

Signature Standard specified by Federal Information Processing Standard 186. This waiver was made pursuant to section 111(d) of the Federal Property and Services Act of 1949, as amended (40 U.S.C. 759(d)), and in accordance with the procedures for waivers contained in Federal Information Processing Standard 186.

DATES: The waiver took effect April 2, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. John B. Belfrage, Staff Veterinarian, USDA, APHIS, VS, CEAH, 555 S. Howe St., Ft. Collins, CO 80521, (970) 490-7939, e-mail jbelfrage@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 186, "Digital Signature Standard," established a standard for generating a digital signature that can be used to verify that electronic documents originated with the signatory of the document, and to protect the entire document against unauthorized modifications of its text. FIPS 186 also allows Federal agency heads to waive use of the FIPS 186 Digital Signature Standard (DSS) under certain circumstances.

A waiver may be granted if compliance with the standard would adversely affect the accomplishment of the mission of an operator of a Federal computer system.

A waiver may also be granted if compliance with the standard would cause a major adverse financial impact on the operator that is not offset by Government-wide savings.

The Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has granted a waiver for APHIS computer systems to employ the RSA digital signature algorithm instead of the DSS for electronic forms. The RSA algorithm provides document security that is at least comparable to the DSS, but unlike the DSS, the RSA algorithm is widely used in a variety of commercial software applications, making development of applications to generate secure APHIS forms feasible and cost-effective. There is very little commercial software available that employs DSS, and none that meets the current digital signature needs of APHIS. Therefore, employing the DSS would adversely affect APHIS missions that are currently beginning to rely on secure electronic documents, such as animal health certificates. The DSS would also cause major adverse financial impacts on the agency, because the cost of developing new software employing DSS would be many times the cost of using existing

commercial software that employs the RSA algorithm.

In accordance with the requirements of FIPS 186 and section 111(d) of the Federal Property and Services Act of 1949, as amended (40 U.S.C. 759(d)), notice of this waiver has been sent to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, United States Department of Commerce; to the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives; and, to the Committee on Government Affairs of the United States Senate.

Done in Washington, DC, this 28th day of October 1996.

A. Strating,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

Forest Service

Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Eastern Washington Cascades PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on November 14, 1996 in Campbell's Conference Center (River Room), 104 W. Wooden, Chelan, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until 4:00 p.m. The focus of this meeting will be to discuss riparian zone and grazing management under the Northwest Forest Plan. All Eastern Washington Cascades Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are welcome to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Paul Hart, Designated Federal Official, USDA, Wenatchee National Forest, P.O. Box 811, Wenatchee, Washington 98807, 509-662-4335.

Dated: October 25, 1996.

Sonny J. O'Neal,

Forest Supervisor, Wenatchee National Forest.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

Depatee Creek Watershed, Independence and Jackson Counties, Arkansas

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR Part 1500); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is being prepared for the Depatee Creek Watershed, in Independence and Jackson Counties, Arkansas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Room 5404, Federal Building, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, Telephone (501) 324-5445.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment of this federally assisted action indicates that the project may cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist, has determined that the preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is needed for this project.

The project concerns a plan for flood prevention. Alternatives under consideration to reach this objective include two upland dams and conservation easements in the floodplain for wetland restoration.

A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared and circulated for review by agencies and the public. The Natural Resources Conservation Service invites participation and consultation of agencies and individuals that have special expertise, legal jurisdiction, or interest in the preparation of the draft environmental impact statement. Further information on the proposed action may be obtained from Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist at the above address and telephone number.

(This activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.904—Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention—and is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials)