

Comments Requested: This Notice of Intent initiates the scoping process that begins the preparation of the EIS. As part of the scoping process, the USFS is requesting comments on the proposed action. Comments received will be part of the public record on this project and will be available for public inspection.

Estimated Dates for DEIS and FEIS: The DEIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and to be available for public review and comment by May 2003. At that time, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the DEIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the DEIS will be a minimum of 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the NOA 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. Firstly, reviewers of the draft EIS 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 concerns (*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage, but are not raised until after completion of the final EIS, 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 project participate by the close of the scoping comment period, so that substantive comments are made available to the Forest Service at a time when the comments can be meaningfully considered and responded to in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft EIS. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the draft EIS. 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.

After the comment period ends on the DEIS, the comments will be analyzed, considered, and responded to by the Forest Service in preparing the FEIS.

The FEIS is scheduled to be completed in September 2003. The responsible official will consider the comments, responses, environmental consequences discussed in the FEIS, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies in making a decision regarding this proposed action.

The responsible official will document the decision and reasons for the decision in a Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to appeal in accordance with 36 CFR part 215.

Dated: February 6, 2003.

Benjamin T. Worthington,

Forest Supervisor, Daniel Boone National Forest.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Lake County Resource Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Lake County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on March 20, 2003, from 3:30 P.M. to 6 P.M.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Lake County Board of Supervisor's Chambers at 255 North Forbes Street, Lakeport.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Debbie McIntosh, Committee Coordinator, USDA, Mendocino National Forest, Upper Lake Ranger District, 10025 Elk Mountain Road, Upper Lake, CA 95485. (707) 275-23612; EMAIL dmcintosh@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Roll Call/Establish Quorum; (2) Review and Approval of the Minutes of the September 19, 2002 Meeting; (3) Finalize business for 2002; (4) Discuss excess funds from 2001 projects; (5) Financial Agreements for RAC Projects not Performed by Forest Service; (6) Mendocino County Representatives; (7) Recommend Projects for 2003; (8) Discussion on Next Meeting Date; (10) Public Comment period. The meeting is open to the public. Public input opportunity will be provided and individuals will have the opportunity to address the Committee at that time.

Dated: February 7, 2003.

Blaine P. Baker,

Designated Federal Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Intent: To Request a Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) intention to request a revision to a currently approved information collection, Long Term Contracting.

DATES: Comments will be received for a 60-day period commencing with the date of this publication.

Additional Information or Comments: Contact *Phyllis I. Williams*, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Mailstop 5460, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5000; (301) 504-2170; phyllis.i.williams@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Payment.

OMB Number: 0578-0013.

Expiration Date of Approval: June 30, 2003.

Type of Request: To continue with a change of a currently approved collection for which the approval will expire.

Abstract: The primary objective of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is to work in partnership with the American people and the farming and ranching community to conserve and sustain our natural resources. The purpose of Long-Term Contracting information collection is to provide for programs to extend cost sharing and technical assistance through long-term contracts to landowners and others. These contracts provide for making land use changes and installing conservation measures and practices to conserve, develop, and use the soil, water, and related natural resources on private