

Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)) to establish a time limit for the receipt of food stamp benefits for certain able-bodied adults who are not working. The provision authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture, upon a State agency's request, to waive the provision for any group of individuals if the Secretary determines "that the area in which the individuals reside has an unemployment rate of over 10 percent, or does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals." As required in the statute, in order to receive a waiver the State agency must submit sufficient supporting information so that USDA can make the required determination as to the area's unemployment rate or sufficiency of available jobs. This collection of information is therefore necessary in order to obtain waivers of the food stamp time limit. During the last three years, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has received on average 48 requests for waivers from an average of 45 State agencies. Each request submitted by a State agency to exempt individuals residing in specified areas is considered by FNS to be a separate request, since the requested exemptions may be based on different criteria, are submitted at different times, and require separate analysis. Although State agencies have submitted significantly fewer multiple requests since the last time that this reporting burden was extended, in order to ensure that all areas that potentially qualify for exemptions are included in their waiver requests, State agencies are employing a more sophisticated analysis covering multiple timeframes and multi-county geographical and labor market areas, requiring more time for the preparation and evaluation of each request. In addition, the number of State agencies requesting waivers has risen from an annual average of 40 to an annual average of 45. Since these waivers must be renewed on an annual basis and new ones may be submitted to reflect changing labor market conditions, FNS anticipates receipt of approximately the same number of waiver requests every year.

*Affected Public:* State and local governments.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 45.

*Estimated Number of Responses:* 48.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.1.

*Estimated Time per Response:* 35 hours.

*Estimated Total Burden:* 1680 hours.

Dated: May 13, 2005.

**Roberto Salazar,**

*Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, WS; Fishbone Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** The USDA Forest Service, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Washburn, Ranger District intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose the environmental consequences of the "Fishbone Project" vegetation management proposal. In the EIS the Forest Service will address the potential environmental impacts associated with timber harvest (including clearcut harvest with reserve trees, shelterwood, and thinning), restoring small, open areas and "pocket barrens" as a component of the overall landscape, and providing a safe road system that meets the long term transportation needs. The Fishbone Project Area is approximately 22,000 acres in size and is located approximately 6 miles east of Iron River, Wisconsin.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received by June 15, 2005 to receive timely consideration in the preparation of the draft EIS. The draft environmental impact statement is expected by January, 2006, and the final environmental impact statement is expected by April, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to the responsible official care of: Jennifer Maziasz, Project Leader; Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Washburn Ranger District; P.O. Box 578, Washburn, WI 54891. Send electronic comments to: *comments-eastern-chequamegon-nicolet-washburn@fs.fed.us*. See

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for information on how to send electronic comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Jennifer Maziasz, Project Leader, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Washburn Ranger District, USDA Forest Service; telephone: 715-373-2667. See address above under **ADDRESSES**. Copies of the documents may also be requested at the same address. Another means of obtaining the information is to visit the

Forest Web page at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/> click on "Natural Resources", then "Fishbone Project".

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Purpose and Need for Action:* The purpose and need for the project is to: (1) Restore forest health and improve the economic value in older, decadent, and/or diseased oak and aspen stands by promoting younger growth, reducing competition, improving crown condition, or increasing species diversity, (2) Improve the vigor, health, and future economic value of red pine plantations by reducing tree competition, (3) Restore small, open areas and "pocket barrens" as a component of the overall landscape, (4) Provide an efficient and safe road system that meets the long term transportation needs, and (5) Provide timber to meet local and/or regional demands for wood products.

*Proposed Action:* The proposed project consists of approximately 5,200 acres of forest management activities. Briefly, the objectives of the proposal are to maintain and enhance the forest health and vigor of trees within the project area while providing a variety of wood products; and, to restore and improve various aspects of the terrestrial ecosystem and transportation system. A brief summary of the proposed activities follows: (1) Clearcut (with reserve trees) 1,500 acres, (2) thin 2,100 acres, (3) shelterwood harvest 1,600 acres, (4) maintain 50 acres of wildlife openings by brushing and/or prescribed burning, (5) restore 200 acres of "pocket barrens" by thinning and/or prescribed burning (pocket barrens are small areas of rare plant communities dominated by grass, low shrubs, small trees, and scattered large trees), and (6) manage for an efficient road system. Road activities would construct 6 miles of new permanent roads and 4 miles of temporary roads to facilitate timber harvest. In addition, 35 miles of roads that the Forest Service has determined is not needed for the long term management would be decommissioned.

*Responsible Official:* Anne Archie, Forest Supervisor; Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 1170 4th Avenue South, Park Falls, WI 54552.

*Nature of Decision To Be Made:* The decision will be limited to answering the following three questions based on the environmental analysis: (1) What actions would be used to address the purpose and need, (2) where and when these actions would occur, and (3) what mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will be required.

*Scoping Process:* The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest plans to scope

for information by contacting persons and organizations on the District's mailing list, by publishing a notice the local newspapers, and by posting flyers at key locations within and nearby the Fishbone project area. No public meetings are planned at this time.

**Electronic Access to Information:** Information is available electronically on the Forest Web page: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/>—click on "Natural Resources", then "Fishbone Project". Send electronic comments to: [comments-eastern-chequamegon-nicolet-washburn@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-chequamegon-nicolet-washburn@fs.fed.us). When sending electronic comments, please reference the Fishbone Project in the subject line. In addition, include your name and address.

**Comment Requested:** This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. Although comments are welcome throughout the analysis process, your comments would be most useful if received by June 15, 2005. Everyone who provides comments will be periodically updated during the course of the Fishbone Project regarding its development, as well as receive a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in order to review the results of our analysis.

**Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:** A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement 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 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 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 that 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, 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 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.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: May 10, 2005.

**Anne F. Archie,**

*Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### **Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest; California and Nevada; Great Basin South Rangeland Project Analysis**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** The Bridgeport Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposal to authorize continued livestock grazing on National Forest System lands east of Bridgeport, California. The project area is located in portions of Mineral and Lyon counties, Nevada, and portions of Mono County, California. The analysis will determine if a change in management direction for livestock grazing is needed to move existing resource conditions towards desired conditions. The Conway, East Walker, Huntoon, Larkin Lake, Masonic, Aurora,

Nine Mile, Powell Mountain, Rough Creek, Whiskey Flat, and Wild Horse Allotments would continue to have authorized grazing. Squaw Creek Allotment would continue to be vacant.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received within 30 days from the date this notice is published in the **Federal Register**. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in September, 2005 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in December, 2005.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to District Ranger, Bridgeport Ranger District, HCR 1 Box 1000, Bridgeport, California 93517.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dave Loomis, Project Manager, Carson Ranger District, 1536 S. Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Purpose and Need for Action**

There is a need to maintain or improve the overall health of the rangeland in the project area. The purpose of this project is to determine the management direction for livestock grazing needed to move existing resource conditions within the project area towards desired conditions.

##### **Proposed Action**

The Bridgeport Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, is proposing to authorize continued cattle grazing on the 410,000 acre Great Basin South area under updated grazing management direction in order to move existing rangeland resource conditions within the project area toward desired condition. The updated direction will be incorporated in attendant grazing permits and allotment management plans to guide grazing management within the project area during the coming decade, or until amendments are warranted based on changed condition.

##### **Possible Alternatives**

In addition to the proposed action, two additional alternatives have been tentatively identified for analysis in the EIS:

1. *No Action Alternative:* Continue current grazing management.
2. *No Grazing Alternative:* Do not issue new grazing permits when existing permits expire.

##### **Responsible Official**

Forest Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431.