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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2008-0073]

#### Sirex Woodwasp; Availability of an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that a final environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact have been prepared by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relative to a proposed biological control program for Sirex woodwasp. The environmental assessment documents our review and analysis of environmental impacts associated with the proposed biological control program. Based on its finding of no significant impact, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that an environmental impact statement need not be prepared.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Lynn Evans-Goldner, Staff Officer, Emergency and Domestic Programs, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 137, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-7228.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The Sirex woodwasp (*Sirex noctilio* Fabricius [Hymenoptera: Siricidae]) is a member of the horntail wasp family native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa, where it is generally considered to be a secondary pest. In its native range, it attacks pines, such as Austrian (*Pinus nigra*), maritime (*P. pinaster*), and Scotch (*P. sylvestris*) pines, almost exclusively. While stressed trees are most at risk, Sirex woodwasp can also attack and kill healthy trees. Adult wasps are strong fliers and can naturally

disperse up to 25 miles, especially when aided by strong winds. In addition, the artificial spread of Sirex woodwasp can occur through the movement of infested host plant materials such as pine logs. Because Sirex woodwasp inhabits the sapwood and larvae tunnel deep into host trees, this pest is difficult to detect through visual inspection.

Sirex woodwasp can complete its lifecycle on many pine species, which are the pest's primary hosts. Thus far, in North America, jack pine (*P. banksiana*), red pine (*P. resinosa*), Scotch pine (*P. sylvestris*), and white pine (*P. strobus*) have served as hosts for Sirex woodwasp. The first detection of a breeding population of the Sirex woodwasp in the United States occurred in 2004 in Oswego County, NY. As a result of ongoing surveys conducted by State and Federal officials since 2005, the Sirex woodwasp has been detected in additional counties in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

In an environmental assessment prepared in March 2007, APHIS considered a program to control Sirex woodwasp in New York and Pennsylvania, the only States where Sirex woodwasp had been detected at that time. The environmental assessment evaluated four alternatives: No action, a quarantine program, a biological control program, and a combination of quarantine and biological control (preferred action) in New York and Pennsylvania. APHIS issued a finding of no significant impact on June 21, 2007, which determined that the proposed program (including quarantine and biological control) identified as the preferred action would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment in those States.

Since that time, Sirex woodwasp has been detected in additional States, and APHIS would like to implement a biological control program in those States. If the pest is detected in other States in the future, APHIS would also want to implement a biological control program in those States, as well. APHIS therefore revised the environmental assessment in order to consider the potential effects on the quality of the human environment from implementing a program for control of Sirex woodwasp in all of the currently infested States and in the surrounding States where Sirex woodwasp would

most likely be detected if it were to spread.

On July 21, 2008, we published in the **Federal Register** (73 FR 42313-42314, Docket No. APHIS-2008-0073) a notice<sup>11</sup> in which we announced the availability for public review and comment of the revised environmental assessment, entitled "Proposed Program for the Control of the Woodwasp *Sirex noctilio* F. (Hymenoptera: Siricidae) in the Northeastern United States" (May 2008). APHIS received 18 comments on the revised environmental assessment. Of these, 17 were outside the scope of the environmental assessment; instead, they pertained to movement restrictions and economic impacts that may occur if APHIS were to impose Sirex-related movement conditions.

The one comment that was relevant to the environmental assessment questioned the efficacy of the proposed environmental release of the parasitic nematode *Beddingia siricidicola* and is addressed in the August 2008 finding of no significant impact.

In this document, we are advising the public of our decision and finding of no significant impact regarding a proposed program for the control of Sirex woodwasp. This decision is based upon the updated environmental assessment, entitled "Proposed Program for the Control of the Woodwasp *Sirex noctilio* F. (Hymenoptera: Siricidae) in the Northeastern United States" (August 2008).

The final environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact may be viewed on the Regulations.gov Web site or in our reading room (see **ADDRESSES** above for a link to Regulations.gov and information on the location and hours of the reading room). You may request paper copies of the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact by calling or writing to the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Please refer to the title of the environmental assessment when requesting copies.

*The environmental assessment has been prepared in accordance with:* (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the

<sup>11</sup> To view the notice, the environmental assessment, the finding of no significant impact, and the comments we received, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2008->

Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 14th day of October 2008.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. E8–24889 Filed 10–17–08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## **BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

### **Sunshine Act Meeting**

**DATE AND TIME:** Wednesday, October 22, 2008, 1:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Cohen Building, Room 3321, 330 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20237.

**CLOSED MEETING:** The members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) will meet in closed session to review and discuss a number of issues relating to U.S. Government-funded non-military international broadcasting. They will address internal procedural, budgetary, and personnel issues, as well as sensitive foreign policy issues relating to potential options in the U.S. international broadcasting field. This meeting is closed because if open it likely would either disclose matters that would be properly classified to be kept secret in the interest of foreign policy under the appropriate executive order (5 U.S.C. 552b.(c)(1)) or would disclose information the premature disclosure of which would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed agency action. (5 U.S.C. 552b.(c)(9)(B)) In addition, part of the discussion will relate solely to the internal personnel and organizational issues of the BBG or the International Broadcasting Bureau. (5 U.S.C. 552b.(c)(2) and (6))

**CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Persons interested in obtaining more information should contact Timi Nickerson Kenealy at (202) 203–4545.

Dated: October 15, 2008.

**Timi Nickerson Kenealy,**

*Acting Legal Counsel.*

[FR Doc. E8–24976 Filed 10–16–08; 4:15 pm]

**BILLING CODE 8610–01–P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request**

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

*Agency:* U.S. Census Bureau.

*Title:* Generic Clearance for 2010 Census Communications Campaign Testing Activities.

*Form Number(s):* None.

*OMB Control Number:* None.

*Type of Request:* New collection.

*Burden Hours:* 13,000.

*Number of Respondents:* 8,000.

*Average Hours per Response:* 1 hour and 38 minutes.

*Needs and Uses:* Every ten years, the U.S. Census Bureau is congressionally mandated to count everyone (citizens and non-citizens) residing in the United States. An accurate count is critical for many reasons including but not limited to:

- Congressional reapportionment;
- Redistricting congressional boundaries;
- Community planning; and
- Distribution of public funds and program development.

To facilitate the data collection effort for the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau is developing an Integrated Communications Campaign (ICC). The role of the ICC is to increase public awareness and motivate people to respond to the census promptly, saving millions of taxpayer dollars. The specific objectives of the ICC are:

- Increase mail response;
- Improve cooperation with enumerators; and
- Improve overall accuracy and reduce differential undercount.

From 1970—the first year questionnaires were mailed to households—to 1990, the mail response rate declined from 78 percent to 65 percent. To help halt the declining mail response rate, the Census Bureau ran a paid advertising campaign to support data collection activities for the 2000 Census. The resulting mail response rate in 2000 was 67 percent—two percentage points above 1990. This campaign was considered a very successful initiative and one of several reasons cited with helping to reverse declining mail response rates.

In order to support the aforementioned objectives, the ICC will be based on behavioral learning during the 2000 Census as well as information

that will come from new research. All messaging and communications that will be developed as part of the 2010 Census integrated communications will be supported by primary research among a wide range of target audiences. The research will serve to support campaign direction and decisions made at each stage of message and communications development, such research commenced in late 2007 and in 2008 (covered as part of Generic Clearance OMB Control No. 0607–0725). That research covered the development of a unifying idea (Only You Can Make the Census Ours) and creative expression (It's in Our Hands), which will be reflected across all communications under the campaign.

This research provided valuable guidance for the next stages of development. Going forward, additional research must be conducted in order to support these next stages. At this time, the Census Bureau is seeking a generic clearance for conducting research to gain respondent feedback to specific messaging, a variety of creative executions, and to track the campaign progress once launched. This will enable the Census Bureau to continue providing support for research activities as part of the Census 2010 ICC.

The proposed quantitative and qualitative methods are: One-on-one interviews; focus groups; online quantitative surveys; telephone quantitative surveys; and in-person quantitative surveys.

Since the types of studies included under the umbrella of the clearance are so varied, it is impossible to specify at this point what kinds of activities would be involved in any particular activity. But at a minimum, Census expect to use in-person group interviews, focus groups, usability tests, and tracking surveys.

OMB will be provided a copy of questionnaires, moderator guides, creative materials, and debriefing materials in advance of any testing activity. Depending on the stage of creative development, this may be rough mock-ups of printed materials or story boards. A brief description of the planned field activity will also be provided. The Census Bureau will send OMB an annual report at the end of each year summarizing the number of hours used, as well as the nature and results of the activities completed under this clearance.

The information collected in this program will be used by staff from the Census Bureau and its contractors to evaluate and improve the quality of the communications, advertising, and messages that are produced as part of