

Slate Creek; analyze and implement access management prescriptions for the existing road and trail system; develop and enhance dispersed recreation sites; and provide interpretive sites for the public.

No new permanent roads would be constructed. Some new construction of temporary roads and helicopter log landings would occur and some re-construction of existing roads would occur. Temporary roads that are constructed or re-constructed will be recontoured after use.

A watershed analysis, called the Slate Creek Implementation Area Assessment, was recently undertaken for the entire Slate Creek watershed. The Clean Slate project is located within the Slate Creek watershed. One of the primary purposes of this watershed analysis was to collect and display historic conditions and processes and document how management activities have influenced the current conditions of the watershed. From this, management opportunities were identified that would best fit with the natural character and processes of the watershed. This proposal is moving forward with some of the recommendations made in the Slate Creek Watershed Assessment.

The Forest Service will consider a range of alternatives to the proposed action. One of these will be the "no action" alternative, in which none of the proposed action will be implemented. Additional alternatives will examine varying levels and locations for the proposed activities, including entry into the Roadless Area, to achieve the proposal's purposes, as well as to respond to the issues and other resource values.

Public participation is an important part of the project, commencing with the initial scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7), which starts with publication of this notice and continues for the next 30 days. In addition, the public is encouraged to visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies, the Nez Perce Tribe, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action.

Comments from the public and other agencies will be used in preparation of the Draft EIS. The scoping process will be used to:

1. Identify potential issues.
2. Identify major issues to be analyzed in depth.
3. Eliminate minor issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis, such

as the Nez Perce National Forest Plan EIS.

4. Identify alternatives to the proposed action.

5. Identify potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative effects).

While public participation in this analysis is welcome at any time, comments received within 30 days of the publication of this notice will be especially useful in the preparation of the draft EIS, which is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency and available for public review in May, 1997. A 45-day comment period will follow publication of a Notice of Availability of the draft EIS in the Federal Register. The comments received will be analyzed and considered in preparation of a final EIS, which is expected to be filed in [July,] 1997. A Record of Decision will be issued not less than 30 days after publication of a Notice of Availability of the final EIS in the Federal Register.

The Forest Service believes it is important at this early stage to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft EISs must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 513 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage but that 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 proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. 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.

I am the responsible official for this environmental impact statement.

Dated: January 31, 1997.

Coy G. Jemmett,

Forest Supervisor, Nez Perce National Forest, Route 2, Box 475, Grangeville, ID 83530.

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Yakima Province Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Yakima Province Advisory Committee will meet on March 12, 1997, in the Cle Elum Ranger District office warehouse conference room, 803 W. 2nd Street, Cle Elum, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. Agenda items to be covered will include agency updates and information relative to the development and role of an advisory subcommittee in providing advice on the Snoqualmie Pass Adaptive Management Area. All Yakima 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, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, Washington 98801, 509-662-4335.

Dated: February 25, 1997.

Glenn Hoffman,

Acting Forest Supervisor, Wenatchee National Forest.

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ARCTIC RESEARCH COMMISSION

Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the U.S. Research Commission will hold its 46th Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 24, 1997, at the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230. Agenda items include:

- (1) Call to order and approval of the Agenda
- (2) Approval of the minutes of the 45th Meeting
- (3) Reports of Congressional Liaisons
- (4) Agency Reports
- (5) Research News

The focus of the meeting will be on Arctic Ocean Research.

Any person planning to attend this meeting who requires special accessibility features and/or auxiliary aids, such as sign language interpreters must inform the Commission in advance of those needs.