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.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Title: Livestock Slaughter.

OMB Control Number: 0535–0005.

Summary of Collection: The primary functions of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) are to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, disposition and prices and to collect information on related environmental and economic factors. General authority for data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204(a). This statue specifies the ''The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which he can obtain . . . by the collection of statistics . . . and shall distribute them among agriculturists''. Information from federally and non-federally inspected slaughter plants are used to estimate total red meat production. NASS will use a Federally and non-Federally-inspected livestock slaughter survey to collect data.

Need and Use of the Information: NASS will combine information collected from both types of plants to estimate total red meat production, consisting of the number of head slaughtered plus live weights of cattle, calves, hogs, sheep, goats, and bison. Accurate and timely livestock estimates provide USDA and the livestock industry with basic data to project future meat supplies and producer prices. Agricultural economists in both the public and private sectors use this information in economic analysis and research.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Monthly, Quarterly and Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 1,748.

Charlene Parker,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–21024 Filed 9–29–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–20–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0071]

Availability of an Environmental Assessment for the Biological Control of Yellow Toadflax

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared a draft environmental assessment relative to the control of yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*). The environmental assessment considers the effects of, and alternatives to, the field release of a stem gall weevil, *Rhinusa pilosa,* into the continental United States for use as a biological control agent to reduce the severity of yellow toadflax infestations. We are making the environmental assessment available to the public for review and comment.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before November 1, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0071.*
- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS–2017–0071, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A–03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0071* or in our reading room, which is located in Room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799–7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Colin D. Stewart, Assistant Director, Pests, Pathogens, and Biocontrol Permits, Permitting and Compliance Coordination, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 133, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 851–2327, email: *Colin.Stewart@aphis.usda.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Yellow toadflax is an invasive plant in pastures and crops, particularly in the northern prairies of North America. First introduced to northeastern North America in the 1600s, yellow toadflax has since spread throughout the United States. Invasions of yellow toadflax in pastures and rangelands displace native and planted—and more valued and nutritious—forage species. Yellow toadflax is difficult to control using chemical, mechanical, cultural, or existing biological control practices, and infestations of the plant have caused economically significant losses to peppermint producers, mainly because chemical control is generally incompatible with production cropping practices. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is proposing to issue permits for the field release of a stem gall weevil, *Rhinusa pilosa,* into the continental United States to reduce the severity of yellow toadflax infestations and to reduce economic losses in the areas of greatest impact since other alternatives are not effective or feasible.

APHIS' review and analysis of the proposed action are documented in detail in a draft environmental assessment (EA) entitled ''Field release of the stem gall weevil *Rhinusa pilosa* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) for classical biological control of yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) (Plantaginaceae) in the contiguous United States'' (March 2017). We are making this EA available to the public for review and comment. We will consider all comments that we receive on or before the date listed under the heading **DATES** at the beginning of this notice.

The EA 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 EA by calling or writing to the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Please refer to the title of the EA when requesting copies.

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

Done in Washington, DC, this 26th day of September 2017.

Michael C. Gregoire,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–21105 Filed 9–29–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Happy Camp/Oak Knoll Ranger District; California; Elk Creek Watershed Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The purpose of the Elk Creek Watershed Project is to address the need to manage forest stands to be more resilient to future disturbances, improve water quality to maintain and restore riparian and aquatic habitat, improve terrestrial habitat for northern spotted owl and Roosevelt elk, reduce fuel accumulations, and improve the vigor and prevalence of Karuk cultural resources.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by November 16, 2017. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected June 2018 and the Final Environmental Impact Statement is expected February 2019.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to P.O. Box 377, Happy Camp, CA 96039. Comments may also be sent via email to *jchastain@fs.fed.us,* or via facsimile to (530) 493–1796. Submit electronic comments at the Klamath National Forest's project Web page: *http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=46553.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dock Chastain, (530) 493–1742, *jchastain@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 Time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose and need for this project is to:

- Reduce fuel accumulations and create ridgetop fuel breaks to increase options for managing planned and unplanned ignitions;
- Improve water quality to maintain and restore riparian and aquatic habitat;
- Maximize efficiency of system roads and trails that provide public access to the Forest while minimizing resource impacts;
- Manage forest stands to be more resilient to future disturbances and improve terrestrial habitat for northern spotted owl and Roosevelt elk;
- Contribute to local and regional economies by providing forest products and enhancing recreational opportunities; and
- Improve the vigor and prevalence of Karuk cultural resources that were historically present in the planning area.

Proposed Action

The proposed action was designed to meet the purpose and need of the project. The proposed action would treat about 10,550 acres within the 45,992-acre project boundary. Acres by treatment type are described below and do not account for overlap in treatment types (acres receiving multiple treatments may be double counted). Treatment acreages are approximate at this point and may be adjusted and refined following scoping. The proposed action also addresses the existing condition of the National Forest Transportation System (Forest System) by treating legacy sites, changing road maintenance levels, and decommissioning roads. All treatments would manage for improving the health and vigor of hardwood species according to the Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Riparian Reserves within and adjacent to treatment units would be evaluated on a site-by-site basis for treatment, and would include equipment and treatment exclusion zones.

This project would include the following eight types of vegetation treatments: (1) Commercial thinning; (2) noncommercial thinning; (3) hardwood enhancement; (4) meadow enhancement; (5) fuels reduction adjacent to private property; (6) defensible fuel profile zones; (7) roadside fuels reduction; and (8) underburning. This project would use a travel analysis for recommending management levels of existing Forest System roads and would develop new opportunities for recreation through the addition of new trails.

(1) Commercial Thinning (1,782 acres): Commercial thinning is an intermediate harvest with the objective of reducing stand density primarily to improve growth, enhance forest health, and other resources objectives. Treatment can recover potential mortality while producing merchantable material.

(2) Noncommercial Thinning (1,256 acres): Noncommercial thinning is an intermediate harvest which removes the less desirable trees of any species in a stand of poles or larger trees primarily to improve the composition and quality of the stand.

(3) Hardwood Enhancement (76 acres): Hardwood enhancement would focus on stimulating the growth and available resources for preferred hardwood species according to the Forest Plan.

(4) Meadow Enhancement (18 acres): Meadow enhancement treatments would focus on reducing conifer encroachment by removing conifer seedlings and saplings growing within the meadow footprint.

(5) Fuels reduction Adjacent to Private Property (153 acres): Fuel breaks created to protect private property would extend up to 500 feet adjacent to private property. The fuel treatments would involve cutting and pile burning of ladder fuels: Brush, hardwoods, and conifer trees up to ten inches diameter at breast height.

(6) Defensible Fuel Profile Zone (823 acres): The width of the defensible fuel profile zone would be up to 250 feet on either side of proposed ridge lines. The fuel treatments would involve cutting and pile burning of ladder fuels: Brush, hardwoods, and conifer trees up to ten inches diameter at breast height.

(7) Roadside Fuels Reduction (1,896 acres): The roadside fuel breaks would extend up to 300 feet above and 50 feet below either side of identified Forest System and county roads adjacent to Forest Service lands. The fuel treatments would involve cutting and pile burning of ladder fuels: Brush, hardwoods, and conifer trees up to ten inches diameter at breast height.

(8) Underburning (4,552 acres): Underburn units are intended to be burned at low to moderate intensities to reduce fuel loadings and reduce the risk of catastrophic fire. Travel Analysis—A risk and benefit analysis was conducted for Forest System roads within the East Fork Elk Creek and Lower Elk Creek 6th field watersheds. Road treatments include 22 miles of decommissioning, 15 miles of downgrading maintenance levels, 10 miles of upgrading maintenance levels, and treating associated legacy sites. In addition to Forest System road actions, four miles of non-system roads would be rehabilitated.

This project would also include recreation improvements, including the construction of 4.3 miles of new multi-use trails and up to 13 miles of mountain bike trail.