

January 14, 2004, (5 p.m.–7 p.m. and 7 p.m.–9 p.m.), Lifelong Learning Center, 801 East Benjamin Avenue, Norfolk, NE

January 15, 2004, (5 p.m.–7 p.m. and 7 p.m.–9 p.m.), Holiday Inn Express, 803 East Highway 20, Valentine, NE

January 20, 2004, (5 p.m.–7 p.m. and 7 p.m.–9 p.m.), Stubb's Restaurant Meeting Room, Junction Highways 2 and 83, Thedford, NE

January 21, 2004, (5 p.m.–7 p.m. and 7 p.m.–9 p.m.), Sandhills Convention Center/Quality Inn and Suites, 2102 South Jeffers Street, North Platte, NE

Preliminary Issues

The current road and trail system cannot be maintained to established standards with the current and projected budget allocations.

Unrestricted motorized travel negatively affects the recreation experience of those who are seeking prefer a non-motorized experience. This relates primarily to big game hunting, and to a lesser extent upland hunting, judging from the comments received.

In a few locations, there is evidence that motorized travel is contributing to resource degradation.

The national forests and national grassland are essentially the only public areas in the state where motorized travel is allowed.

Restricting motorized travel could contribute to a decline in rural economies that rely in part upon motorized recreation participation on the national forests and grassland.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. A detailed description of the proposed action and available maps can be accessed at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska>. Comments that are most helpful for the Forest Service in making adjustments to the proposed action are those that provide specific suggestions for changes and include reasons and/or scientific documentation to support the requested changes. Comments that support the proposed action also are most helpful if they clearly describe why the writer favors the actions proposed.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact 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 environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final 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 and those interested in the 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 21)

Dated: January 20, 2004.

Charlie Marsh,

District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 04–1988 Filed 1–29–04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Alpine County, CA, Resource Advisory Committee (RAC)

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committees Act (Pub. L. 92–463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106–393) the Alpine County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will meet on Monday, February 2, 2004, at 18:00 at the Diamond Valley School for business meetings. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues relating to implementing the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Payment to States) and expenditure of Title II funds. The meetings are open to the public.

DATES: Monday, February 2, 2004, at 18:00 hours.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Diamond Valley School (physical address, room and time). Send written comments to Franklin Pemberton, Alpine County RAC coordinator, c/o USDA Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe N.F., Carson Ranger District 1536 So. Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Alpine Co. RAC Coordinator, Franklin Pemberton at (775) 884–8150; or Gary Schiff, Carson District Ranger and Designated Federal Officer, at (775) 884–8100, or electronically to fpemberton@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Meeting is open to the public. Council discussion is limited to Forest Service staff and Council members. However, persons who wish to bring urban and community forestry matters to the attention of the council may file written statements with the Council staff before and after the meeting.

Dated: January 22, 2004.

Larry Randall,

Acting Carson District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 04–1904 Filed 1–29–04; 8:45 am]

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