

# Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 72, No. 180

Tuesday, September 18, 2007

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Camp Four Vegetation Project

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** The USDA Forest Service, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Medford-Park Falls Ranger District intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to document the analysis and disclose the environmental effects of proposed land management activities, and corresponding alternatives within the Camp Four project area. The primary purpose of this proposal is to implement activities consistent with direction in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and respond to specific needs identified in the project area.

The project area is located on National Forest System land in the north central portion of the Park Falls landbase of the Medford-Park Falls Ranger District, approximately 9 miles east of Park Falls, Wisconsin. The legal description for the area is: Township 40 North, Range 2 East, sections 1–3, 9–17, 19–28, 35; Township 40 North, Range 3 East, sections 4, 6, 8–10, 16–20, 29; 4th Principal Meridian.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received within 30 days of publication of this notice to receive timely consideration in the preparation of the draft EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to Jeanne Higgins, c/o Ann Hoefflerle, Medford-Park Falls Ranger District, 850 N. 8th St., Medford, Wisconsin 54451. Send electronic comments to: [ahoefflerle@fs.fed.us](mailto:ahoefflerle@fs.fed.us) with a subject line that reads "Camp Four Project."

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ann Hoefflerle, Camp Four Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Medford-Park Falls

Ranger District, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, USDA Forest Service: Telephone 715–748–4875 (or TTY: 711, National Relay System), e-mail [ahoefflerle@fs.fed.us](mailto:ahoefflerle@fs.fed.us). To mail correspondence to Ann Hoefflerle, see information in **ADDRESSES**. Copies of documents may be obtained at the same address. Another means of obtaining information is to visit the Forest Web site at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/natres/index.html>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The information presented in this notice is included to help the reviewer determine if they are interested in or potentially affected by this proposed project. The information presented in this notice is summarized. Those who wish to comment on this proposal or are otherwise interested in or potentially affected by it are encouraged to review more detailed documents such as the Proposed Action for the Camp Four Project (currently available for review) and the draft EIS. See the preceding section of this notice for the person to contact for more detailed information about this project.

#### Project Background

The Camp Four project falls within the area defined in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests 2004 Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) as Management Area (MA) 4A and 8D. Vegetation management in MA 4A is towards coniferous, mixed coniferous-hardwood and aspen forests. Natural and plantation conifer stands are most prevalent, but both hardwood and aspen are well represented in the landscape. MA 8D is characterized by free-flowing rivers and associated corridors in a natural condition identified for special management on federal or state level. This management area provides habitat for riparian-dependant fish and wildlife species, area for recreational activities, and wildlife viewing opportunities. Two segments of the South Fork of the Flambeau River that are included in the project area are eligible national scenic and recreation river segments.

Forest Plan guidance for MA 4A includes species distribution of the aspen, balsam fir, paper birch, jack pine, red and white pine, northern hardwoods, and oak to be within a certain percentage range in order to maintain and develop a desired

landscape dominated by coniferous, mixed coniferous-hardwood and aspen forests. This landscape composition would in turn benefit wildlife by providing a winter food source and thermal cover for species such as northern saw-whet owl, brown creeper, black pole warbler, chipping sparrow, pine warbler and red breasted nuthatch that are often associated with coniferous and mixed conifer-hardwood forests. Currently, the species distribution within MA 4A in the project area has more aspen than desired to meet management area objectives.

Additionally, the Forest Plan recommends that certain percentages of the aspen, paper birch and jack pine be within certain age categories in order to maintain the type and provide a variety of wildlife habitat. Currently, aspen and paper birch age classes are overrepresented in the older age classes, while the younger age classes are deficit, or moving towards a deficit condition.

Forest Plan guidance for vegetation within MA 8D includes treatment for the purposes of restoring or enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and visual quality. Vegetation management will be designed to create a large-tree character, and species composition that favors long-lived, large diameter trees. There are opportunities along the South Fork of the Flambeau River corridor (MA 8D) to convert mature aspen stands to long-lived tree species and maintain the health and vigor of existing red pine stands.

#### Purpose and Need for Action

The primary purpose of the Camp Four proposal is to implement activities consistent with direction in the Forest Plan and to respond to specific needs identified in the project area. The primary project-specific needs are to address maintenance of forest health and tree vigor, develop a desired landscape species distribution and adjust the age class distribution for aspen, paper birch and jack pine to the desired range within MA 4A and 8D, as identified in the Forest Plan. An associated need is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system within the project area.

#### Proposed Action

To meet the need of maintaining a healthy forest and tree vigor, proposed land management activities (proposed

actions) include thinning red pine plantations on approximately 1,700 acres and treating approximately 800 acres of mixed northern hardwoods through thinning and selection harvest.

To meet the desired need of developing a landscape species distribution that is dominated by conifer and coniferous hardwood and aspen forests, the following activities are proposed: Convert mature aspen through shelterwood harvest and underplanting white pine on approximately 900 acres, remove jack pine and aspen overstory on approximately 100 acres to promote the advanced regeneration of the hardwood in the understory and reforest approximately 90 acres of mixed pine species and oak within large openings in abandoned hayfields.

To adjust age class distribution of aspen, paper birch and jack pine within the project area to the appropriate and desired range, the following activities are proposed: Clearcut regeneration harvest on about 190 acres of mature aspen, paper birch, jack pine and white spruce and shelterwood paper birch on approximately 65 acres.

To provide a safe and efficient transportation system, the following road projects within the area are proposed: Approximately one mile of temporary road construction, one mile of permanent road construction and two miles of road reconstruction are needed to accomplish harvest activities. Temporary logging roads are roads that would be decommissioned and revegetated following project completion.

In addition, approximately 24 miles of existing road within the project area, some of which would be utilized for the harvest activity, will be decommissioned and revegetated. These roads were identified as no longer needed for management activities and many are not Forest System roads. Most were probably utilized for past harvest activity, but since they would not be needed again for many years (20–40), they will be dropped from our road inventory following decommissioning activity.

Approximately eight miles of existing road will be closed. These roads are needed to meet future access needs but were identified for closure to all motorized use, except for administrative purposes, due to resource conflicts and public safety. Roads will be closed using gates, rock or berm barriers.

#### **Preliminary Issues**

Included with the proposal and any action alternatives to the proposal will be the implementation of the Forest Plan standards and guides as they apply

to this project. Plan standards and guides are detailed information on how the activities will be carried out or implemented and address potential impacts to brook trout habitat, heritage resources, forest age structure as it relates to forest health, wildlife species (spruce grouse, wolf, bald eagle, etc.), water, wetlands, and soils, and some potential economic and social impacts (such as visual quality, recreation). These standards and guidelines have been considered and incorporated into the proposed action. The incorporation of the Plan standards and guides is intended to reduce or eliminate potential adverse effects of the activities that may result from the proposed action.

Given the inclusion of the Plan standards and guides in the development of the proposed action, the following preliminary issue was identified: Potential effects on nesting habitat for the Northern goshawk, a Regional Forester Sensitive Species (RFSS). There are several probable Northern goshawk nests within the project area and while the Forest Plan has standards and guides that minimize direct disturbance to this species' known nesting habitat, disturbance to potential nesting habitat at this time is unknown. At a minimum, this species will be evaluated to determine impacts (if any) to habitat and any subsequent impact to population viability.

#### **Possible Alternatives**

Alternatives to the proposed action that are currently being considered for display in the draft EIS are as follows: The required No Action alternative and the proposed action alternative.

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

The primary decision will be whether or not to implement the proposed projects or alternatives of the projects within the project area. The decision may also include additional resource protection measures, monitoring, and whether Forest Plan amendments are needed to implement the decision.

#### **Responsible Official**

Jeanne Higgins, Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, 1170 4th Avenue South, Park Falls, WI 54552.

#### **Comment Requested**

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the EIS. Comments in response to this solicitation for information should focus on (1) The proposal; (2) issues or impacts from the proposal; and (3) possible alternatives

for addressing issues associated with the proposal. We are especially interested in information that might identify a specific undesired result of implementing the proposed actions.

Comments received in response to this solicitation and subsequent solicitations, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for 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 part 215. See the section titled **ADDRESSES** in this notice for location of where to send comments.

#### **Estimated Dates for Filing**

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and be available for public review in February 2008. A 45-day comment period will follow publication of a Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. Comments received on the draft EIS will be used in preparation of a final EIS. We expect to file the notice of the availability of the final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) in the **Federal Register** in June 2008.

*Early Notice of the Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:* 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 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 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 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 EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action,

comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft EIS. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the draft EIS. 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.

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

Dated: September 7, 2007.

Jeanne Higgins,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. E7-18341 Filed 9-17-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Request for Proposals for Woody Biomass Utilization Grant—Forest Restoration Activities on National Forest System Lands

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Request for proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Technology Marketing Unit, located at the Forest Products Laboratory, requests proposals for forest product projects that increase the use of woody biomass from National Forest System lands. The woody biomass utilization grant program is intended to help improve forest restoration activities by using and creating markets for small-diameter material and low-valued trees removed from forest restoration activities, such as reducing hazardous fuels, handling insect and diseased conditions, or treating forestlands impacted by catastrophic weather events. These funds are targeted to help communities, entrepreneurs, and others turn residues from forest restoration activities into marketable forest products and/or energy products.

**DATES:** *Pre-application Deadline:* Close of business November 2, 2007.

*Full application Deadline:* Close of business February 1, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** All pre- and full-application packages must be sent to the following address: ATTN: Patricia Brumm, Grants and Agreements Specialist, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53726-2398. Detailed information regarding what to include in the pre- and full-

application, definitions of terms, eligibility and federal restrictions are available at <http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/tmu> (under Woody Biomass Grants), and at <http://www.grants.gov>. Paper copies of the information are also available by contacting the USDA Forest Service, S&PF Technology Marketing Unit, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53726-2398.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For questions regarding the grant application or administrative regulations, contact Patricia Brumm, Grants and Agreements Specialist, (608) 231-9298, [pbrumm@fs.fed.us](mailto:pbrumm@fs.fed.us); for program and technical questions, contact Susan LeVan, Program Manager, (608) 231-9504, [slevan@fs.fed.us](mailto:slevan@fs.fed.us).

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** To meet the shared goals of Public Law 109-58, the Energy Policy Act of 2005, and the anticipated Public Law governing the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriate Act of 2008, the agency is requesting proposals to address the nationwide challenge in dealing with low-valued material removed from hazardous fuel reduction activities, restoration of insect and diseased conditions or catastrophic weather events. The Woody Biomass Utilization Grant Program has a pre-application submission process, and upon notification, selected pre-applicants will be asked to submit a full application. Goals of the grant program are the following:

- Help reduce forest management costs by increasing value of biomass and other forest products generated from forest restoration activities.
- Create incentives and/or reduce business risk for increased use of biomass from national forestlands (must include National Forest System lands, however, may also include other lands such as, BLM, Tribal, State, local, and private).
- Institute projects that target and help remove economic and market barriers to using small-diameter trees and woody biomass.
- Help generate renewable energy from woody.
- Build industry infrastructure around national forestlands where no or limited industry infrastructure exists.
- Require a Forest Service letter of support for the woody biomass grant project on National Forest System lands.

## Woody Biomass Grants Program

### 1. Eligibility Information

a. Eligible Applicants. Eligible applicants are State, local, and Tribal governments, school districts, communities, non-profit organizations, businesses, companies, corporations, or special purpose districts, e.g., public utilities districts, fire districts, conservation districts, or ports. Only one application per business or organization will be accepted. If applicants have received a Woody Biomass Utilization Grant within the last three years, they are not eligible. Construction projects involving a permanent building or infrastructure item, such as roads, are not allowed with federal funds; however construction funds can be part of the non-federal cost share. For Alaska, only applicants on the Seward Ranger District on the Chugach National Forest are eligible to apply for this grant. Cordova and Glacier Ranger Districts on the Chugach are not eligible. Ranger Districts on the Tongass National Forest are not eligible.

b. Cost Sharing (Matching Requirement). Applicants must demonstrate at least a 20% match of the total project cost. This match must be from non-Federal sources, which can include cash or in-kind contributions.

### 2. Duns Number

All applicants must include a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B), Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in their full application. For the purpose of this requirement, the applicant is the entity that meets the eligibility criteria and has the legal authority to apply for an award. For assistance in obtaining a DUNS number at no cost, call the DUNS number request line (1-866-705-5711) or register on-line at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. By submission of an application, the applicant acknowledges the requirement that prospective awardees shall be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database prior to award, during performance, and through final payment of any grant resulting from this solicitation. Further information can be found at <http://www.ccr.gov>. For assistance, contact the CCR Assistance Center (1-888-227-2423).

### 3. Award Information

At least \$4 million are available for granting under this program. Individual grants will not be less than \$50,000 or more than \$250,000. Funds are presently not available for this grant program. The Government's obligation