

OMB Number: 0596-0164.

Expiration Date of Approval: June 30, 2006.

Type of Request: Extension with Revision.

**Abstract:** The Protection Act of 1922 (16 U.S.C. 594) authorizes the Forest Service to fight fires on National Forest System lands. The individuals that perform firefighter jobs are subjected to strenuous working conditions requiring long hours of arduous labor. It is imperative they be in peak physical condition to avoid injury to themselves or their coworkers.

Current or prospective firefighters must complete the Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) when seeking employment as a new firefighter with the Forest Service or seeking recertification as a firefighter. The information collected pertains to an individual's health status and health history in an effort to determine if any physical conditions exist or have developed that might result in injury or death during fitness testing or when fighting a wildfire. Forest Service employees will evaluate the collected information to determine if the individual seeking certification or recertification may begin a fitness program to train for the arduous level "Pack Test" of the Work Capacity Tests. If Forest Service employees determine, based on the collected information, that an individual may not be physically able to train for the arduous level of the Work Capacity Test, the agency will require the individual to undergo a physical examination from a physician.

Information collected will be evaluated by a human resource specialist within the specific unit office to ensure that individuals applying for a position or seeking recertification meet the fitness requirements of the position. Forest Service employees will collect general information about the current health of the individual such as height, weight, current level of fitness activity, previous serious health injuries, diseases, or heart conditions, and special current conditions such as allergies and diabetes. The form will be revised to exclude the words "or over the counter" from the second item under "Section A" under subhead "Other Health Issues." We make this change because prescription medications indicate a condition being treated by a physician, and therefore, represent an indication of the individual's health. Individuals determined in sufficient health will be asked to complete the "Work Capacity Tests," which would include testing the level of an individual's aerobic fitness,

level of muscular strength, and muscle endurance.

Failure to collect this data will result in a higher number of unwanted injuries, or even deaths, during the "Work Capacity Test" and while working on wildland fires. If the data is not collected annually, there will be no way to determine if an individual's condition has changed since the previous year.

The information provided by an individual will be placed in the person's Official Employee Medical File and any release of the information will be in accordance with the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a) and the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552). Data gathered in this information collection is not available from other sources.

**Estimate of Annual Burden:** 5 Minutes.

**Type of Respondents:** Current employees requesting certification or recertification as a firefighter (Incident Qualifications and Certification Card) and applicants seeking Forest Service firefighter positions.

**Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:** 15,000.

**Estimated Annual Number of Responses per Respondents:** 1.

**Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:** 1,250 hours.

#### Comment Is Invited

Comment is invited on: (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agencies, including whether the information will have practical or scientific utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: February 17, 2006.

**Robin L. Thompson,**  
Associate Deputy Chief, S&PF.

[FR Doc. E6-3080 Filed 3-2-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Nez Perce National Forest; Idaho County, ID; Meadow Face Stewardship Pilot Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

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

(Authority: 40 CFR 1502.9)

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service will prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement ("SEIS") for the Meadow Face Stewardship Pilot Project on the Nez Perce National Forest, Clearwater Ranger District, in Idaho County, Idaho, for the purpose of completing the cumulative effects analysis referred to in United States District Court Judge Edward J. Lodge's March 31, 2005 unpublished order in *Friends of the Clearwater v. Lohn*, Case No. CV04-384-C-EJL (D. Idaho). The court in that case issued a preliminary injunction against further timber harvesting under the Meadow Face Project until the Forest Service complies with the requirements for a cumulative effects analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). The court stated, quoting *Lands Council v. Powell*, 395 F.3d 1019 (9th Cir. 2005), that the final environmental impact statement ("FEIS") for the Meadow Face Project "should have provided adequate data of time, type, place and scale of past timber harvest and should have explained in sufficient detail how different project plans and harvest methods affected the environment." *Friends of the Clearwater*, unpub. ord. at 31 (quoting *Lands Council*, 395 F.3d 1019 at 1028). Regarding the FEIS's analysis of cumulative effects from grazing, the court stated as follows:

The Forest Service's analysis of grazing \* \* \* does not specifically describe the history of grazing in the Project Area, *i.e.*, by providing a catalog of where, and how much, grazing has occurred in the Watershed, or where and the extent to which it is occurring now. The agency's failure to provide adequate data of time, type, place and scale of past, present and reasonably foreseeable grazing activities in the Project Area precludes the public and the decision maker from having necessary information to evaluate the alternatives presented in the FEIS.

*Id.* at 32. The Forest Service hereby gives notice that it will prepare a SEIS in response to the court's preliminary injunction order.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the cumulative effects analysis must be received by April 17, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Darcy Pederson, District Ranger, 1005 Highway 13, Grangeville, ID 83530, Attn: Meadow Face Stewardship.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** David Harper, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Clearwater Ranger District, at the address above, or via telephone at (208) 983-1963.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Meadow Face Stewardship Pilot Project was initially scoped on August 15, 2000. The Notice of Intent to prepare the EIS was published in the **Federal Register**, 66 FR 13700, on March 7, 2001. The Draft EIS was sent out for a 45-day comment period in April of 2001. The Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS was published in the **Federal Register**, 66 FR 37956, on July 20, 2001. A Notice of Availability for the Final EIS was published in the **Federal Register**, 67 FR 40923, on June 7, 2002. The Record of Decision ("ROD") was signed by the Nez Perce National Forest Supervisor on February 11, 2003. The supervisor selected Alternative 4B as displayed in the FEIS, with some modifications described on page 12 of the ROD, for implementation.

On June 14, 2004, several environmental groups (led by Friends of the Clearwater out of Moscow, Idaho) filed a lawsuit against D. Robert Lohn (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration); William T. Hogarth (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration); the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Donald L. Evans (Secretary of the Department of Commerce); Gail Kimbell (Northern Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service); Ann N. Veneman (Secretary of the Department of Agriculture); and the United States Forest Service; Plaintiffs include Friends of the Clearwater, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Idaho Sporting Congress, and the Ecology Center. Plaintiffs sought a preliminary injunction against the Meadow Face Project, and on March 31, 2005, the court issued an order enjoining "further timber harvesting \* \* \* until the Forest Service complies with the requisite NEPA cumulative effects analysis." *Friends of the Clearwater*, unpub. ord. at 57.

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

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (February 2002) provided a detailed description of the purpose and need for action. It was noted that the existing condition of aquatic and soil resources and vegetation in the analysis area does not meet the desired condition and/or departs from the historic range.

The project was proposed to begin remediation of the effects of past actions, and to return various resource conditions to within the historic range of variability. The purpose and need for action from the Final Environmental Impact Statement (February 2002) remains unchanged. The purpose for preparing the proposed SEIS is to complete the cumulative effects analysis referred to by the court in *Friends of the Clearwater*.

#### **Proposed Action**

The FEIS (February 2002) and ROD (February 2003) provided a detailed description of the original proposed action (Alternative 2). Alternative 2 focused on activities that would improve aquatic and vegetative elements of the analysis area. The proposal was formulated to address conditions and changes needed to achieve the desired conditions and specific goals and objectives described in the Nez Perce Forest Plan.

With the record of decision of February 11, 2003, the Nez Perce National Forest Supervisor selected Alternative 4B as displayed in the FEIS, with some modifications for implementation. The decision included the following activities: Maintain 102 miles of road (12.5 deferred maintenance), construct 12 miles of temporary road, decommission 91 miles of road, convert 5 miles of road to trail, construct 0.1 mile of new OHV trail, maintain dispersed campsites where roads are decommissioned, rehabilitate about 3 miles of stream, harvest timber on up to 3,735 acres, prescribe burn 7,100 acres, replace 45 culverts, apply dust abatement to 5 miles of road, treat 200 acres of existing noxious weeds, restore native plant species in McComas Meadows, restore 550 acres of compacted soils, stabilize the Meadow Creek Slide, and install improvements at McComas/Blacktail Junction, Camp 58, and Quartz Ridge dispersed recreation sites. Additionally, the Forest Supervisor decided to make three site specific amendments to the Nez Perce Forest Plan.

A portion of the timber harvest covered by the Record of Decision (Yew Rock Timber Sale) commenced on March 26, 2004 and was ordered to be ceased following the court's preliminary injunction order of March 31, 2005. To date, the following activities have been implemented in the Environmental Impact Statement project area: replacement of two culverts, stabilization of three sites along an irrigation ditch, decommissioning of 23 miles of road, treatment of noxious weed on 141 acres, maintenance of 34

miles of road, development of one rock source, timber harvest on 730 acres, and construction of 8.6 miles of temporary road.

#### **Responsible Official**

The responsible official for this project is Jane Cottrell, the Nez Perce National Forest Supervisor. Comments regarding the cumulative effects analysis for this project should be sent to the address and contacts identified above and should be submitted within 45-days of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. A Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is expected to be available by late May 2006 and the Final SEIS is expected in late summer 2006.

#### **Nature of Decision To Be Made**

The Forest Supervisor will decide whether to continue implementation of Alternative 4B, as planned, or whether to modify or terminate implementation of the alternative in light of the revised cumulative effect analysis.

#### **Scoping Process**

The U.S. Forest Service uses the scoping process required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for all major Federal actions. NEPA requires a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to ensure integrated application of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in any planning and decision-making that affects the human environment (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(A)).

Recently, the Council on Environmental Quality issued guidance on the preparation of cumulative effects analyses. Memorandum from James L. Connaughton, Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality, to Heads of Federal Agencies (June 24, 2005). To determine what information is necessary for a cumulative effects analysis, the CEQ Guidance recommends agencies use scoping to determine the extent to which information is "relevant to reasonably foreseeable significant adverse impacts," is "essential to a reasoned choice among alternatives," and can be obtained without exorbitant cost. *Id.* (quoting 40 CFR 1502.22). Based on scoping, agencies have discretion to determine whether, and to what extent, information about the specific nature, design, or present effects of a past action is useful for the agency's analysis of the effects of a proposal for agency action and its reasonable alternatives. *Id.*

The CEQ Guidance further states agencies "should be guided in their cumulative effects analysis by the scoping process, in which agencies

identify the scope and 'significant' issues to be addressed in an environmental impact statement." *Id.* at 2 (quoting 40 CFR 1500.1(b), 1500.4(g), 1501.7, 1508.25). "With respect to past actions, during the scoping process and subsequent preparation of the analysis, the agency must determine what information regarding past actions is useful and relevant to the required analysis of cumulative effects." *Id.* at 3.

#### Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the supplemental environmental impact statement. Comments regarding the revised cumulative effects analysis will be accepted for 45 days after this notification in the **Federal Register**. These comments will help the Forest Service determine the scope of the requisite cumulative effects analysis, and what information regarding past actions is useful and relevant. Send written comments to Darcy Pederson, District Ranger, 1005 Highway 13, Grangeville, Idaho 83530, Attn: Meadow Face Stewardship.

#### Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

A draft supplemental environmental impact statement will be prepared after consideration of responses to this scoping and completion of the requisite cumulative effects analysis. The comment period on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

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 supplemental environmental impact statement must structure their comments so they are meaningful and alert 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 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). It is very important that those interested in the cumulative effects analysis for the

Meadow Face Stewardship Pilot Project participate by the close of the 45-day comment period on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement 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 supplemental environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in completing the final supplemental environmental impact statement, comments on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement will need to be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft 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 in response to this scoping notice as well as comments received on the subsequent Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, 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: February 10, 2006.

Jane L. Cottrell,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 06-1982 Filed 3-2-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Notice of New Fee Sites on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of new fee site—Harris Springs Guard Station.

**SUMMARY:** The Shasta-Trinity National Forest will begin charging a \$35 fee for the overnight rental of the Harris Springs Guard Station. Rentals of other cabins and lookouts on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest have shown that visitors appreciate and enjoy the availability of historic rental facilities. Funds from the rental will be used for the continued operation and maintenance of the Harris Springs Guard Station.

**DATES:** The Harris Springs Guard Station will become available for rent August 7, 2006.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brenda Tracy, Assistant Forest Public Staff Officer, USDA Forest Service, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, 3644 Avtech Parkway, Redding, CA 96002.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Federal Recreation Lands Enhancement Act (Title VII, Pub. L. 108-447) directs the Secretary of Agriculture to publish a six month advance notice in the **Federal Register** whenever new recreation fee areas are established. The intent of this notice is to inform publics of a new fee site.

The Shasta-Trinity National Forest currently has three other cabin/lookout rentals. These rentals are popular and often fully booked throughout their rental season. A business analysis of the Harris Springs Guard Station has shown that people desire having this sort of recreation experience on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. A market analysis indicates that the \$35/per night fee is both reasonable and acceptable for this sort of unique recreation experience.

People wanting to rent the Harris Springs Guard Station will need to do so through the National Recreation Reservation Service, at <http://www.reserveusa.com> or by calling 1-877-444-6777. The National Recreation Reservation Service charges a \$9 fee for reservations.

Dated: February 3, 2006.

Valerie Guardia,

Deputy Director, Recreation, Wilderness and Heritage Resources.

[FR Doc. 06-2024 Filed 3-2-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

RIN 0596-AC02

#### Directive for Environmental Management Systems

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of agency final directive.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service is issuing a final directive to Forest Service Manual 1330, Environmental Management Systems (EMS), to provide overall guidance to Forest Service line officers and employees on how to include EMS in carrying out national forest land management planning regulations at 36 CFR part 219, subpart A, published in the **Federal Register** on