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final document.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns related to the proposed action, comments on the Draft EIS should be as specific as possible. Referring to specific pages or chapters of the Draft EIS is most helpful. Comments may also address the adequacy of the Draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 CFR 1503.3, in addressing these points.)

The final EIS is expected to be released in December, 1998.

The Forest Supervisor for the Manti-La Sal National Forest and Utah State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, who are the responsible

officials for the EIS, will then make their respective decisions regarding this proposal, after considering the comments, responses, and environmental consequences discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The rationale for the respective agency decisions will be documented in the Record(s) of Decisions.

Dated: February 11, 1998.

Janette S. Kaiser,

Forest Supervisor, Manti-La Sal National Forest.

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BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business—Cooperative Service

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Rural Business—Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; comments request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of the Cooperative Development Division (CDD), Cooperative Development Program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by April 20, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Wells, Director, Cooperative Development Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 3254, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3254, Telephone: (202) 720-3350.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Cooperative Services Questionnaire:

New Cooperative Volume and Structure, Producer Survey for New Cooperative Activity.

OMB Number: 0570-0008.

Expiration Date of Approval: May 31, 1998.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) Cooperative Services Programs conducts feasibility studies to assist in the development of new cooperatives. The Cooperative Development Division (CDD) specializes

in technical assistance to agricultural and rural producer groups interested in organizing a cooperative, and to emerging or developing co-ops, so they can: (a) Use sensible economic judgment, (b) determine co-op feasibility, (c) meet an economic need, (d) successfully operate on sound business principles and, (e) increase member income. In order to carry out the Agency's mission, RBS needs to collect information from the cooperative community.

The authority to carry out RBS mission is defined in the Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926 (44 Stat. 802-1926), and other regulations listed below.

Authority and Duties of Division (7 U.S.C. & 453)

(a) The division shall render service to associations of producers of agricultural products, and federations and subsidiaries thereof, engaged in the cooperative marketing of agricultural products, including processing, warehousing, manufacturing, storage, the cooperative purchasing of farm supplies, credit, financing, insurance, and other cooperative activities.

(b) The division is authorized:

(1) To acquire, analyze and disseminate economic, statistical, and historical information regarding the progress, organization, and business methods of cooperative associations in the United States and foreign countries.

(2) To conduct studies of the economic, legal, financial, social, and other phases of cooperation, and publish the results thereof. Such studies shall include the analyses of the organization, operation, financial, and merchandising problems of cooperative associations.

(3) To make surveys and analyses if deemed advisable of the accounts and business practices of representative cooperative associations upon their request; to report to the association so surveyed to results thereof, and with the consent of the association so surveyed to publish summaries of the results of such surveys, together with similar facts, for the guidance of cooperative associations and for the purpose of assisting cooperative associations in developing methods of business and market analysis.

(4) To confer and advise with committees or groups of producers, if deemed advisable, that may be desirous of forming a cooperative association and to make an economic survey and analysis of the facts surrounding the production and marketing of the agricultural product or products which

the association, if formed, would handle or market.

(5) To acquire from all available sources information concerning crop prospects, supply, demand, current receipts, exports, imports, and prices of the agricultural products handled or marketed by cooperative associations, and to employ qualified commodity marketing specialists to summarize and analyze this information and disseminate the same among cooperative associations, and others.

(6) To promote the knowledge of cooperative principles and practices and to cooperate, in promoting such knowledge, with educational and marketing agencies, cooperative associations, and others.

(7) To make such special studies, in the United States and foreign countries, and to acquire and disseminate such information and findings as may be useful in the development and practice of cooperation.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response.

Respondents: Mainly producers of agricultural products in domestic market areas in which proposed cooperatives would be expected to market their member's products.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 245.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 245 hours per year.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Diana Wareham, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 720-1975.

Comments: Comments are invited on:

(a) Whether the proposed 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 the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions 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 techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Diana Wareham, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0743, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0743. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request

for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 11, 1998.

Dayton J. Watkins,

Administrator, Rural Business—Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 98-4170 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Alabama Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the Alabama Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 6:00 p.m. and adjourn at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 1998, at the Christian Tutwiler Hotel, 2021 Park Place North, Birmingham, Alabama 32503. The purpose of the meeting is to plan future activities.

Persons desiring additional information, or planning a presentation to the Committee, should contact Melvin L. Jenkins, Director of the Central Regional Office, 913-551-1400 (TDD 913-551-1414). 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.

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

Dated at Washington, DC, February 6, 1998.

Carol-Lee Hurley,

Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.

[FR Doc. 98-4119 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6335-01-P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Nebraska Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the Nebraska Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 6:00 p.m. and adjourn at 8:00 p.m. on March 5, 1998, at the Double Tree Hotel, 1616 Dodge Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102. The purpose of the meeting is to plan future activities.

Persons desiring additional information, or planning a presentation to the Committee, should contact