

Done at Washington, DC this 12th day of March, 2001.

Dawn R. Riley,

Acting Deputy Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics.

[FR Doc. 01-6856 Filed 3-19-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Kirkpatrick Dam/Oklawaha River Restoration Project, Ocala National Forest, Putnam and Marion County Florida

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a draft environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The USDA Forest Service along with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), intends to prepare a draft environmental impact statement to authorize continued occupancy and use of national forest system land for operating and maintaining portions of Kirkpatrick Dam, Rodman Reservoir, and Eureka Lock in conjunction with the implementation of the partial restoration of the Oklawaha River.

DATES: A draft environmental impact statement is expected to be completed in April 2001. The final environmental impact statement is scheduled to be completed in December 2001.

ADDRESSES: You may request to be placed on the project mailing list and direct comments to: Marsha Kearney, Forest Supervisor, USDA Forest Service, 325 John Knox Rd., Tallahassee, Florida 32303.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Hemingway, Special Projects Liaison, USDA Forest Service, 325 John Knox Rd., Tallahassee, Florida 32303, 850-942-9364.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FDEP has applied for a permit to occupy and use national forest system land for operating and maintaining portions of Kirkpatrick Dam, Rodman Reservoir, and Eureka Lock. The FDEP is in the process of developing the Kirkpatrick Dam/Ocklawaha River Restoration Project for restoring a portion of the Cross Florida Barge Canal to its historic condition. The FDEP is considering four alternatives for this project: (1) Complete Restoration of the Oklawaha River, (2) Partial Restoration of the Oklawaha River, (3) Total Retention of the Rodman Reservoir, and (4) Partial Retention of the Rodman Reservoir. The FDEP has chosen the Partial Restoration of the Oklawaha River as its preferred

alternative. This plan will restore river hydrology and floodplain function to historic conditions through breaching the dam, with limited removal and/or alteration of structures and topographical manipulation, and allowing for restoration by natural processes.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a draft environmental impact statement for this project was prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and published on February 6, 1996. The COE decisions include permitting activities for Section 9 and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and for Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The COE permitting decisions are several years away and the Forest Service decision is ripe for action at this time; therefore, the Forest Service intends to prepare its own draft environmental impact statement to support its land use decision. The Forest Supervisor for the National Forests in Florida will decide whether or not to permit continued occupancy and use of national forest system land by FDEP for operating and maintaining portions of Kirkpatrick Dam, Rodman Reservoir, and Eureka Lock, and the disposition and management of currently submerged national forest land in conjunction with the implementation of the Partial Restoration of the Oklawaha River.

The scoping process, as outlined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), will be utilized to involve Federal, State, and local agencies and other interested persons and organizations. Interested persons and organizations wishing to participate in the scoping process should contact the Forest Service at the above mentioned address. Environmental considerations include potential presence of historical or archeological resources, aesthetics, recreation demand, water quality, flood control, water supply, land use, wetlands, endangered and threatened species, and fish and wildlife habitats and values. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency 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 draft environmental impact statements 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 draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement 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 comment period 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 environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement 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 draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the CEQ for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Dated: March 14, 2001.

Art Rohrbacher,

Acting Forest Supervisor, National Forests in Florida.

[FR Doc. 01-6810 Filed 3-19-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Availability of an Environmental Assessment for an Amendment to the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan; Grafton, Coos, and Carroll Counties, New Hampshire, and Oxford County, Maine

AGENCY: Forest Service, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of availability of an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: The White Mountain National Forest proposes to amend the Forest Plan to address threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Supervisor Donna L. Hepp (Responsible Official) made available copies of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Amendment to the White Mountain

National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan for Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species. This amendment adds required Terms and Conditions from a Biological Opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to minimize impacts to the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*). The amendment also provides new standards to protect the federally threatened small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) and includes new direction on protection of Regional Forester Sensitive Species. This notice is required pursuant to National Forest System Land and Resource Management Planning regulations (36 CFR 219.35(b)).

DATES: On April 21, 2000, the White Mountain National Forest initiated scoping for the proposal to amend the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). On January 22, 2001, White Mountain National Forest Supervisor Donna L. Hepp (Responsible Official) made available for public notice and comment an Environmental Assessment to amend the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan for Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species. The Environmental Assessment was available for public comment beginning January 22, 2001. Comments were accepted through February 21, 2001. A decision is expected in April of 2001.

ADDRESSES: The Forest Supervisor's address is Forest Supervisor, White Mountain National Forest, 719 North Main St., Laconia, NH 03246.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Leighlan Prout, Forest Biologist, at 603-528-8721 or TTY 603-528-8722.

Responsible Official: Donna L. Hepp, Forest Supervisor, 719 North Main Street, Laconia, NH 03246.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: New standards are being proposed for several reasons: (1) To officially adopt Terms and Conditions specified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to minimize "take" (under the Endangered Species Act) of Indiana bats, as well as propose additional measures to aid in Indiana bat recovery; (2) To incorporate standards for protecting small whorled pogonia, a threatened species discovered after the approval of the original Forest Plan in 1986; and (3) To provide protective standards for Regional Forester Sensitive Species, the list of which was recently evaluated and updated in February 2000. This is a non-significant amendment.

Dated: March 9, 2001.

Donna L. Hepp,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 01-6874 Filed 3-19-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC)

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet on March 28 and 29, 2001, at the US Fish and Wildlife Service Second Floor Conference Room in Arcata, California. The meeting will be held from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 28, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 29. The USFWS office is located at 1655 Heindon Road in Arcata. Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Update on the National Fire Plan; (2) discussion on the issue of anadromous fish populations and their habitat on federal lands in the Province; (3) report on watershed planning activities; (4) Regional Ecosystem Office (REO) update; (5) presentations on fire ecology history in the Province and hazardous fuels treatment opportunities; (6) update on legislation concerning federal Payments to Counties; (7) presentations on Mendocino and Six Rivers Forest fire management plans; (8) action plan for the Province comprehensive road work/fisheries and watershed restoration plan; (9) discussion of issue concerning a Provincial integrated fire strategy; (10) Mendocino NF Strategic Agenda; and (11) open public comment. All California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to James Fenwood, Forest Supervisor, or Phebe Brown, Province Coordinator, USDA, Mendocino National Forest, 825 N. Humboldt Avenue, Willows, CA 95988, (530) 934-3316.

Dated: March 7, 2001.

James D. Fenwood,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 01-6770 Filed 3-19-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

National Tree-Marking Paint Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Tree-Marking Paint Committee will meet in Santa Fe, New Mexico on April 24-26, 2001. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss activities related to the use, improvements, concerns, and handling of tree marking paint within the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management. While certain segments of this meeting are open to the public, other portions are closed for federal government officials' participation only.

DATES: The meeting will be held April 24-26, 2001, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Courtyard Marriott, 3347 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505.

Send written comments to Bob Monk, National Paint Committee Chair, USDA Forest Service, San Dimas Technology and Development Center, 444 East Bonita Avenue, San Dimas, California 91773.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Monk, Project Leader, Forest Service San Dimas Technology and Development Center, (909) 599-1267, extension 267.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Tree-Marking Paint Committee is comprised of representatives from the agency's national headquarters, each of the nine regions, the Forest Products Laboratory, the Forest Service's San Dimas California Technology and Development Center, and the Bureau of Land Management. The General Services Administration and the National Institute of Safety and Health are ad hoc members and may provide technical advice to the committee.

A field trip will be held on April 24 to observe forest management activities on the Santa Fe National Forest. This trip is open to public attendance for those participating in the public meeting on April 25. Transportation for non-government individuals is not provided.

The main session of the meeting, which is open to public participation, will be held on April 25 and, if needed, the public participation session may be extended into the morning of April 26. Persons who wish to bring tree-marking paint proposals to the attention of the committee may file written statements