

which currently, one exists on the District.

Proposed Action

The proposed action to meet the purpose and need of the project area is: commercially harvest approximately 5,300 acres of which 4,000 acres is intermediate harvest, 1,100 acres are sanitation salvage and approximately 200 acres of regeneration harvest (clearcut with reserve). The commercial harvest would include approximately 9 miles of road construction and reconstruction on existing roads. The proposal also includes the use of prescribe burning on approximately 466 acres on big game winter range, building approximately 3 miles of fuel breaks on the Idaho/Montana border, conducting pre-commercial stand improvement on approximately 2,000 acres, enhancement of whitebark pine habitat on 1,434 acres, by thinning around the remaining trees, and decommissioning approximately 160 miles of road and putting approximately 68 miles of road into storage. The proposal also adds access for disabled hunters, provides loops for ATV enthusiasts, increases wildlife security through effective road closures and improves instream fisheries habitat by placing structures in several streams in the area.

Responsible Official

Ranotta McNair, Forest Supervisor, Idaho Panhandle National Forest, 3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur D'Alene, Idaho 83815.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The St. Joe Ranger District will prepare the EIS. The Forest Supervisor of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest will decide whether to implement this project, and if so, in what manner. The decision will be documented in a Record of Decision (ROD).

Scoping Process

Public Scoping packages describing the proposed action were sent out to the Quartz Gold Project mailing list in January 2003. An open house was held in February of 2003. A field trip to the project area is planned for May or June of 2003.

Preliminary Issues

Preliminary issues from scoping have been identified. These include effects of the proposed vegetation management and roads on water yield and sediment delivery to streams, the effects of management activities on riparian habitat conservation areas, the effects of proposed access management on the full spectrum of recreation use of roads and

trial in the project area, and economic cost efficiency of proposed commercial harvest and road construction and decommissioning.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. Public participation in this analysis is welcome at any time, however; comments received within 30 days of publication of this notice will be especially useful in the preparation of the Draft EIS.

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 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 21)

Dated: May 9, 2003.

Ranotta K. McNair,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-12104 Filed 5-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Public Meetings of the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) will hold meetings to become informed about Black Hills National Forest issues and to reach consensus on those issues so as to make management recommendations to the forest supervisory. The meetings are open, and the public may attend any part of the meetings. The May 28 agenda includes a presentation on the Phase II Amendment to the Black Hills National Forest 1997 Land and Resource Management Plan.

DATES: The meetings will be held on the following dates:

Wednesday, May 28, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Friday, July 11, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, August 20, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, September 17, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 15, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, November 19, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will take place at the Alex Johnson Hotel located at 523 Sixth Street, Rapid City, SD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Carroll, Black Hills National Forest, 25041 North Highway 16, Custer, SD, 57730, (605) 673-9200.

Dated: May 6, 2003.

David M. Thom,

Acting Black Hills National Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-12105 Filed 5-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Ravalli County Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Ravalli County Resource Advisory Committee will be meeting to discuss projects for 2003 and monitoring of 2002 projects. Agenda topics will include project proposal submissions and a public forum (question and answer session). The meeting is being held 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 meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held on May 27, 2003, 6:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Ravalli County Administration Building, 215 S. 4th Street, Hamilton, Montana. Send written comments to Jeanne Higgins, District Ranger, Stevensville Ranger District, 88 Main Street, Stevensville, MT 59870, by facsimile (406) 777-7423, or electronically to jmhiggins@fs.fed.us.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeanne Higgins, Stevensville District Ranger and Designated Federal Officer, Phone: (406) 777-5461.

Dated: May 8, 2003.

David T. Bull,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-12103 Filed 5-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Tuolumne County Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Tuolumne County Resource Advisory Committee will meet on May 19, 2003 at the City of Sonora Fire Department, in Sonora, California. The purpose of the meeting is to review project proposal submittals, and

determine presentation needs for the upcoming June and July meetings.

DATES: The meeting will be held May 19, 2003, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the City of Sonora Fire Department located at 201 South Shepherd Street, in Sonora, California (CA 95370).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pat Kaunert, Committee Coordinator, USDA, Stanislaus National Forest, 19777 Greenley Road, Sonora, CA 95370 (209) 532-3671; e-mail pkunert@fs.fed.us

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Status of replacement member applicants; (2) Review project proposal submittals; (3) Determine which proposal proponents to invite to make an oral presentation at the June and July meetings. This meeting is open to the public.

Dated: May 7, 2003.

Tom Quinn,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-12106 Filed 5-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-ED-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee, Kamiah, Idaho, USDA, Forest Service.

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 Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests' North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee will meet Thursday, May 29, 2003 in Kooskia, Idaho for a business meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The business meeting on May 29 begins at 10 a.m. (PST), at the IOOF Hall, Kooskia, Idaho. Agenda topics will include discussion of potential projects. A public forum will begin at 2:30 p.m. (PST).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ihor Mereszczak, Staff Officer and Designated Federal Officer at (208) 935-2513.

Dated: May 6, 2003.

Ihor Mereszczak,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 03-12126 Filed 5-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes to Section IV of the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Indiana

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability of proposed changes in Section IV of the FOTG of the NRCS in Indiana for review and comment.

SUMMARY: It is the intention of NRCS in Indiana to issue two revised conservation practice standards in Section IV of the FOTG. The revised standards are: Dike (356) and Wildlife Watering Facility (648). These practices may be used in conservation systems that treat highly erodible land and/or wetlands.

DATES: Comments will be received for a 30-day period commencing with this date of publication.

ADDRESSES: Address all requests and comments to Jane E. Hardisty, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), 6013 Lakeside Blvd., Indianapolis, Indiana 46278. Copies of this standard will be made available upon written request. You may submit your electronic requests and comments to darrell.brown@in.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane E. Hardisty, 317-290-3200.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 states that after enactment of the law, revisions made to NRCS state technical guides used to carry out highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the law, shall be made available for public review and comment. For the next 30 days, the NRCS in Indiana will receive comments relative to the proposed changes. Following that period, a determination will be made by the NRCS in Indiana regarding disposition of those comments and a final determination of changes will be made.