

Done in Washington, DC, this 12th day of July 2004.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 04-16182 Filed 7-15-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04-069-1]

Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases; Meeting

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. II), we are giving notice of a meeting of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases.

DATES: The meeting will be held on August 4 and 5, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Conference Center at the USDA Center at Riverside, 4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD.

Written statements on the meeting topic may be sent to Dr. Joseph Anelli, Director Outreach/Liaison, Emergency Management, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 41, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Joseph Anelli, Director Outreach/Liaison, Emergency Management, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 41, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-8073.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases (the Committee) advises the Secretary of Agriculture on actions necessary to prevent the introduction of foreign diseases of livestock and poultry into the United States. In addition, the Committee advises the Secretary on contingency planning and on maintaining a state of preparedness to deal with these diseases, if introduced.

The Committee will meet in Riverdale, MD, on August 4-5, 2004, to discuss issues related to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and the national animal identification system.

The meeting will be open to the public, and any member of the public may file a written statement. However, due to the time constraints, only

Committee members will be allowed to participate in the Committee's discussions.

You may file written statements on meeting topics with the Committee before or after the meeting. You may also file written statements at the time of the meeting. Please refer to Docket No. 04-069-1 when submitting your statements.

Parking and Security Procedures

Please note that a fee of \$2.25 is required to enter the parking lot at the USDA Center. The machine accepts \$1 bills and quarters.

Upon entering the building, visitors should inform security personnel that they are attending the Advisory Committee Meeting on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases. Identification is required. Visitor badges must be worn at all times while inside the building.

Done in Washington, DC, this 13th day of July 2004.

W. Ron DeHaven,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 04-16278 Filed 7-15-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Bridger-Teton National Forest—Big Piney and Jackson Ranger Districts, WY; Lower Valley Energy Natural Gas Pipeline

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Forest Service has received an application for a special use permit for the construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline from Lower Valley Energy. This pipeline would bring natural gas service to the Jackson, Wyoming area from a location near Merna, Wyoming. Design of the proposed project, including final route selection, a proposed gas processing facility, and access needs along the pipeline route for maintenance, will also be considered in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

DATES: Comments concerning the proposed action should be received by August 31, 2004. Comments on issues that you feel should be evaluated as part of this analysis or are essential to this environmental analysis process should be submitted by the above date. Please direct any project related questions or comments to the following individuals.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: Greg Clark, District Ranger, Big Piney Ranger District; P.O. Box 218; Big Piney, Wyoming 83113. Electronic comments may be sent to mailroom_r4_bridger_teton@fs.fed.us with the subject line "Lower Valley Pipeline".

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Teresa Trulock, Project Manager, at the Big Piney Ranger District at 307-276-3375. The local contact in the Jackson area is Dave Cunningham at the Jackson Ranger District, at 307-739-5423.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Project Area

The proposed Lower Valley Energy Natural Gas Pipeline project encompasses nearly 50 linear miles from Jackson to the vicinity of Merna, in Sublette and Teton Counties, Wyoming. The project area includes portions of the Big Piney and Jackson Ranger Districts of the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The proposed pipeline would parallel existing roadways and utility corridors for a portion of its proposed route. The pipeline would cross portions of the following townships: Township 36 North, Ranges 112 and 113 West; Township 37 North Ranges 111, 112, and 113 West; Township 38 North, Ranges 113, 114, and 115 West; Township 39 North, Ranges 115 and 116 West; and Township 40 North, Range 116 West; Sixth Principal Meridian.

Purpose and Need for Action

The current gas supply for Lower Valley Energy's distribution system is a liquid natural gas (LNG) facility located adjacent to its Jackson, Wyoming office. Tanker trucks currently transport LNG from the Shute Creek facility, located south of La Barge, Wyoming, to Lower Valley Energy's LNG facility. Delivery of LNG to the Jackson area requires that trucks, carrying approximately 10,000 gallons of LNG, travel approximately 120 miles (one way) on public highways (U.S. highways 287/191/26 and 89/191) on a daily basis. Approximately 665 round trips by tanker trucks are projected by the year 2010. The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a steady supply of natural gas to the Jackson area, eliminating the need for 500 to 600 tanker truck round trips per year along public highways.

Proposed Action

Lower Valley Energy proposes to construct a natural gas pipeline that will provide a steady stream of natural gas to the Jackson area, eliminating the need for trucking LNG along public highways. The proposed action would

be located on lands administered by the Forest Service, State of Wyoming lands, and private lands. Most of the pipeline route would be located on the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Pipeline construction is anticipated to begin in mid-year 2006 and the pipeline should be fully operational by the beginning of the 2006 winter season. The pipeline's sole purpose is to deliver processed natural gas to the Jackson area. The pipeline is not designed to receive natural gas directly from gas wells. Newly discovered gas resources along the pipeline route could not and would not be added to the proposed pipeline.

Possible Alternatives

The proposed pipeline route and other potentially feasible route segments have been identified by Lower Valley Energy. Possible alternatives to the proposed action include the selection of combinations of these segments. No alternative route segment to the Hoback Canyon corridor along U.S. Highway 89/191 has been found for this portion of the proposed pipeline route. The scoping process and environmental analysis will evaluate the feasibility of alternatives to the proposed action.

Responsible Officials

Greg Clark, District Ranger; Big Piney Ranger District; P.O. Box 218; Big Piney, Wyoming 83113; and Nancy Hall, District Ranger; Jackson Ranger District; P.O. Box 1689; Jackson, Wyoming 83001.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision, which is based on this analysis, will be to decide if a special use authorization will be issued to Lower Valley Energy to construct a natural gas pipeline on National Forest System land between Merna and Jackson Wyoming either through the implementation of the proposed action or an alternative to the proposed action. The decision will include mitigation measures identified as being needed during this planning process in addition to any prescribed in the Forest Plan.

Scoping Process

The Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from individuals, organizations and federal, state, and local agencies that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action (36 CFR 219.6).

Public comments will be used and disclosed in the environmental analysis documented in the Lower Valley Energy Natural Gas Pipeline EIS. Public participation will be solicited by notifying in person and/or by mail

known interested and affected parties. A legal notice and news releases will be used to give the public general notice. Open houses will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, July 19, 2004, at the Teton County Library Auditorium in Jackson and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday July 20, 2004, at the Bondurant Elementary School in Bondurant. Forest Service and Lower Valley Energy representatives will be available to explain the project and answer questions.

A reasonable range of alternative will be evaluated and reasons will be given for eliminating alternatives from detailed study. A "no-action alternative" is required, meaning that no pipeline would be constructed, and LNG delivery to Jackson would continue by existing methods. Alternatives will provide different pipeline routes in response to public issues, management concerns, and resource opportunities identified during the scoping process. Scoping comments and existing condition reports will also be used to develop alternatives. It is possible that no other action alternative, other than the proposed action, will be determined to be feasible by the environmental analysis.

Preliminary Issues

The Forest Service has identified the following potential issues. No determination has been made as to which issues will be examined in detail in the environmental analysis. Your input will help determine which of these issues merit detailed analysis and will also help identify additional issues related to the proposed action that may not be listed here.

- Coordination with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) for use of the Hoback Canyon corridor along U.S. Highway 89/191.
- Coordination with WYDOT for future maintenance of the highway and the pipeline.
- Effects of pipeline construction of the Hoback River.
- Effects of pipeline construction on wetlands.
- Rights-of-way across private lands.
- Effects of pipeline construction on individuals, property, and highway traffic.
- Public safety.
- Pipeline integrity in active landslide and fault areas.
- Effects on seasonal recreational uses.
- Effects of pipeline construction and operation on wildlife habitats
- Concern that newly discovered gas resources would be added to the pipeline, which would encourage

exploration along the pipeline route (**Note:** This concern has been addressed above in the proposed action. Newly discovered gas from wells along the pipeline route will not be added to the proposed pipeline, which will carry only processed gas).

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

The Draft EIS (DEIS) is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public comment in June 2005. At that time, the EPA will publish a notice of availability for the DEIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the DEIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA 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 the DEIS 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 DEIS stage but are not raised until after completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) 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 on the DEIS 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 EIS (FEIS).

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed actions, comments on the DEIS 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 DEIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statements. 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: July 6, 2004.

Greg W. Clark.

District Ranger, Big Piney Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest.

[FR Doc. 04-15793 Filed 7-15-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Shasta County Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Services, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Shasta County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will meet at the USDA Service Center in Redding California, August 4, 2004, September 1, 2004 and October 6, 2004. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss proposed projects under Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

DATES: August 4, 2004, September 1, 2004 and October 6, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the USDA Service Center, 3644 Avtech Parkway, Redding, California 96002.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael R. Odle, Asst. Public Affairs Officer and RAC Coordinator.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meetings are open to the public. Public input sessions will be provided and individuals will have the opportunity to address the Shasta County Resource Advisory Committee.

Dated: July 9, 2004.

J. Sharon Heywood,

Forest Supervisor, Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

[FR Doc. 04-16165 Filed 7-15-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

RIN 0596-AB90

Roadless Area Protection

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of issuance of agency interim directive.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service is reinstating interim directive (ID) 1920-

2001-1 (issued Dec. 14, 2001, and expired June 14, 2003) for the management of inventoried roadless areas. The reinstated ID, now numbered ID 1920-2004-1, is intended to provide guidance for addressing road and timber management activities in inventoried roadless areas until land and resource management plans are amended or revised. The ID has been reinstated to the Forest Service Manual (FSM) Chapter 1920, Land Management Planning.

DATES: This interim directive is effective July 16, 2004.

ADDRESSES: ID 1920-2004-1 is available electronically from the Forest Service via the World Wide Web/Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives>. Single paper copies of the interim directive are also available by contacting the Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff, Forest Service, USDA, Mail Stop 1104, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1104, or by facsimile to (202) 205-1012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dave Barone, Planning Specialist, Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff, Forest Service (202) 205-1019.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service is reinstating an interim directive (ID) to Forest Service Manual (FSM) chapter 1920 to provide guidance for the protection and management of inventoried roadless areas. The ID was originally published for comment on August 22, 2001 (66 FR 44111), and a revised ID was published for comment on December 20, 2001 (66 FR 65801). The December 2001 ID expired on June 14, 2003. This action reinstates the administrative policy that, until a land management plan is revised or an amendment is adopted that considers their protection and management, inventoried roadless areas shall, as a general rule, be managed to preserve their roadless characteristics. This ID also reinstates the reservation of authority to the Chief to make decisions affecting inventoried roadless areas, except in specific circumstances that generally are consistent with the exceptions in the set aside Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) (36 CFR part 294), involving: (1) Road construction or road reconstruction until a forest-scale roads analysis is completed and incorporated into a forest plan, or until a determination is made that an amendment to the plan is not necessary; and (2) the cutting, sale, or removal of timber until a revision of a forest plan or adoption of a plan amendment that has considered the

protection and management of inventoried roadless areas.

The reinstated ID makes two changes to the direction previously issued on December 14, 2001, in ID No. 1920-2001-1. The first change is in the Policy section at FSM 1925.03 where a statement has been added that allows the Chief to grant project-specific exceptions to the reservations of authority set out in the ID. This addition is being made to give the Chief the flexibility to exercise discretion, on a case-by-case basis, when a Forest Supervisor or a Regional Forester requests, for good cause, that the decision authority not be reserved. The second change is at FSM 1925.04b to the authority and the responsibility of the Regional Forester for decisions on a road construction or road reconstruction project in an inventoried roadless area. This section has been revised to include all lands associated with any mineral lease, license, permit or approval issued for mineral leasing operations. This adjustment was made in order to eliminate the confusion concerning the minerals leasing program in inventoried roadless areas which involve protracted, staged decisionmaking, as well as in consideration of the interests set forth in the National Energy Plan.

There have been nine lawsuits filed in six judicial districts and four Federal circuits challenging the Roadless Rule. On May 10, 2001, the U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho issued a preliminary injunction order enjoining the Department from implementing the Roadless Rule. That order was reversed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. On July 14, 2003, the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming issued a permanent injunction order enjoining the Department from implementing the Roadless Rule. That ruling has been appealed. The roadless management ID was originally issued to provide interim protections for inventoried roadless areas because of the legal uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the Roadless Rule. There continues to be uncertainty as legal proceedings are ongoing and the ultimate outcome is far from certain. In addition, the Department of Agriculture has announced its intentions to proceed with a new rulemaking addressing inventoried roadless area management. The Forest Service is not yet prepared to adopt a final policy, and feels that reinstating the interim policy is the best course of action at this time.

The agency believes that the interim policy contained in the ID provides stability to roadless area management