

public review by January 2000. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date EPA publishes the notice of availability of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**.

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

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS 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 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 at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points).

Individuals and organizations who write to comment on projects may have their letters released in their entirety, if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed in March 2000. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making the decision regarding this proposal. Sonny O'Neal, Forest Supervisor, is the responsible official. As responsible official, he will document the project

decision and rationale in a Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR Part 215 and 36 CFR 251).

Dated: August 13, 1999.

Stuart Woolley,

Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor, Okanogan National Forest.

[FR Doc. 99-21635 Filed 8-19-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Goose Restoration Projects, Winema National Forest, Klamath County, Oregon

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for restoration projects on the Klamath Ranger District of the Winema National Forest. The planning area is located in T32S, R6E, T32S, R7 1/2E, T33S, R6E, and T33S, R7 1/2E, Willamette Meridian. Projects included under this analysis include commercial timber harvest, precommercial thinning, underburning, post and pole harvest, reforestation, evaluation of access and travel opportunities, road closures and obliterations, correction of sediment problems at the Annie Creek dispersed site, and elk forage enhancement. The Forest Service is initiating the process of preparing an EIS to analyze and disclose the effects of the proposed action and alternatives.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing by September 20, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Goose Project, Klamath Ranger District, 1936 California Ave., Klamath Falls, Oregon, 97601.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Phil Jahns, Klamath Ranger District, Winema National Forest, 1936 California Avenue, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601, phone 541-885-3400 or e-mail at: pjahns/r6pnw__,winema@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Goose Planning Area is located on the east side of the southern Cascades immediately south of Crater Lake National Park. The elevation ranges from 4000 to 6000 feet and encompasses forest types ranging from lodgepole pine and white fir in the lower elevations to Shasta red fir and Mountain hemlock in the higher reaches. The planning area contains one of the largest root disease pockets in western North America.

This project-level EIS will tier to the 1990 Winema National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended by the 1994 Record of Decision for "Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Document Within the Range of the Northern spotted Owl" (Forest Plan). The Forest Plan provides guidance for management activities within the potentially affected area through its goals objectives, management area direction, and standards and guidelines. The project would occur primarily within Scenic Management Area (MA3) and to a lesser extent within Late Successional Reserve (MA16) and Timber Management Area (MA12).

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to (1) develop implementable treatments that will reduce the risk of large scale disturbances and/or encourage development of old growth characteristics within the planning area, (2) review the adequacy of the transportation system for the future and recommend deletion of those segments that are surplus to the needs or that are contributing to water quality problems, and (3) produce a timber product from matrix lands.

Proposed Action

The proposal contains a series of projects which reduce forest mortality to root disease while improving watershed condition. Up to 1930 acres of commercial harvest with thinning prescriptions will be proposed. Up to 2320 acres may be treated with prescribed underburning, possibly in conjunction with thinning. Up to 335 acres will be precommercially thinned and up to 100 acres will have opportunities to harvest posts and poles. Other proposed activities are 150 acres of seeding to improve elk foraging habitat, evaluation of access and travel opportunities and up to 40 miles of road may be closed or obliterated. In addition, the recreation site by Annie Creek will be reconstructed to minimize sediment.

Alternatives

The No Action alternative will serve as a baseline for comparison of alternatives and will be fully developed and analyzed. With the No Action alternative, there would be no activities implemented based on the Goose analysis. Previously approved activities, and routine protection and maintenance activities will continue. The proposed action, as described above, will be considered and other alternatives will be developed around the proposed

action to address issues identified in the scoping and public involvement process.

Issues

The preliminary issues that have been identified include the importance of the area for elk calving, the need to improve connectivity of late seral habitat between blocks of Late Successional Reserve and Crater Lake National Park, and the potential impact of the project on roadless values.

Public Involvement

Public participation will be important at several points during the EIS preparation. The first point is during the scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7). The Forest Service will be seeking information and comments from Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. This input will be used in preparation of the draft EIS.

Public scoping will be achieved through mailings, notification in the Klamath Falls Herald & News, and if interest dictates, public meetings will be held within the Klamath Basin.

A range of alternatives will be considered including the No Action alternative. As issues are identified, other potential alternatives will be developed.

Comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within a specified number of days.

Estimated Dates For Draft and Final EIS

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review in January 2000. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date EPA's Notice of Availability appears in the **Federal Register**.

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

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS 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 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 at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

After the 45 day comment period ends on the draft EIS, the comments will be analyzed and considered by the Forest Service in preparing the final EIS. The final EIS is scheduled to be completed by April 2000. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to the comments received (40 CFR 1503.4). Forest Supervisor, Winema National Forest, is the responsible official and will consider comments, responses, environmental consequences discussed in the EIS and applicable laws,

regulations, and policies in making a decision regarding this proposal. The responsible official will document the decision and reasons for the decision in the Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR Part 215).

Dated: August 12, 1999.

Mary C. Erickson,

Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor, Winema National Forest.

[FR Doc. 99-21634 Filed 8-19-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee will hold a meeting on September 28, 1999, at the Granlibakken Conference Center, 725 Granlibakken Road, Tahoe City, CA. This Committee, established by the Secretary of Agriculture on December 15, 1998 (64 FR 2876), is chartered to provide advice to the Secretary on implementing the terms of the Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Region and other matters raised by the Secretary.

DATES: The meeting will be held September 28, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the City of South Lake Tahoe Chamber Office, 1900 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ed Gee or Jeannie Stafford, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Forest Service, 870 Emerald Bay Road Suite 1, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150, (530) 573-2642.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The committee will meet jointly with the Lake Tahoe Basin Executives Committees. Items to be covered on the agenda include: (1) Recommendations to the Federal Partners on the Watershed Assessment; (2) Recommendations to the Federal Partners regarding federal budget priorities; (3) discussion of the USDA Forest Supervisor Replacement; (4) Open Public Comment. All Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. Issues may be brought to the attention of the Committee during the open public comment period at the