

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

November 7, 2008.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8681.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to

the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Rural Utility Service

Title: 7 CFR 1780, Water and Waste Loan and Grant Program.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0121.

Summary of Collection: Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT), 7 U.S.C. 1926, authorizes Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to make loans to public agencies, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes for the development of water and waste disposal facilities primarily servicing rural residents with populations up to 10,000 residents.

Need and Use of the Information: Rural Development's field offices will collect information from applicants/borrowers and consultants to determine eligibility and project feasibility. The information will help to ensure borrowers operate on a sound basis and use loan funds for authorized purposes. There are agency forms required as well as other requirements that involve certifications from the borrower, lenders, and other parties. Failure to collect proper information could result in improper determinations of eligibility, use of funds and or unsound loans.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government; Not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 7,000.

Frequency of Responses: Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Annually; Weekly.

Total Burden Hours: 133,309.

Charlene Parker,

*Departmental Information Collection
Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. E8-26937 Filed 11-12-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Black Hills National Forest, Mystic Ranger District, SD, Slate Castle Project Area

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact

statement on a proposal to use multiple vegetation treatments focused on reducing the threat to ecosystem components including forest resources from an existing insect and disease epidemic (mountain pine beetle), creating a landscape condition more adapted to fire and that reduces potential for high severity wildfire near at-risk communities and in the wildland-urban interface. The proposal is being planned for the 44,500 acre Slate Castle Project Area that includes about 38,300 acres of National Forest System land and about 6,200 acres of interspersed private land. The project area generally extends from northwest of Hill City, South Dakota and east of Deerfield Lake. This project will be conducted as an authorized project under Section 102 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA). Actions proposed for the Slate Castle Project Area include the following:

- Thin and harvest approximately 31,000 acres of pine stands using a variety of methods to treat mountain pine beetle (MPB) infested stands, reduce the overall density of pine trees and create a mosaic of structural stages across the landscape. Both commercial harvest and noncommercial thinning will be used to reduce the stand density, and associated fuel hazard conditions and susceptibility to mountain pine beetle infestations.

- Reduce the amount of fuels that currently exists and that created by vegetation treatment activities. Treatment could include lopping, chipping, crushing, piling and burning, and creating fuel breaks along roads and adjacent to private property, particularly those properties with houses and subdivisions. Prescribed broadcast and pile burning of up to 35,000 acres is also planned to disrupt the continuity of surface and canopy fuels, and to increase the quantity and quality of forage for big game and other wildlife resources.

- Remove conifers from hardwood stands such as aspen and birch, and restore meadows on approximately 4,400 acres to provide habitat diversity and additional wildfire protection by restoring natural fuel breaks.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis would be most useful if received by 30-days following the date of this notice. The draft environmental impact statement is expected to be