

the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to Council on Environmental Quality *Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* at CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

This decision will be subject to appeal under 36 CFR 215. The responsible official is John R. Schultz, Bradford Ranger District, Star Route 1 Box 88, Bradford, PA 16701.

Dated: July 17, 2000.

John R. Schultz,

District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 00-18520 Filed 7-27-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Sixshooter Project, Boise National Forest, Valley County, Idaho

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Emmett Ranger District of the Boise National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for project in the Six Mile subwatershed, a tributary to the Middle Fork Payette River drainage. The project area is located about 70 road miles north of Boise, Idaho.

The Forest Service is seeking information and comments from Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies, as well as individuals and organizations who may be interested and/or affected by the proposed action. The agency invites written comments and suggestions on the issues related to the proposal and the area being analyzed. The information received will be used in preparing the draft and final EIS.

Proposed Action: Three objections have been identified for the project: (1) Reduce forest susceptibility to damaging insects and/or pests and to severe wildfire; (2) reduce management induced sediment in Six Mile and West Fork Creek by up to 9 percent over current levels; and (3) provide forest products (*i.e.*, commercial timber) that support local sawmills, employment opportunities, and economies.

The proposal action would treat, with timber harvest, about 9,000 acres, through ground-based (2,300 acres), skyline/cable (4,500 acres), or helicopter (2,000 acres) yarding systems. The proposed action would employ a variety of silvicultural systems. Silvicultural prescriptions for the proposed action are clearcut with reserve (32 acres),

commercial thinning (3,474 acres), and shelterwood (5,469 acres).

The existing transportation system would be improved to facilitate the harvest operation and reduce sedimentation. Changing the existing transportation system would require 16 miles of road relocation, 15 miles of new road construction, reconstruction of over 30 miles of existing road by adding drainage structures and additional hard surfacing, relocating Six Mile road (No. 670) and closing over 30 miles of existing roads. The proposed haul route would be up West Fork Creek (No. 600) road and Six Mile Creek (No. 670) road to the 662 road and then out the 417B road to Highway 55. Portions of the following roads would be closed: 600C (3.2 miles), portions of 621, (1.4 miles), and portions of 670A, (2.9 miles). Portions of the 670 road would be relocated (5.3 miles). This change in the road system targets those areas that contribute the greatest amount of sediment delivery to the watershed. The motorized access to the following roads would be maintained during the snow free season: West Fork Creek 600, Six Mile-Round Valley 670, and Middle Fork Payette Ridge 662.

Preliminary Issues: None have been identified at this time.

Possible Alternatives to the Proposed Action: The following alternative to the proposed action has been discussed thus far and will be considered in the draft environmental impact statement: a no action alternative.

Decisions to be made: The Boise National Forest Supervisor will decide the following: (1) Should roads be constructed and reconstructed and timber harvested within the Sixshooter project area at this time; and if so, where within the project area, and how many miles of road should be constructed and/or reconstructed; and (2) should other roads be relocated and/or closed to meet watershed restoration objectives.

Public Involvement and Comments: Written comments concerning the proposed project should be postmarked within 30 days from the day after publication of this announcement in the **Federal Register**.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available to 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 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 FOIA, confidentiality might be granted in only 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 the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within 10 days.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Morris Huffman, District Ranger, Emmett Ranger District, 1805 Highway 16, Emmett, ID 83617.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeffery Clark, Project Team Leader, at the address above or by telephone at 208-365-7000.

Schedule: The draft EIS is anticipated to be available for public review and comment in November 2000; the final EIS is anticipated to be available in the spring of 2001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 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 Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of the draft EIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions, (*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 533 (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 comment period so 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 environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be 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.

Responsible Official: David D. Rittenhouse, Forest Supervisor, Boise National Forest is the responsible official, 1249 South Vinnell Way, Suite 200, Boise, Idaho 83709.

Dated: July 21, 2000.

David D. Rittenhouse,
Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 00-19075 Filed 7-27-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Ray's Valley Road Realignment, Uinta National Forest, Utah County, Utah

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Uinta National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement on a proposal to realign the existing Ray's Valley Road (Forest Development Road #051). Ray's Valley road is an arterial road on the Spanish Fork Ranger District, Uinta National Forest. This is a revision to the Notice of Intent published in the **Federal Register** (Vol. 65, No. 104, pp. 34436-34437) on May 30, 2000.

DATES: Comments should be received in writing by August 30, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be mailed to Renee Flanagan, Ray's Valley EIS Team Leader, Uinta National Forest, 88 West 100 North, PO Box 1428, Provo, Utah 84601 or sent by e-mail to rflanagan@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Notice of Intent for this project was originally published in the **Federal Register** (Volume 65, Number 104, pp. 34436 to 34437) on May 30, 2000. The May 20th NOI contained an error in the scoping dates. This Revision to the NOI provides for another scoping comment period,

revises the anticipated completion dates for the Draft and Final environmental impact statements, and updates the name of the project leader and contact.

The Ray's Valley Road is a heavily used travel route that connects with the Diamond Fork Road (Forest Development Road #029), and the Right Fork Hobbie Creek Road (Forest Development Road #058) at Springville Crossing. These arterial travel routes provide access for the Wasatch Front to Spanish Fork Canyon, and Utah State Highway 6 via the Diamond Fork and Ray's Valley Roads. They also provide access to and from Utah State Highway 6 and the Strawberry Reservoir Recreation Complex via the Ray's Valley Road.

The surface of the Diamond Fork Road and most of the Ray's Valley Road are asphalt pavement of gravel. However, a portion of the Ray's Valley Road is narrow, winding, and native-surfaced. During inclement weather conditions, the road surface becomes extremely hazardous to travel, and/or impassable.

Some of the existing road lies directly adjacent to tributaries of Diamond Fork Creek. Approximately 1.8 miles of this route are located on soils subject to severe slumping and/or erosion. Due to the proximity of the road to the streams, eroding soil is easily transported into Diamond Fork and Sixth Water Creeks. Diamond Fork Creek provides habitat for Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, a sensitive species. Operation and maintenance costs on this section of road are high. Existing road conditions do not meet Road Management Objectives for an arterial system road. The Forest Service has long planned to realign this road to address these concerns; however, funding has never been available.

The proposed action is to construct the Ray's Valley Road on a new alignment and to obliterate the road on its existing alignment. The purpose and need of the proposed action is to reduce or eliminate these adverse watershed and fisheries impacts, and to provide safer driving conditions, while maintaining a key arterial component of the Forest's travel system.

Preliminary issues: Issues identified at this time include: health and safety; travel management; soils; fisheries; threatened, endangered, and sensitive plant and animal species; and roadless areas.

Possible Alternatives: Three possible alternatives have been identified: (1) No Action—Leave the road in its current condition; (2) Reconstruct Using the Existing Alignment—Reconstruct on the existing alignment and surface the road

with crushed aggregate; and (3) Construct on a New Alignment (Proposed Action)—Reconstruct, realign, and obliterate portions of the Ray's Valley Road.

The No Action Alternative would leave the road in current condition. Maintenance would be limited to actions required for passage of high clearance vehicles. The road would remain unsafe during periods of precipitation. Arterial system road standards for capacity and safety would not be addressed by this alternative. Road induced sediment in nearby streams would remain at current levels, or increase as erosion of the roadway continues.

The Reconstruct Existing Alignment Alternative would reconstruct the road on its existing alignment and add a crushed aggregate surface. Reconstruction would provide better control of drainage from roadway runoff, provide safer and more comfortable vehicle travel during precipitation, and support a greater range of vehicle types. Road induced sediment in nearby streams would slightly decrease due to better drainage and aggregate surfacing. Road Management Objectives for an arterial system road will not be fully accomplished by this alternative due to the location.

The Proposed Action is the Construct New Alignment Alternative. Under this alternative the majority of the existing Ray's Valley Road would be constructed on a new alignment and a small portion would be reconstructed on the existing alignment. The new alignment would be located on more stable soils, and away from streams and riparian areas. The abandoned portions of the existing alignment would be closed and rehabilitated. This proposal would result in approximately 3.6 miles of a double lane road with a crushed aggregate surface. Access to Forest Development Road 715 from the new alignment would be maintained by reconstructing a portion of Forest Development Road 387. This would ensure continued access to the west portal of the Strawberry Tunnel.

Proposed Scoping Process: This Revised Notice of Intent extends the scoping process. As part of the scoping period, the Forest Services solicits public comment on the nature and scope of the environmental, social, and economic issues related to the proposed action that should be analyzed in depth in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments on this proposal should be sent to the address shown earlier in this notice.