

27, 2005 in order to be fully considered in preparing this supplemental statement. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement is expected July, 2005 and the final supplemental environmental impact statement is expected September, 2005.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Anne F Archie, Forest Supervisor (Responsible Official), Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 1170 4th Avenue S, Park Falls, WI 54552.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brian Quinn, Forest Environmental Coordinator, (see address above).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On April 14, 2003, District Ranger Butch Fitzpatrick signed a record of decision (ROD) and released the final EIS for the Northwest Howell Project. This EIS and ROD were challenged in federal district court by the Habitat Education Center, Inc. The plaintiffs raised several issues including the adequacy of the cumulative effects analysis in the FEIS. On April 1, 2005, United States Eastern District of Wisconsin Judge Adelman issued his order granting plaintiff's motion with respect to sufficiency of the cumulative impacts analysis and affirming the Forest Service's motion regarding all other issues raised by plaintiff's. After review of the court's findings, CEQ regulations, Forest Service policy, and a review of the Northwest Howell FEIS/ROD and administrative record, I have decided that the court order and the public can best be served by preparing a Supplement to the FEIS.

This notice begins the public involvement process. I will use the public response plus interdisciplinary team analysis to decide whether to revise, amend or reaffirm the original Northwest Howell Record of Decision.

The proposed action and purpose and need of the Northwest Howell Project remains unchanged from the April 2003 FEIS. The purpose is to move the structure and cover of the existing forest closer to desired conditions described under Forest Plan management direction, and to provide forest products while doing so. A concurrent purpose is to eliminate unneeded roads and manage needed roads in a more efficient and effective way.

*Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:* A draft supplement to the environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft 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 supplemental environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final supplemental 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 20)

Dated: May 19, 2005.

**Anne F. Archie,**

*Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.*

[FR Doc. 05-10403 Filed 5-24-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### "McCaslin Project", Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, WI

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare a supplement to the environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** In response to Federal District Judge Adelman's March 31, 2005 order regarding the "McCaslin" environmental impact statement and Record of Decision, I am preparing a Supplement to the September 2003 "McCaslin Project" Final Environmental Impact Statement. Consistent with the Court's findings, this supplement will clarify and add more detail to the cumulative effects regarding analysis area boundaries and other activities as they relate to specific Regional Forester Sensitive Species that may be affected by the actions considered in the original Environmental Impact Statement.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by June 27, 2005 in order to be fully considered in preparing this supplemental statement. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement is expected July, 2005 and the final supplemental environmental impact statement is expected September, 2005.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Anne F. Archie, Forest Supervisor (Responsible Official), Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 1170 4th Avenue S, Park Falls, WI 54552.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brian Quinn, Forest Environmental Coordinator, (see address above).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On September 29, 2003, Deputy Forest Supervisor Larie Tippin signed a record of decision (ROD) and released the final EIS for the McCaslin Project. This EIS and ROD were challenged in federal district court by the Habitat Education Center, Inc. The plaintiffs raised several issues including the adequacy of the cumulative effects analysis in the FEIS. On March 31, 2005, United States Eastern District of Wisconsin Judge Adelman issued his order granting plaintiff's motion with respect to sufficiency of the cumulative impacts analysis and affirming the Forest Service's motion regarding all other issues raised by plaintiffs. After review of the court's findings, CEQ regulations, Forest Service policy, and a review of the McCaslin FEIS/ROD and administrative record, I have decided that the court order and the public can

best be served by preparing a Supplement to the FEIS.

This notice begins the public involvement process. I will use the public response plus interdisciplinary team analysis to decide whether to revise, amend or reaffirm the original McCaslin Record of Decision.

The proposed action and purpose and need of the McCaslin Project remains unchanged from the October 2003 FEIS. The purpose is to move the structure and cover of the existing forest closer to desired conditions described under Forest Plan management direction, and to provide forest products while doing so. A concurrent purpose is to eliminate unneeded roads and manage needed roads in a more efficient and effective way.

*Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:* A draft supplement to the environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft 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 supplemental environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final supplemental 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 20)

Dated: May 19, 2005.

**Anne F. Archie,**

*Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.*

[FR Doc. 05-10405 Filed 5-24-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### **Revision of Land Management Plan, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, Located In West-Central Colorado**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) will exercise its option to adjust its land management plan revision process from compliance with the 1982 planning regulations, to conformance with new planning regulations adopted in January 2005. This adjustment will have the following effects:

1. The new rule redefines forest plans to be more strategic and flexible to better facilitate adaptive management and public collaboration.
2. The new rule focuses more on the goals of ecological, social, and economic sustainability and less on prescriptive means of producing goods and services.
3. The Responsible Official who will approve the final plan will now be the Forest Supervisor instead of the Regional Forester.
4. The GMUG will establish an environmental management system (per ISO 14001:2004(E)) prior to completion of the revised forest plan.
5. Upon completion of final rulemaking, the planning and decision-making process may be categorically excluded from analysis and

documentation in an environmental impact statement and record of decision (see draft rule at 70 FR 1062, January 5, 2005).

6. The emphasis on public involvement will shift from public comment on a range of alternative plans, to an iterative public-Forest Service collaboration process intended to yield a single broadly supported plan.

7. Administrative review has changed from a post-decision appeals process to a pre-decision objection process.

*Public Involvement:* There has been a great deal of public participation and collaborative work on this planning process over the past few years, including more than 60 public meetings. Results of this work and a detailed proposed action are available for review and comment. Current information and details of upcoming public participation opportunities are posted on our Web site: [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan\\_rev/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan_rev/). Contact Anne Janik at (970) 874-6637, or e-mail at, [ajanik@fs.fed.us](mailto:ajanik@fs.fed.us) to be placed on our mailing list.

**ADDRESSES:** Physical location: GMUG Forest Planning, 2250 Highway 50, Delta CO, 81416; or by e-mail: [r2\\_GMUG\\_planning@fs.fed.us](mailto:r2_GMUG_planning@fs.fed.us).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Gary Shellhorn, Analysis Team Leader, GMUG National Forest, (970) 874-6666 or e-mail: [gshellhorn@fs.fed.us](mailto:gshellhorn@fs.fed.us); or view our Web site at [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan\\_rev/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan_rev/).

**DATES:** Transition is effective immediately upon publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

*Responsible Official:* Charles S. Richmond, Forest Supervisor, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest, 2250 Highway 50, Delta CO, 81416.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) are managed as a single administrative unit. In September of 1999, the GMUG formally initiated its land management plan revision process with publication of a notice of intent to prepare and environmental impact statement for plan revision (64 FR 52266, September 28, 1999). After the initiation, several delays were experienced due to budget and administrative matters. When plan revision began in earnest in 2002, the GMUG began an extensive "pre-NEPA" public participation and collaboration process. In addition, the planning team has been working on comprehensive geographic area analyses of conditions and trends for the ecological, social and economic components of the plan area.