

best be served by preparing a Supplement to the FEIS.

This notice begins the public involvement process. I will use the public response plus interdisciplinary team analysis to decide whether to revise, amend or reaffirm the original McCaslin Record of Decision.

The proposed action and purpose and need of the McCaslin Project remains unchanged from the October 2003 FEIS. The purpose is to move the structure and cover of the existing forest closer to desired conditions described under Forest Plan management direction, and to provide forest products while doing so. A concurrent purpose is to eliminate unneeded roads and manage needed roads in a more efficient and effective way.

**Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review:** A draft supplement to the environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft 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 supplemental environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final supplemental 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.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 20)

Dated: May 19, 2005.

**Anne F. Archie,**

*Forest Supervisor, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### **Revision of Land Management Plan, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, Located In West-Central Colorado**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) will exercise its option to adjust its land management plan revision process from compliance with the 1982 planning regulations, to conformance with new planning regulations adopted in January 2005. This adjustment will have the following effects:

1. The new rule redefines forest plans to be more strategic and flexible to better facilitate adaptive management and public collaboration.
2. The new rule focuses more on the goals of ecological, social, and economic sustainability and less on prescriptive means of producing goods and services.
3. The Responsible Official who will approve the final plan will now be the Forest Supervisor instead of the Regional Forester.
4. The GMUG will establish an environmental management system (per ISO 14001:2004(E)) prior to completion of the revised forest plan.
5. Upon completion of final rulemaking, the planning and decision-making process may be categorically excluded from analysis and

documentation in an environmental impact statement and record of decision (see draft rule at 70 FR 1062, January 5, 2005).

6. The emphasis on public involvement will shift from public comment on a range of alternative plans, to an iterative public-Forest Service collaboration process intended to yield a single broadly supported plan.

7. Administrative review has changed from a post-decision appeals process to a pre-decision objection process.

**Public Involvement:** There has been a great deal of public participation and collaborative work on this planning process over the past few years, including more than 60 public meetings. Results of this work and a detailed proposed action are available for review and comment. Current information and details of upcoming public participation opportunities are posted on our Web site: [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan\\_rev/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan_rev/). Contact Anne Janik at (970) 874-6637, or e-mail at, [ajanik@fs.fed.us](mailto:ajanik@fs.fed.us) to be placed on our mailing list.

**ADDRESSES:** Physical location: GMUG Forest Planning, 2250 Highway 50, Delta CO, 81416; or by e-mail: [r2\\_GMUG\\_planning@fs.fed.us](mailto:r2_GMUG_planning@fs.fed.us).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Gary Shellhorn, Analysis Team Leader, GMUG National Forest, (970) 874-6666 or e-mail: [gshellhorn@fs.fed.us](mailto:gshellhorn@fs.fed.us); or view our Web site at [http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan\\_rev/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan_rev/).

**DATES:** Transition is effective immediately upon publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

**Responsible Official:** Charles S. Richmond, Forest Supervisor, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest, 2250 Highway 50, Delta CO, 81416.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) are managed as a single administrative unit. In September of 1999, the GMUG formally initiated its land management plan revision process with publication of a notice of intent to prepare and environmental impact statement for plan revision (64 FR 52266, September 28, 1999). After the initiation, several delays were experienced due to budget and administrative matters. When plan revision began in earnest in 2002, the GMUG began an extensive "pre-NEPA" public participation and collaboration process. In addition, the planning team has been working on comprehensive geographic area analyses of conditions and trends for the ecological, social and economic components of the plan area.

The first phase of public participation was focused primarily on development of "vision" statements, desired conditions, management issues, and suitable land uses to be incorporated into the preliminary proposed action. Over forty community meetings were conducted in this effort. During the second phase, the planning team met with the public to review the content of the preliminary proposal and to get feedback as to its desirability and feasibility. Also during the second phase, we displayed the draft findings of the comprehensive analyses of ecological, social, and economic conditions. We are still accepting comments on the preliminary proposed action and the analyses. We are using these comments to modify the plan proposal through an iterative process of public participation and adjustment. The planning team will be taking additional collaborative steps to finish the draft plan components and to identify potential options. Remaining work includes formulation of plan objectives (projections of measurable, time-specific actions toward achieving or maintaining desired conditions), guidelines (information and guidance for projects), monitoring program, and environmental management system.

This is an open planning process with numerous opportunities for the public to obtain information, provide comment, or participate in collaborative stakeholder activities. Options for the public include any of the following methods: (1) Reviewing and commenting on the preliminary proposed action, analysis results, and supporting maps posted on our website, (2) attending open house meetings, (3) requesting planning team presentations to specific groups, (4) newsletters, (5) participating in collaborative dialogue in-topic working groups, or (6) providing input during formal comment periods.

The focal points of the future collaborative work will be: (1) Review and adjustment of the preliminary proposed action (desired conditions and suitability of land areas for various purposes) and identification of options, (2) development of management objectives to assist in attaining or maintaining desired conditions, (3) formulation of guidelines to serve as operational controls to help ensure projects move toward or maintain desired conditions, and (4) development of the plan monitoring framework and environmental management system to guide adaptive management. We expect to complete this phase of collaboration by early Fall 2005. Our remaining forest

plan revision schedule will be approximately as follows:

Release of Draft Forest Plan and start of 90-day public comment period—Fall 2005.  
Release of Final Plans and start of 30-day objection period—Summer 2006.  
Final decision and start of plan implementation—Fall 2006.

Please see our Web site to review draft revised plan components in progress and other details.

Dated: May 20, 2005.

**Charles S. Richmond,**

*Forest Supervisor, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-ES-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

#### Funding Opportunity: Section 525 Technical and Supervisory Assistance (TSA) Grants

*Announcement Type:* Initial notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) inviting applications from qualified organizations for Fiscal Year 2005 funding.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA):* 10.441.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Housing Service (RHS) announces it is soliciting competitive applications under its Technical and Supervisory Assistance (TSA) grant program. Grants will be awarded to eligible applicant organizations to conduct programs of technical and supervisory assistance for low-income rural residents to obtain and/or maintain occupancy of adequate housing.

**DATES:** The deadline for receipt of preapplication proposals by Rural Development State Offices is the close of business on June 24, 2005. Preapplications received after June 24, 2005, will not be considered for funding. Within 30 days after the closing date, each State Director will forward to the National Office the original preapplication(s) and supporting documents of the selected applicant. State Directors will be advised of the National Office's action on their selected preapplications.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nica Mathes, Senior Loan Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division, Special Programs and New Initiatives Branch, Mail Stop 0783, Room 2206-S, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-0783, phone: (202) 205-3656 or (202) 720-1474, e-

mail: [nica.mathes@usda.gov](mailto:nica.mathes@usda.gov), or FAX: (202) 690-3555.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Paperwork Reduction Act

The reporting requirements contained in this Notice have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0575-0188.

##### Overview

This notice is published as required by 7 CFR 1944.525 (b) and 1944.528, which states the RHS Administrator must provide annual notice in the **Federal Register** on the distribution of appropriated TSA funds, the number of preapplications to be submitted to the National Office from the State Offices, and the maximum grant amount per project, and the dates governing the review and selection of TSA grant preapplications.

Complete agency regulations for the TSA program are contained in RD Instruction 1944-K, accessible online at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs>, or in 7 CFR part 1944, subpart K.

Up to \$1,000,000 in competitive grants will be awarded to eligible applicants. No single award will exceed \$100,000.

In accordance with 7 CFR 1944.525, the Administrator of RHS will distribute a portion of the funds to those States with the highest degree of substandard housing and persons in poverty in rural areas eligible to receive RHS housing assistance. These States are: New Mexico, Montana, South Dakota, Mississippi, and Kentucky. Up to \$500,000 will be targeted to eligible TSA programs in these States. Remaining funds will be available for national competition. No more than one grant per State will be awarded.

The State Director may submit multiple preapplications, ranked in order of preference, to the National Office for consideration.

The performance period of grant activities will be two years from the date the grant agreement is executed.

Reimbursement of pre-award costs is not allowed.

To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must be a nonprofit corporation, agency, institution, organization, Indian tribe or other association. A private nonprofit corporation, which is owned and controlled by private persons or interests, must have local representation from the area being served, be organized and operated by private persons or interests for purposes other than making gains or profits for the corporation, and be legally precluded from distributing any gains or profits to its members.