

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Economic Research Service****Notice of Intent to Seek Approval To Collect Information**

AGENCY: Economic Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Economic Research Service's (ERS) intention to request renewal of approval for annual information collection on supplemental food security questions in the Current Population Survey, commencing with the December 2005 survey. These data will be used: to monitor household level food security and food insecurity in the United States; to assess food security and changes in food security for population subgroups; to assess the need for, and performance of, domestic food assistance programs; to improve the measurement of food security; and to provide information to aid in public policy decision making.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by May 30, 2005 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments concerning this notice to Mark Nord, Food Assistance Branch, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW., Room N-2180, Washington, DC 20036-5831. Tel. 202-694-5433. Submit electronic comments to marknord@ers.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Annual Food Security Supplement to the Current Population Survey, beginning in December 2005.

Type of Request: Approval to collect information on household food insecurity.

OMB Number: 0536-0043.

Expiration Date: N/A

Abstract: The U.S. Census Bureau will supplement the December Current Population Survey, beginning in 2005, with questions regarding household food shopping, food sufficiency, coping mechanisms and food scarcity, and concern about food sufficiency. A similar supplement has been appended to the CPS annually since 1995. The last collection was in December 2004. Copies of the information to be collected

can be obtained from the address in the preamble.

ERS is responsible for conducting studies and evaluations of the Nation's food assistance programs that are administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Department spends about \$46 billion each year to ensure access to nutritious, healthful diets for all Americans. The Food and Nutrition Service administers the 15 food assistance programs of the USDA including Food Stamps, Child Nutrition, and WIC programs. These programs, which serve 1 in 5 Americans, represent our Nation's commitment to the principle that no one in our country should lack the food needed for an active healthy life. They provide a safety net to people in need. The programs' goals are to provide needy persons with access to a more nutritious diet, to improve the eating habits of the Nation's children, and to help America's farmers by providing an outlet for the distribution of food purchased under farmer assistance authorities.

These data will be used to monitor the prevalence of food security and the prevalence and severity of food insecurity among the Nation's households. The prevalence of these conditions as well as year-to-year trends in their prevalence will be estimated at the national level and for population subgroups. The data will also be used to monitor the amounts that households spend for food and their use of community food pantries and emergency kitchens. These statistics along with research based on the data will be used to identify the causes and consequences of food insecurity, and to assess the need for, and performance of, domestic food assistance programs. The data will also be used to improve the measurement of food security and to develop measures of additional aspects and dimensions of food security. This consistent measurement of the extent and severity of food insecurity will aid in policy decision making. The supplemental survey instrument was developed in conjunction with food security experts nationwide as well as survey method experts within the Census Bureau. This supplemental information will be collected by both personal visit and telephone interviews in conjunction with the regular monthly CPS interviewing. All interviews, whether by personal visit or by telephone, are conducted using computers.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this data collection is estimated to average 7.6 minutes for

each household that responds to the laborforce portion of the CPS.

Respondents: Individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 56,200.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 7,155 hours.

Comments: 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; (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 should be sent to the address in the preamble. 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: March 7, 2005.

Susan Offutt,

Administrator, Economic Research Service.

[FR Doc. 05-5896 Filed 3-24-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-18-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Forest Service****Superior National Forest, LaCroix and Kawishiwi Ranger Districts, Minnesota Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project Environmental Impact Statement**

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project. The Record of Decision will disclose how the Forest Service will manage vegetation to meet landscape ecosystem objectives in the Project Area. The project Area encompasses about 126,000 acres of National Forest System land. The Proposed Action would provide approximately 80 million board feet of timber to local and regional timber

markets; harvest approximately 16,006 acres of mature and overmature stands in the Jack Pine/Black Spruce, Dry-mesic Red and White Pine, and Lowland Conifer landscape ecosystems; thin about 838 acres of pine; do timber stand improvement activities on about 287 acres and diversity planting on about 981 acres; and provide road access across National Forest System land to State and county forested lands. The transportation system would also be analyzed to provide roads for forest resource management. A range of alternatives, including a no-action alternative, will be developed to respond to significant issues. The proposed project is located on the LaCroix and Kawishiwi Ranger Districts, Cook and Ely, Minnesota, Superior National Forest. In addition, the Proposed Action may create temporary openings greater than 1,000 acres.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of this project must be received by May 9, 2005. The draft environmental impact statement is expected October 2005. The final environmental impact statement is expected March 2006.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Nancy S. Larson, LaCroix District Ranger, Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project EIS, LaCroix Ranger District, 320 North Highway 53, Cook, MN 55723. For further information, mail correspondence to Carol Booth, Project Leader, at the address above. Send electronic comments to comments-eastern-superior-la-croix@fs.fed.us. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below for how to send electronic comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy S. Larson, LaCroix District Ranger, or Carol Booth, Echo Trail Area Project Leader at **ADDRESSES** above or telephone: (218) 666-0020.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project is to move the area towards the vegetation and landscape ecosystem desired conditions described in the 2004 Superior National Forest Plan.

Proposed Action

The proposed action would include clearcut harvesting with reserve trees about 16,006 acres and thinning about 838 acres, resulting in an estimated 80 million board feet available for timber sales. In addition, about 34 miles of road would be added to the transportation system and about 51 miles of road would be decommissioned. Special use

road permits for about 12 miles of roads would be issued to the State and county.

Responsible Officials

Nancy S. Larson, LaCroix District Ranger, 320 North Highway 53, Cook, MN 55723 and Mark E. Van Every, Kawishiwi District Ranger, 118 South 4th Ave. East, Ely, MN 55731.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

An environmental analysis for this project area will evaluate site-specific issues, consider alternatives, and analyze the potential effects of the proposed action and alternatives. The scope of the project is limited to decisions concerning activities within the Echo Trail Project Area that meet the purpose and need and desired conditions. An environmental impact statement will provide the deciding officials (Nancy S. Larson, LaCroix District Ranger and Mark Van Every, Kawishiwi District Ranger) with the information needed to make the following decisions for the Echo Trail Area Forest Management Project:

1. What actions would be used to address the purpose and need.
2. Where and when those actions would take place.
3. What mitigation measure and monitoring requirements would be required.

Scoping Process

Public participation will be an integral component of the analysis process, and will be especially important at several points during the analysis. The first is during the scoping process. The Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal agencies, State agencies, local agencies, individuals, and organizations that may be interested or affected by the proposed activities. The scoping process will include: (1) Identification of potential issues, (2) identification of issues to be analyzed in depth, and (3) elimination of insignificant issues, or those which have been covered by a previous environmental review. Based on the results of scoping and the resource capabilities within the project area, alternatives, including a no-action alternative, will be developed for the draft environmental impact statement.

Permits or Licenses Required

The proposed action may create temporary openings greater than 1,000 acres. A 60-day public notice and review by the Regional Forester would be needed for such action.

Easement or permission to cross non-federal property may be needed to

access some treatment units to implement Forest Service activities.

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. Written comments will be solicited through a scoping package that will be sent to the project mailing list. For the Forest Service to best use the scoping input, comments must be received by May 9, 2005. Include name, address, and title of the project with your comments.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review: A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. 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, that 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 objects that could have been 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 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 of 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 chapter 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 in 40 CFR 1503.3.

Comments received, including 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. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. Pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission, from the public record, by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Requesters should be aware that, under FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality. If the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within seven days.

In making the decision, the responsible officials will consider the comments, responses, disclosure of environmental consequences, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The responsible officials will state the rationale for the chosen alternative in the Record of Decision.

Dated: March 21, 2005.

Nancy S. Larson,
LaCroix District Ranger.

Dated: March 21, 2005.

Mark E. Van Every,
Kawishiwi District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 05-5908 Filed 3-24-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Forest Counties Payments Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Forest Counties Payments Committee will meet in Sparks, Nevada, April 15, 2005. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss Section 320 of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2001.

DATES: The meeting will be held on April 15, 2005. The meeting will consist of a session from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m., which will be open to public

participation, followed by a business session, open only to public attendance.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel, Rose B Meeting Room, 2nd floor, 1100 Nugget Avenue, Sparks, Nevada 89431.

Those who cannot be present may submit written responses to the questions, listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice, to Randle G. Phillips, Executive Director, Forest Counties Payments Committee, PO Box 34718, Washington, DC 20043-4713, or electronically to the Committee's Web site at <http://countypayments.gov/comments.html>. Comments must be received by May 1, 2005, to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent possible.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Randle G. Phillips, Executive Director, Forest Counties Payments Committee, at (202) 208-6574 or via e-mail at rphillips01@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 320 of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2001 created the Forest Counties Payments Committee to make recommendations to Congress on a long-term solution for making Federal payments to eligible States and counties in which Federal lands are situated. The Committee will consider the impact on eligible States and counties of revenues from the historic multiple use of Federal lands; evaluate the economic, environmental, and social benefits which accrue to counties containing Federal lands; evaluate the expenditures by counties on activities occurring on Federal lands, which are Federal responsibilities; and monitor payments and implementation of The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-393). In order to develop its recommendations to Congress, the Committee would like to hear from both elected officials and the general public. At the April 15 meeting in Sparks, Nevada, the Committee asks that respondents provide information that is responsive to the following questions:

1. Schools

Identify specific examples of expenditures for education resulting directly from payments received from Public Law 106-393 that would not have been possible without the funding from this Act. Specify whether these, or other education services, would be discontinued or reduced when the current Law expires in 2006 and, if other funding sources would be available to replace the funds currently provided by Public Law 106-393.

2. Roads

Identify examples of expenditures on roads from payments from Pub. L. 106-393 that would not have been possible without the funding from this Act. Specify whether these, or other transportation services, would be discontinued or reduced when the current Law expires in 2006, or if other funding sources would be available to replace them.

3. Resource Advisory Committees

Pursuant to the requirements of Pub. L. 106-393, a county, or similar local governing body, that receives \$100,000 or more, must set aside between 15 and 20 percent of the total payment for Title II, Title III, or a combination of the two titles.

If your county received at least \$100,000, please describe the reasons why your local governing body decided not to set aside money for Title II, public lands projects, and establish a resource advisory committee. Please describe any conditions or circumstances that would have caused your local governing body to set aside money in Title II, and establish a resource advisory committee.

4. Role of Resource Advisory Committees

The projects of resource advisory committees are determined by funds set aside by counties and agreed to by the members of the committee as described in their charter.

Based on the experience you have gained in working with resource advisory committees, do you believe the role of these committees could be expanded beyond their current responsibilities to address other management activities on public lands? If so, please provide examples. What advantages would be gained from such expansion?

5. Title III

There are currently six categories for which expenditures of Title III funds are permitted. These categories are: Search, rescue, and emergency services on Federal lands; community service work camps for Federal lands; easement purchases; forest related educational opportunities; fire prevention and county planning; and community forestry. Are there other categories you would like to see added to the list that would permit expenditures of these funds? Please provide your reasons.