

haul; (8) approximately 124 miles of herbicide treatment of noxious weeds along roadsides.

The Lolo National Forest Plan provides overall guidance for land management activities in the project area. The purposes for these actions are to: (1) Improve water quality, fish habitat and fish passage. (2) Improve grizzly bear habitat within the Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone. (3) Restore, maintain or enhance native "at risk" vegetative communities. (4) Provide for ecological sustainability and community stability through the use of forest products. (5) Improve and maintain big game winter range. (6) Provide for a transportation system that better reflects current access and resource concerns and reduces economic burdens associated with maintaining unneeded roads.

Issues currently identified for analysis in the SEIS include potential effects on old growth, soils, wildlife (particularly grizzly bear), water quality, fisheries, and forest access.

The Forest Service will consider a range of alternatives. A No Action alternative and other alternatives, which respond to significant issues, will be analyzed and compared to the Draft SEIS.

The Draft SEIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in June 2007. Comments on the Draft SEIS will be considered and responded to in the Final SEIS, scheduled to be completed by October 2007.

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.

Responsible Official: Deborah L.R. Austin, Forest Supervisor, Lolo National Forest, Building 24—Fort Missoula, Missoula, MT 59804, is the responsible official. In making the decision, the responsible official will consider comments, responses, disclosure of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The responsible official will state the rationale for the chosen alternative in the Record of Decision.

Dated: November 21, 2006.

Deborah L.R. Austin,

Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Telephone Bank

Determination of the 2006 Fiscal Year Interest Rate on Rural Telephone Bank Loans

AGENCY: Rural Telephone Bank, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of 2006 fiscal year interest rate determination.

SUMMARY: In accordance with 7 CFR 1610.10, the Rural Telephone Bank (Bank) cost of money rate has been established as 5.49% for all advances made during fiscal year 2006 (the period beginning October 1, 2005 and ending September 30, 2006). All advances made during fiscal year 2006 were under Bank loans approved on or after October 1,

1992. These loans are sometimes referred to as financing account loans.

The calculation of the Bank's cost of money rate for fiscal year 2006 is provided in Table 1. Since the calculated rate is greater than or equal to the minimum rate (5.00%) allowed under 7 U.S.C. 948(b)(3)(A), the cost of money rate is set at 5.49%. The methodology required to calculate the cost of money rates is established in 7 CFR 1610.10(c).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jonathan P. Claffey, Deputy Assistant Governor, Rural Telephone Bank, STOP 1590—Room 5151, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1590. Telephone: (202) 720-9556.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The cost of money rate methodology develops a weighted average rate for the Bank's cost of money considering total fiscal year loan advances, debentures and other obligations, and the costs to the Bank of obtaining funds from these sources.

Dissolution of the Bank

At its quarterly meeting on August 4, 2005, the Board of Directors (the "Board") approved a resolution to dissolve the Bank. On November 10, 2005, the liquidation and dissolution process was initiated with the signing by President Bush of the 2006 Agriculture Appropriations bill, which contained a provision lifting the restriction on the retirement of more than 5 percent of the Class A stock held by the Government.

In accordance with the Board's resolution and the terms of the Loan Transfer Agreement between the Bank and the Government, dated August 4, 2005, the Bank's liquidating account loan portfolio (the portfolio of Bank loans approved before October 1, 1992) was transferred to the Government on October 1, 2005. As a result of that transfer, there are no more advances of liquidating account loan funds.

The dissolution of the Bank will not affect future advances of financing account loan funds. Requests for financing account advances will continue to be processed by employees of USDA Rural Development's Telecommunications Program, just as they were while the Bank remained in operation. The terms and conditions of the financing account loans will not change, nor will the method for determining the interest rates, including the determination of the cost of money rates after the end of each fiscal year. The only significant change to the financing account advances is that beginning October 1, 2005, Class B stock in the Bank is no longer being

purchased with financing account loan advances.

Sources and Costs of Funds

Due to the ongoing dissolution of the Bank, no stock of any kind was issued

during fiscal year 2006. Issuance of debentures or any other obligations related to advances from the financing account during the fiscal year were \$66,496,919 at an interest rate of 5.494%. The Bank's cost of money rate

for advances from the financing account is provided in Table 1.

Curtis M. Anderson,

Deputy Governor, Rural Telephone Bank.

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Table 1

Rural Telephone Bank Cost of Money Rate - Financing Account

FY 2006 Source of Bank Funds	(a) Amount	(b) Cost	(c) (a)x(b)	(c) / Advances
Issuance of Class A Stock	NA	NA	NA	NA
Issuance of Class B Stock	NA	NA	NA	NA
Issuance of Class C Stock	NA	NA	NA	NA
Issuance of Debentures and Other Obligations*	\$ 66,496,919	5.494%	\$ 3,653,438	5.4941%
Excess of Total Advances Over Issuances	\$ -	5.813%	\$ -	0.0000%

Total FY 2006 Advances \$ 66,496,919 **CALCULATED COST OF MONEY RATE =** 5.49%

MINIMUM RATE ALLOWABLE = 5.00%

* RTB borrowed \$94,839,000 from the Financing Account in FY2006; the remaining funds will be used to cover other obligations of the fund.

Rural Telephone Bank Historical Cost of Money Rate - Financing Account

Fiscal Year	(a) Cost of Money	(b) Advances	(c) (a)x(b)	(c) / Total Advances
FY 1992	7.38%	\$ 4,056,250	\$ 299,351	0.047%
FY 1993	6.35%	\$ 23,839,200	\$ 1,513,789	0.237%
FY 1994	6.40%	\$ 56,838,902	\$ 3,637,690	0.569%
FY 1995	6.88%	\$ 37,161,517	\$ 2,556,712	0.400%
FY 1996	6.42%	\$ 44,536,621	\$ 2,859,251	0.447%
FY 1997	6.54%	\$ 34,368,726	\$ 2,247,715	0.351%
FY 1998	5.71%	\$ 34,446,458	\$ 1,966,893	0.307%
FY 1999	5.54%	\$ 38,685,732	\$ 2,143,190	0.335%
FY 2000	6.05%	\$ 31,401,867	\$ 1,899,813	0.297%
FY 2001	5.17%	\$ 55,405,896	\$ 2,864,485	0.448%
FY 2002	6.05%	\$ 60,232,919	\$ 3,644,092	0.570%
FY 2003	5.67%	\$ 55,835,695	\$ 3,165,884	0.495%
FY 2004	5.36%	\$ 67,074,751	\$ 3,595,207	0.562%
FY 2005	5.00%	\$ 95,987,530	\$ 4,799,377	0.750%

TOTAL ADVANCES \$ 639,872,064 **COST OF MONEY** 5.81%