

• *Federal eRulemaking Portal*: Go to <http://regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

• *Mail*: Skip Hyberg, Agricultural Economist, Economic and Policy Analysis Staff, Farm Service Agency, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 3730, Mail Stop 0519, Washington, DC 20250.

Comments also should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. Copies of the information collection may be obtained from Dr. Skip Hyberg at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Skip Hyberg, (202) 720-9222. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication (Braille, large print, audio tape, etc) should contact the USDA Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title*: Economic Assessment of Conservation Reserve Program Lands for Hunting.

*OMB Control Number*: 0560-NEW.

*Type of Request*: New.

*Abstract*: As specified in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (the 2008 Farm Bill, Pub. L. 110-246), FSA administers the CRP to conserve and improve soil, water, and wildlife resources. Federal investments in the CRP on private cropland enhance essential ecosystem services, including wildlife, and provide improved hunting opportunities in rural areas. Hunters from urban areas within the State and non-residents outside the State are drawn to CRP lands or other private lands surrounding CRP lands for hunting.

FSA is required by statute to consider benefits from the enhancement of wildlife habitat when selecting CRP offers. Because hunter spending increases in rural areas as hunting opportunities increase, economic activity and employment within the outdoor recreational sector are enhanced. FSA is responsible for identifying and quantifying the relationship between job creation and investments in CRP lands, as increased outdoor recreation is among the benefits FSA provides in administering the CRP.

There have been no statewide assessments of the CRP program on hunting use, expenditures, and jobs in North and South Dakota (ND and SD, respectively). The only prior studies focused on six small areas in ND and are 10 years old. There have been significant changes to the CRP program since that time. In addition, there is

limited generalizability of the six ND areas to the rest of ND and SD. Without data on hunter use and expenditures, the economic contribution generated by federal investments in CRP cannot be reliably estimated.

FSA plans to conduct statewide mail surveys with ND and SD hunters to elicit information on:

- (a) Their use of CRP lands in terms of days spent hunting there;
- (b) Expenditure pattern information; and
- (c) Net economic values.

The primary objective of the survey is to estimate the employment and income contribution of current CRP lands to the rural areas within the respective States, and possible changes to jobs and income emanating from changes in the CRP program.

We have discussed the survey with the State Fish and Game agencies and tentatively selected mail surveys. Mail surveys appear to be the best unbiased survey approach because the State Fish and Game agencies do not have email addresses for all hunters, and hunters in many rural locations of ND and SD do not have email access at home.

Collection of the data is necessary to evaluate and improve CRP selection criteria and program implementation. Having information on recreation-related jobs permits a comparison of county-level impacts of CRP land temporarily going out of crop production.

*Estimate of burden*: Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 20 minutes per response.

*Frequency of Collection*: One time only.

*Respondents*: Hunters in ND and SD.  
*Estimated Number of Annual Respondents*: 2,400.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent*: 1.

*Estimated Total Annual Responses*: 2,400.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents*: 800 hours.

We are requesting comments on all aspects of this information collection to help us to:

- (1) Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of FSA, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (2) Evaluate the accuracy of FSA's estimate of burden, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) 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.

All responses to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed on March 6, 2012.

**Bruce Nelson,**

*Administrator, Farm Service Agency, Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-05-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Tongass National Forest Wrangell Ranger District; Alaska; Wrangell Island Project Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY**: Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY**: A Notice of Intent (NOI) was first published for this proposal in the **Federal Register** (75 FR 81210) on December 27, 2010. This NOI is being published due to the length of time that has passed since the first NOI was published and due to changes made to the Purpose and Need and Proposed Action in response to public input received during the initial scoping period.

**DATES**: Comments received during the initial scoping period in 2010-2011 will be considered in the preparation of this EIS. New or additional comments must be received by March 15, 2012, 45 days from date of publication of this Corrected NOI in the **Federal Register**. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in December 2012, and the final environmental impact statement is expected in June 2013.

**ADDRESSES**: Send written comments to: Tongass National Forest, c/o Tim Piazza, 648 Mission Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901, Attn: Wrangell Island Project EIS. Comments may be hand-delivered to the Wrangell Ranger District, 525 Bennett Drive, Wrangell, AK 99929, Attn: Wrangell Island Project EIS. Comments may also be sent via email to [wrangell\\_island\\_project\\_eis@fs.fed.us](mailto:wrangell_island_project_eis@fs.fed.us), or via facsimile to 907-228-6215, Attn: Wrangell Island Project EIS.

In all correspondence, please include your name, address, and organization name if you are commenting as a representative of an organization.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tim Piazza, Team Leader, Federal Building, Ketchikan, AK 99901, (907) 228-6318; or Austin O'Brien, Wrangell Ranger District, P.O. Box 51, Wrangell, AK 99929, (907) 874-2323.

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 Time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Purpose and Need for Action**

The purpose of the Wrangell Island Project is to respond to the goals and objectives identified by the Forest Plan to guide timber management to support the local and regional economies of Southeast Alaska, while moving the Wrangell Island Project Area towards the desired future condition for all resources.

The underlying need for the Wrangell Island Project comes from the Forest Service's obligation, subject to applicable law, to seek to provide a supply of timber from the Tongass that meets market demand annually and for the planning cycle, and to restore and improve forest resources to a condition where they provide increased benefits to society.

Integrated planning is essential to provide an orderly flow of timber to large and small timber purchasers, mill operators, and value-added wood product industries in Southeast Alaska who contribute to the local and regional economies of Wrangell Island and Southeast Alaska while also improving forest resource conditions. This project will help provide a reliable, long-term supply of timber that will support local jobs and facilitate the transition to a sustainable wood product industry based on young-growth management.

**Proposed Action**

The Forest Service is proposing a multi-year project involving a variety of timber harvest, road construction, and forest restoration and enhancement activities. The proposed action would include the harvest of timber from up to 6,500 acres of forested land using one or varying sizes of timber sales, offered over a period of years, within the roaded land base on Wrangell Island. Up to 22 miles of National Forest System road and about 30 miles of temporary road would be constructed. Preliminary analysis shows that up to an estimated

80 million board feet of sawtimber and utility wood could be made available to industry for harvest. Existing log transfer facilities would be used as needed. Harvest would include helicopter, ground based, and cable-yarding systems and include even-aged and uneven-aged harvest prescriptions to achieve stand objectives.

Integrated restoration and enhancement activities will include road maintenance and improvements, invasive species treatments, erosion control, fish passage improvements. Other activities may include recreation enhancements, wildlife and fisheries habitat improvements, and subsistence access enhancement. All proposed activities would meet the standards and guidelines of the Tongass Forest Plan.

**Possible Alternatives**

In addition to the Proposed Action and No Action alternative, the Forest Service is considering a range of action alternatives based on public input received to date. These include an alternative which adjusts Old Growth Reserve (OGR) boundaries to allow timber harvest within the roaded portions of small and medium OGRs on Wrangell Island. This alternative would require a Forest Plan amendment as part of the Decision. Another alternative is being developed by interested citizens and the Borough of Wrangell.

**Responsible Official**

The responsible official for the decision on this project is the Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest, Federal Building, 648 Mission Street, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901.

**Nature of Decision To Be Made**

The responsible official will decide: (1) The estimated timber volume to make available from the project, as well as the location, design, and scheduling of timber harvest, road construction and reconstruction, and silvicultural practices used; (2) access management measures (road, trail, and area restrictions and closures); (3) mitigation measures and monitoring requirements; and (4) whether there may be a significant restriction on subsistence uses.

**Preliminary Issues**

The initial scoping identified preliminary issues and concerns which may be analyzed in the EIS to disclose potential effects of the project on the following: timber supply, supporting the timber industry through the transition from old-growth harvest to young-growth management, road and access management, economic and rural

stability, wildlife habitat, aquatic habitat (fisheries/hydrology/watersheds), soil productivity and slope stability, invasive species, heritage resources, roadless area characteristics, scenery, recreation, subsistence use, and climate change and carbon cycling.

**Preliminary List of Permits or Licenses Required**

All necessary permits will be obtained prior to project implementation, and may include the following:

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

- Review Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC);
- Solid Waste Disposal Permit State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources (DNR);
- Authorization for occupancy and use of tidelands and submerged lands

**Scoping Process**

The initial scoping period started when the NOI was published in 2010. This proposal has been listed on the Tongass National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions since January, 2011. There is an opportunity to submit new or additional comments for 45 days after publication of this Corrected NOI. Comments submitted previously will be considered in the analysis.

Public scoping meetings were held in Petersburg and Wrangell, Alaska, on January 11 and 13, 2011, respectively. An updated scoping document has been posted on the Tongass National Forest public Web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/projects.shtml>, and a project update letter will be mailed out to those who previously commented.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record. Comments submitted anonymously will also be accepted and considered.

Dated: March 5, 2012.

**Forrest Cole,**

*Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest.*

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