

Type of Request: Extension of a previously approved information collection.

Abstract: The Exchange Agreement contains such information as the identification of the parties, description of the lands and interests to be exchanged, identification of all reserved and outstanding interests. This information is collected by Forest Service personnel by phone or meeting with the exchange party and used to complete the Exchange Agreement.

Estimate of Burden: 1 hour.

Type of Respondents: non-Federal land exchange partners.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 100.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 100 hours.

Data from this information collection is used to facilitate a mutually beneficial land exchange between the Forest Service and a non-Federal party and is not available from other sources.

Comment Is Invited

The agency invites comments on the following: (a) The necessity of the proposed collection of information for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical or scientific utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Use of Comment

All comments received in response to this notice, including name and address when provided, will become a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: June 3, 2003.

Gloria Manning,

Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Carbon County, WY, Blackhall-McAnulty Timber Sale, Prescribed Burn and Travel Management

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose the environmental effects of a site-specific proposal to reduce the spread of dwarf mistletoe and mountain pine beetle in area lodgepole pine stands, increase patch size of forested areas that have had past harvest, improve resiliency and reduce susceptibility to future disease and insect attack, salvage fire damaged trees, and promote and maintain area aspen and ponderosa pine stands within the Blackhall-McAnulty Analysis Area of the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District of the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests within Carbon County, Wyoming, using a combination of clearcutting and partial harvest treatments.

The proposal also includes: prescribed fire to improve forage for big game and livestock, boundary treatments to reduce hazardous fuels on National Forest adjacent to private land, watershed restoration projects, improvement of the Big Creek Trailhead, and travel management within this portion of the Sierra Madre Range.

DATES: The draft environmental impact statement is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review during August 2003. At that time, the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the draft EIA in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the draft EIS will be for a period of not less than 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the NOA in the **Federal Register**. It is important that those interested in the management of this area comment at that time.

The final EIS is expected to be available in November 2003. In the final EIS, the Forest Service will respond to any comments received during the public comment period that pertain to the environmental analysis. Those comments and the Forest Service responses will be disclosed and discussed in the final EIS and will be considered when the final decision about this proposal is made.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Terry DeLay, Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District, PO Box 249, Saratoga, WY 82331. Electronic Mail (e-mail) may be sent to tdelay@fs.fed.us and FAX may be sent to (307) 326-5250. Telephone: (307) 326-2518.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mail correspondence to Terry DeLay, Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District, PO Box 249, Saratoga, WY 82331, (telephone (307) 326-2518), or Scott Armentrout, District Ranger, Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District, PO Box 249, Saratoga, WY 82331, (telephone (307) 326-5250). Electronic mail (e-mail) may be sent to tdelay@fs.fed.us and FAX may be sent to (307) 326-5250.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of this project is to improve the health and resiliency of area forests to reduce the current outbreak of mountain pine beetle and to decrease their susceptibility to insects and disease, maintain and restore aspen and ponderosa pine to its historic prominence, improve wildlife habitat capability, minimize human-caused soil erosion, reduce non-native cheatgrass in the area, and treat vegetation along portions of the Forest boundary to reduce the wildfire hazard to adjacent private land and structures.

Proposed Action

The proposed action includes commercial timber sales, mountain pine beetle treatments, prescribed fire, hazardous fuels reduction adjacent to private land, precommercial thinning, travel management, trailhead improvement, and watershed restoration.

Possible Alternatives

1. No action
2. Proposed Action with less road decommissioning
3. No clearcutting
4. Watershed restoration only

Background Information

The Blackhall-McAnulty Analysis combines projects that were previously identified on the Schedule of Proposed Actions: The Blackhall Timber Sale, the McAnulty/Beaver Creek Timber Sale, the McAnulty 2 Fuels Management project, and the Sierra Madre Travel Management Analysis. Comments submitted in response to any of these projects previously will be considered as part of this analysis.

Responsible Official

Mary Peterson, Forest Supervisor, USDA Forest Service, Medicine Bow-