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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

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-037N]

Technical Conference on HACCP Implementation

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is holding a public meeting on August 17-18, 1999, to discuss technical issues related to the implementation of the Pathogen Reduction/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Systems, Final Rule. The focus of the meeting will be to address how a hazard analysis is to be conducted and documented, and what constitutes validation of HACCP plans. In conjunction with addressing what constitutes the validation of HACCP plans, the topics of Listeria and performance standards related to lethality and stabilization will be addressed. A steering committee made up of people from industry, trade associations, consumer groups, and academia assisted in identifying sub-topics to be addressed at the conference. The FSIS Technical Service Center staff, which is the Agency's primary resource for addressing technical questions, will host the meeting.

DATES: The public meeting will be held August 17-18, 1999, from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. each day.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Omaha Downtown/Old Market, 555 South 10th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, Telephone (402) 346-9000, FAX (402) 345-6156. The meeting is open to the public on a space-available basis. To register for the meeting, contact Ms. Deborah Arthur of the Food Safety and Inspection Service's Technical Service

Center on or before August 10, 1999, by TELEPHONE (402) 221-7400, FAX (402) 221-7438, or e-mail

deborah.arthur@usda.gov Attendees who require a sign language interpreter or other special accommodation should contact Ms. Arthur at the above numbers. Send an original and two copies of comments to: FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #99-037N, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection in the Docket Clerk's Office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Transcripts from the meeting will be on file for viewing in the FSIS Docket Clerk's Office.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Karlease Kelly, Technical Service Center, Office of Field Operations, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Suite 300 Landmark Center, 1299 Farnam Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, TELEPHONE 402-221-7400, FAX 402-221-7421 or e-mail karlease.kelly@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to address technical issues that have emerged during the implementation of the Agency's Pathogen Reduction/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) Systems Final Rule, which published on July 25, 1996. The PR/HACCP rule calls for federally inspected establishments to develop a HACCP-based food safety system to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses from livestock and poultry products. The PR/HACCP Systems Final Rule has been implemented in large and small establishments with a high degree of success. The final phase of implementation will take place in January 2000, with the implementation by very small establishments.

It is envisioned that the meeting will be useful for the establishments that have already implemented HACCP as well as for those establishments that will be implementing HACCP.

Done at Washington, DC on: July 13, 1999.

Thomas J. Billy,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 99-18661 Filed 7-21-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Mill-Key-Wey Timber Sales; Superior Ranger District, Lolo National Forest; Mineral County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for timber harvesting, prescribed burning, road access changes, and watershed rehabilitation in a 25,000-acre area near Superior, Montana. Lands affected are within the Mill, Fourmile, Slowey Gulch, Keystone and Pardee Creek drainages, tributary to the Clark Fork River, between Superior and St. Regis, Montana. The project area is bounded by Interstate 90 to the south and west and the Ninemile divide between Plains/Thompson Falls and Superior Ranger Districts to the north.

DATES: Initial comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing no later than August 23, 1999. Comments received during the previous scoping will be considered in the analysis and do not need to be resubmitted during this comment time period.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Cindy Champman Enstrom, District Ranger, Superior Ranger District, Box 460, Superior, MT 59872.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Martin, Mill-Key-Wey Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Superior Ranger District, as above, or phone: (406) 822-4233.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public involvement was initiated in September 1996 on the Mill-Key-Wey proposal. Additional public involvement was conducted in November of that year during alternative development. An open house hosted by the Superior Ranger District was held on January 1997, where additional comments were solicited. A follow-up letter was sent in April 1997 to the open house attendees notifying them of the project status and projected timelines.

The environmental analysis has indicated that significant effects may occur. Accordingly, we are now in the process of developing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS proposes the following:

The Proposed Action would harvest about 25.2 million board feet of timber from about 5812 acres (about 5180 of those acres to be burned after harvest), to underburn an additional 1348 acres, to construct 10.6 miles of new road (5.1 miles of this total will be temporary or short term access roads, reclaimed after use), to reconstruct or recondition about 13.1 miles of road and rehabilitate about 7.7 miles of existing road (primarily to mitigate existing water quality and fish habitat impacts), and to change travel management on 10.5 miles of existing roads, including 2.7 miles from open yearlong to closed yearlong, 3.6 miles from seasonal to year long closure and 4.2 miles open yearlong to a seasonal closure.

The purpose of this proposal is to carry out the goals and direction given in the Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan with ecosystem management principles. Key elements of the purpose and need are:

- (1) Maintain and restore ecosystem health through timber harvesting and prescribe burning that would develop sustainable plant communities;
- (2) Improve and maintain big game winter range and elk security conditions which are declining due to current plant successional trends and existing open road access;
- (3) Reduce existing sediment impacts to water and fish resources caused by existing roads;
- (4) Provide a more favorable and safe access to an existing electronic site;
- (5) Improve the visual quality of several old harvest units and create scenic vistas to improve viewing opportunities, and
- (6) Provide a sustained yield of timber to help support the economic structure of the local communities.

The decision to be made is to what extent, if at all, the Forest Service should conduct timber harvest, prescribed burning, road construction or reconstruction, road reclamation, and road closures in the Mill, Fourmile, Slowey Gulch, Keystone and Pardee Creek drainages, given the above purpose and need. This is a site-specific project decision, not a general management plan nor a programmatic analysis.

While quite a number of issues have been identified for environmental effects analysis during scoping, the following issues have been found significant enough to guide alternative development and provide focus for the EIS:

- (1) Wildlife habitat effects (including hunting season bull elk security) resulting from timber harvest and road

construction and rehabilitation activities; and

- (2) Visual quality effects due to proposed harvesting and road building;
- (3) Road management changes that affect accessibility to national forest lands;
- (4) Water quality and fish habitat which are affected by existing roads;
- (5) Forest Health effects in fire dependent ecosystems.

The proposed action could have both beneficial and adverse effects on these resources. In addition to the proposed action, a range of alternatives has been developed in response to issues identified during scoping that meet or partially fulfill the purpose and need. Other alternatives that have been given detailed study are:

- (1) No action;
- (2) Harvest only from existing roads (no new roads or temporary roads), reconstruct 13.1 miles of existing road, rehabilitate 5.9 miles of road, add year-round road closures to one mile of existing road and change access from seasonal restrictions to open yearlong on 3.6 miles; and
- (3) Use prescribed burning only (no timber harvest), rehabilitate 5.9 miles of existing road and change access on 2.7 miles of road from open yearlong to closed yearlong and 3.6 miles from seasonal closure to open yearlong; and,
- (4) Harvest timber similar to the proposed action, construct 10 miles of new road (6.1 miles of this total would be temporary or short term roads, reclaimed after use), reconstruct 13.1 miles of existing road with no new road restrictions.

Public participation is important to the analysis. People may visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. No additional formal scoping meetings are planned. Another formal opportunity for response will be provided following completion of a draft EIS.

The draft EIS should be available for review in August, 1999. The final EIS is scheduled for completion in December, 1999.

The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The responsible official who will make decisions based on this EIS is, Forest Supervisor, Lolo National Forest, Building 24, Fort Missoula, Missoula, MT 59804. She will decide on this proposal after considering comments and responses, environmental consequences discussed in the Final EIS, and applicable laws, regulations,

and policies. The decision and reasons for the decision will be documented in a Record of Decision.

The Forest Service believes it is important, at this early stage, to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so it is meaningful and alerts the 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 environmental impact statement stage but are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so 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 environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement 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 at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

I am the responsible official for this environmental impact statement. My address is Lolo National Forest, Building 24, Fort Missoula, Missoula MT 59804.

Authority: 40 CFR 1508.22.

Dated: July 12, 1999.

Deborah L.R. Austin,
Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 99-18759 Filed 7-21-99; 8:45 am]

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