Nature of the Decision To Be Made

The scope of the actions in the decision are limited to vegetative treatment measures within the analysis area that would result in a change in age class and structure of the current vegetative conditions, including timber harvest and use of prescribed burning, as well as road management determinations, including road construction and reconstruction.

Scoping Process

The proposal was developed with input from state congressional offices, county commissioners, and local community members, who formed an association as a forum for ensuring community viewpoints were communicated. Two public field trips and two public meetings were held at which approximately 100 people attended. A formal scoping letter was sent to interested parties in April 1998 and a Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact was released in June 2000. Three appeals were received and the vegetative portion of the decision was reversed to better address effects of the project to soil resources.

The USDA Forest Service published a notice of intent to conduct an EIS for the Dry Fork Vegetative Restoration project in the **Federal Register** on November 17, 2000 (Vol. 65, No. 233, page 69496).

The Forest Service released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in April 2001. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision were released in November 2001. The project was administratively appealed and the Forest Supervisor decision was upheld through administrative review. On June 19, 2003, The Ecology Center and Native Ecosystem Council filed a complaint in the district court for the District of Montana seeking declaratory and injunctive relief. In February 2004, the District Court ruled in favor of the Forest Service. Plaintiffs in that case appealed to the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. On August 10, 2005, the Court of Appeals reversed the District Court and remanded the case to the Forest Service. The Court of Appeals made the following determinations:

1. The Forest Service failed to demonstrate that the project was consistent with the forest plan's old growth forest standard, and thus failed to comply with the Forest Act.

2. The Forest Service failed to demonstrate that the project was consistent with the forest plans' goshawk monitoring requirements. The Supplemental EIS will address issues associated with the forest plan old growth standard as it relates to the proposed action. A forest plan monitoring report will address issues associated with forest plan goshawk monitoring requirements.

Preliminary Issues

Key issues that were identified include the possible negative environmental effects to soil and water quality and fisheries resources, effects of treatments for addressing forest health issues, effects of actions on wildlife species and their habitat, and effects to recreational activities and opportunities.

Comments Requested

The Draft Supplemental EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in January 2006. At that time the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft Supplemental EIS in the Federal Register. The comment period for the Draft Supplemental EIS will be 45 days from the publication date of the NOA. A Supplemental Final EIS and new Record of Decision will then be prepared.

Early Notice of the Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage 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. *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 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 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).

Dated: October 11, 2005.

Lesley W. Thompson,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 05–20687 Filed 10–14–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest, Georgetown Ranger District, Georgetown, CA; Notice of Intent To Prepare a Supplement to the Rock Creek Recreational Trails Final Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare a supplement to the 1999 Rock Creek Recreational Trails EIS. The supplement will be limited to the cumulative environmental effects on the Pacific Deer Herd. Specifically, the supplement will analyze the cumulative effects of the existing proposed action and all alternatives, in combination with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, as bounded by the mapped range of the Pacific Deer Herd.

DATES: Scoping is not required for supplements to environmental impact statements (40 CFR 1502.9(c)4(4)). The draft supplemental environmental impact statement is expected to be issued in January 2006 and the final supplemental environmental impact statement is expected June 2006. Comments on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement must be received by 45 days after publication.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Tim Dabney, District Ranger, Georgetown Ranger Station, 7600 Wentworth Springs Road, Georgetown, CA 95634, Attn: Rock Creek Supplement.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charis Parker, District Wildlife Biologist and Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Georgetown Ranger Station at (530) 333–4312, FAX (530) 333–5522, or by e-mail to *cparker@fs.fed.us.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Rock Creek area encompasses approximately 23,600 acres of public lands centered about five miles to the southeast of the town of Georgetown, CA. Historic uses of mining, logging, and cattle grazing created roads and trails throughout the area to access both public and private lands. Recreational use of these routes, including horseback riding, hiking, fishing, off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel, and mountain biking, has occurred in the area since at least the late 1950s. In 1987, the Forest Service issued Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact on the Rock Creek Off-Road Vehicle Use Environmental Assessment (EA), to better manage recreational use. The decision was challenged in court and the Forest Service was ordered in 1989 to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) [*Friends Aware of Wildlife Needs (FAWN)* vs. *United States Department of Agriculture, et al.*, Civ. S–88–214 LKK (E.D. California)]. The Rock Creek Recreational Trails Draft EIS was first published in 1996 with a Revised Draft EIS being published in 1997 based on comments received. The Rock Creek Recreational Trails Final EIS and Record of Decision was issued in 1999 implementing Alternative 6—Resource Protection and Recreation Opportunities.

In February 2002, a lawsuit was filed against the Forest Service that, among other OHV-related issues on the Eldorado National Forest, alleged the cumulative effects analysis conducted for the 1999 Rock Creek Recreational Trails Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision was inadequate. On February 15, 2005, Judge Lawrence K. Karlton, United States District Court (Eastern District of California), issued a finding [*Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation, et al.*, v. *John Berry, Eldorado National Forest Supervisor, et al.*, CIV–S–02–0325 LKK/JFM (E.D. California)] that the cumulative effects analysis was indeed inadequate, particularly in regard to the Pacific Deer Herd. More specifically, Judge Karlton found that the cumulative impacts analysis area was incorrectly limited to the Rock Creek project area and that ''other activities,'' including grazing, within the deer herd's entire range, were not analyzed in sufficient detail to adequately determine the cumulative impacts of the proposed action on the deer herd. On August 16, 2005, Judge Karlton issued his order that a supplement to the Rock Creek Recreational Trails Environmental Impact Statement be prepared as specified in its February 15, 2005 finding.

Purpose and Need for Action

Because this supplement is limited to a cumulative effects analysis for the Pacific Deer Herd, the purpose and need for action remain the same as was described in the 1997 Rock Creek Recreational Trails Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIS). ''The need for the Proposed Action arises from continuing conflicts over how the trails in the Rock Creek Area should be managed and the impacts of trail use on the natural resources * * * The purpose or goal in designing the trail system, designated uses, and resource protection measures is to provide a quality recreation experience for all trail users, while minimizing conflicts between the trail users and adjacent landowners, providing protection of natural resources, and promoting safety.'' (Rock Creek Recreational Trails RDEIS, page 1–3)

Proposed Action

The proposed action and all alternatives will also remain the same as was described in the 1997 Rock Creek Recreational Trails Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Six alternatives were analyzed in the original RDEIS to address the Purpose and Need including: (1) No Action—continue with current trail system and management plan; (2) No OHV Use; (3) Increased Multiple Use Recreation—all trail uses allowed on predominantly shared-use trails with reduced closure periods; (4) Separated Multiple Use Recreation—all trail uses allowed but uses segregated to some extent to reduce conflicts between different use types; (5) Reduced Multiple Use Recreation—all trail uses allowed, but trail mileages reduced and closures increased; and (6) Resource Protection and Recreation Opportunities (preferred alternative)—all trail uses allowed in a manner that attempts to find an optimal balance of resource protection and opportunity for a quality recreation experience.

Responsible Official

John Berry, Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest, 100 Forni Road, Placerville, CA, 95667.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The responsible official will decide, based on the cumulative effects analysis for the Pacific Deer Herd in the supplement, whether to confirm the decision in the 1999 ROD or choose another alternative. This will be documented in a new Record of Decision.

Comment Requested

A legal notice will be published in the newspaper of record and a Notice of Availability will be published in the **Federal Register** to inform the public that supplemental information is available for review and comment. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement will be distributed to all parties that received the 1999 final environmental impact statement.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review: A draft supplemental environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft supplemental 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 supplemental 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 supplemental environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final supplemental 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 45-day 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 supplemental environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and

concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft supplemental environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft supplemental statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft supplemental environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. 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.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21)

Dated: October 3, 2005.

John D. Berry,

Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest.

[FR Doc. 05–20699 Filed 10–14–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by December 16, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard C. Annan, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 720–0784. Fax: (202) 720–4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB for approval.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical 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 those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Richard C. Annan, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 720–0784. Fax: (202) 720–4120.

Title: 7 CFR part 1728, Electric Standards and Specifications for Materials and Construction.

OMB Control Number: 0572–0131.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The Rural Utilities Service makes loans and loan guarantees in accordance with the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, (RE Act). Section 4 of the RE Act requires that RUS make or guarantee a loan only if there is reasonable assurance that the loan, together with all outstanding loans and obligations of the borrower, will be repaid in full within the time agreed. In order to facilitate the programmatic interests of the RE Act, and, in order to assure that loans made or guaranteed by RUS are adequately secure, RUS, as a secured lender, has established certain standards and specifications for materials, equipment, and the construction of electric systems. The use of standards and specifications for materials, equipment and construction units helps assure RUS that: (1) Appropriate standards and specifications are maintained; (2) RUS loan security is not adversely affected; and (3) loan and loan guarantee funds are used effectively and for the intended purposes. 7 CFR 1728 establishes Agency policy that materials and equipment purchased by RUS electric borrowers or accepted as contractor-furnished material must conform to RUS standards and specifications where they have been established and, if included in RUS IP 202–1, ''List of Materials Acceptable for Use on Systems of RUS Electrification Borrowers'' (List of Materials), must be selected from that list or must have received technical acceptance from RUS.

Estimate of Burden: This collection of information is estimated to average 2.32 hours per response.

Respondents: Businesses or other for profits.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 38.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 2.30.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1,760 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from MaryPat Daskal, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720–7853. Fax: (202) 720–4120.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: October 7, 2005.

Curtis M. Anderson,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 05–20650 Filed 10–14–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by December 16, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard C. Annan, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 720–0784. Fax: (202) 720–4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB)