

elements to uneven-aged, small group selection and prescribed fire. The intention is to implement these activities in suitable locations over time and to monitor and perform research studies on the response of physical, chemical, and biological features of the Big Creek and Dinkey Creek watersheds. The study is a collaborative effort between the Sierra National Forest and the Pacific Southwest Research Station.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by January 24, 2005. Mail comments to: Ray Porter District Ranger, High Sierra Ranger District, PO Box 559 (29688 Auberry Road), Prather, CA 93651.

The draft environmental impact statement is expected June 2005 and the final environmental impact statement is expected October 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ross Peckinpah, Acting Kings River Project Coordinator, (559) 855-5355 x3350.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The Kings River Project is a key part of the adaptive management program for the Sierra Nevada designed to address questions that relate to the uncertainties associated with management activities and their effects on wildlife habitat, watershed condition and modified wildfire behavior.

Proposed Action

The Sierra National Forest proposes to implement the Kings River Project that initially involves analyzing in detail eight management units for treatment between 2006 and 2008. Analysis will include an additional 71 management units for examination based on existing conditions and the potential for cumulative effects (of which 10 are no treatment-controls units and the remaining 61 units for implementation between 2011 and 2033). Thus, the EIS will be programmatic for the entire project with a focused piece for the initial eight management units. The EIS will address the five planned research studies (Kings River experimental watershed, California spotted owl, fisher, air quality, and uneven-aged management) while incorporating the National Fire Plan objectives (April 2000), USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan and the Sierra Nevada Framework for Conservation and Collaboration Record of Decision (January 2001), as amended on January 21, 2004.

Lead and Cooperating Agencies

The Kings River Project is a collaborative effort between the Sierra National Forest and the Pacific

Southwest Research Station (PSW). The Sierra National Forest is the lead agency.

Responsible Official

Ed Cole, Forest Supervisor, Sierra National Forest, 1600 Tollhouse Ave., Clovis, CA 93612.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision to be made is whether to implement the planned treatment and associated studies, an alternative or select no action.

Scoping Process

The Sierra National Forest will conduct a public scoping period that coincides with this notice.

Comment Requested

This revised notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. The Sierra National Forest is seeking comments regarding this proposal to identify issues that may be presently unknown to the agency.

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 60-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. MRDC*, 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 that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 60-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 1508.2; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: December 14, 2004.

Jane Fertig,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 04-27809 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Mendocino Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mendocino County Resource Advisory Committee will meet January 21, 2005, (RAC) in Willits, California. Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Approval of minutes (2) Public Comment, (3) Sub-committees (4) Old Business. (5) Non Attendance/ Informational/action item (6) Discussion/approval of projects, (7) Matters before the group (8) hand outs (9) next agenda items and meeting date.

DATES: The meeting will be held on January 21, 2005, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Mendocino County Museum, located at 400 E. Commercial St., Willits, California.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Roberta Hurt, Committee Coordinator, USDA, Mendocino National Forest, Covelo Ranger District, 78150 Covelo Road, Covelo CA 95428. (707) 983-8503; e-mail rhurt@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting is open to the public. Persons who wish to bring matters to the attention of the Committee may file written statements with the Committee staff by January 17, 2005. Public comment will have the opportunity to address the committee at the meeting.

Dated: December 14, 2004.

Blaine Baker,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 04-27744 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Mineral County Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393) the Lolo National Forest's Mineral County Resource Advisory Committee will meet on the first Tuesday of each of the next five months from January 2005 through May 2005. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. in Superior, Montana and are open to the public. Meetings normally last two hours.

DATES: January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, and May 3, 2005.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Mineral County Courthouse, 300 River Street, Superior, MT 59872.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Harper, Designated Forest Official (DFO), District Ranger, Lolo National Forest, at (406) 822-4233.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda topics for all five meetings will focus on presentation and discussion of new project proposals, as authorized under Title II of P.L. 106-393. Selection of projects will occur at the April and May meetings. Meetings will be announced in local newspapers, the Mineral Independent and the Missoulian.

Dated: December 14, 2004.

Deborah L. R. Austin,

Designated Federal Official.

[FR Doc. 04-27813 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393), the Boise and Payette National Forests' Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee will conduct a business meeting, which is open to the public.

DATES: Wednesday, January 19, 2004, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: Idaho Counties Risk Management Program Building, 3100 South Vista Avenue, Boise, Idaho.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda topics will include review and approval of project proposals, and is an open public forum.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dough Gochnour, Designated Federal Officer, at 208-392-6681 or e-mail dgochnour@fs.fed.us.

Dated: December 14, 2004.

Lana S. Thurston,

Administrative Officer, Boise National Forest.

[FR Doc. 04-27815 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resource Conservation Service

Beaver Creek Watershed Project; Morgan and Washington Counties, Colorado

AGENCY: Natural Resource Conservation Service, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of a Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Part 1500); and the Natural Resource Conservation Service Regulations (7 CFR Part 650); the Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is not being prepared for the Beaver Creek Watershed Project, Morgan and Washington counties, Colorado.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Allen Green, Colorado State

Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service, 655 Parfet St., Lakewood, Colorado, 80215-5517, telephone (720) 544-2802.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment of this federally assisted action documents that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the human environment. The findings of Allen Green, State Conservationist, indicate that the preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is not needed for this project.

The primary project purposes are, (1) Agricultural water management—improve water application effectiveness and reduce negative water quality and quantity impacts to surface and groundwater's including, the South Platte River. These impacts being from excessive loading of nitrates, nutrients, sediment, and salts. (2) Watershed protection—protect the soil resource base from excessive irrigation induced erosion and sedimentation, improve soil health through carbon sequestration. (3) Nonagricultural Water Management—creation and improvement of wetland and wildlife habitat as part of a three state initiative.

The planned works of improvement include, on-farm underground irrigation pipelines, on-farm concrete irrigation ditches; sprinkler irrigation systems, and structures for water control. These enduring practices are accompanied by facilitating management practices such as Irrigation Water Management.

This Notice of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency and to various Federal, State and Local agencies and interested parties. Copies of the FONSI and Plan/Environmental Assessment are available by request from Allen Green, Colorado State Conservationist. Basic data developed during the environmental evaluation are on file and may be reviewed by contacting Allen Green, State Conservationist.

No administrative action on implementation of this project will be taken until 30 days after the date this Notice is published in the **Federal Register**.

Allen Green,

State Conservationist.

(This activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under NO. 10904, Soil and Water Conservation.)
[FR Doc. 04-27777 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-P