

conduit for fire to travel from the ground surface into the tree canopy and put the later, older trees at greater risk of loss to fire. Removing these ladder fuels greatly reduces the likelihood that wildfire will get into the canopy. The harvest and sale of cut trees provides wood products to society and offsets the cost of the proposed treatments.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to thin trees and shrubs and reduce existing fuels. Thinning prescriptions would be based on the following guidelines:

- On approximately 600 acres in 15 stands of mixed conifer and hardwood forest, aged 100 to 150 years, implement a low thinning. Enough trees would be removed to reduce the number of stems per acre to a stocking level that maintains a greater competitive advantage for the larger older trees and to remove fuel ladders. The largest and oldest trees would be retained, with the resulting stand averaging 60% tree canopy cover.

- On approximately 1,000 acres in 23 stands of mixed conifer and hardwood forest, aged 80 to 100 years old, implement a low thinning. Enough trees would be removed to reduce the number of stems per acre to a stocking level that maintains or increases growth rates and to remove fuel ladders. The largest and healthiest trees would be retained with the resulting stand averaging 50% tree canopy cover.

A service contract would thin trees and grind up shrubs in planted stands. Thinning and release treatments would be accomplished through hand felling and mastication on approximately 100 acres in four planted conifer stands aged 20–40 years. Enough trees and shrubs would be removed to reduce the number of stems per acre to a stocking level that maintains stand growth rate and removes shrubs that act as a fuel ladder. The resulting stand would have an average of 100 trees per acre.

Responsible Official

J. Sharon Heywood, Forest Supervisor, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, 3644 Avtech Parkway, Redding, CA 96002. (530) 226–2500.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The Forest Supervisor will decide whether to implement the proposed action, implement an alternative action that meets the purpose and need or take no action. The decision may include a non-significant forest plan amendment that permits treatment of stands older than 80 years.

Scoping Process

Notice of the proposed action will be published in the newspaper of record, the Redding Record Searchlight. It will also be published in the Trinity Journal. Scoping letters will be mailed to interested and affected publics coincident with publication of the NOI in the **Federal Register** and information on the proposed action will be posted on the Forest Web site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/shastatrinity/projects>. In addition, this proposal will be presented to and reviewed by the Trinity County Firesake council. This notice of intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the environmental impact statement.

Comments submitted during this scoping process should be in writing and should be specific to the proposed action. The comments should describe as clearly and completely as possible any issues the commenter has with the proposal. The results of scoping will include:

- Identifying potential issues.
- Identifying issues to be analyzed in depth.
- Eliminating non-significant issues or those previously covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis.
- Exploring additional alternatives.
- Identifying potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives.

Preliminary Issues

No preliminary issues have been identified. Issues will be identified through scoping. *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 it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process.

- 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)].

- Environmental objections that could be raised by the draft environmental impact statement stage

but 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 and received in time for meaningful consideration and response in the final environmental impact statement.

Comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible, for example, refer to specific pages and/or chapters. 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.

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: December 5, 2005.

J. Sharon Heywood,

Forest Supervisor, Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

[FR Doc. 05–23894 Filed 12–9–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board Public Meeting Dates Announced

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: The Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) has announced its meeting dates for 2006. These meetings are open to the public, and public comment is accepted at any time in writing and during the last 15 minutes of each meeting for spoken comments. Persons wishing to speak are given three minutes to address the Board.

Meeting dates are the third Wednesday of each month unless otherwise indicated:

January 4 (Previously announced)

February 15

March 22 (Moved to fourth Wednesday due to Biomass Conference in Denver the previous week)

April 19

May 17

June 21

July 19

August 16 (Summer Field Trip—TBA)

September 20

October 18

November 15

December 20

January 3, 2007 (Tentative)

ADDRESSES: Meetings will begin at 1 p.m. and end no later than 5 p.m. at the West River Ag Center, 1905 Plaza Boulevard, Rapid City, SD 57731.

Agenda: The Board will consider a variety of issues related to national forest management. Agendas will be announced in advance in the news media but principally concern implementing phase two of the forest land and resource management plan. The Board will consider such topics as integrated vegetation management (wild and prescribed fire, fuels reduction, controlling insect epidemics, invasive species), travel management (off highway vehicles, the new OHV rule, and related topics), and forest fragmentation, among others.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Carroll, Committee Management Officer, Black Hills National Forest, 25041 North Highway 16, Custer, SD 57730, (605) 673-9200.

Dated: December 5, 2005.

Craig Bobzien,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 05-23895 Filed 12-9-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Georgia Transmission Corporation; Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a finding of no significant impact with respect to a request from Georgia Transmission Corporation for financing assistance from RUS to finance the construction of a 230/25 kV Substation,

a 230 kV switching station, and a 230 kV transmission line in Gwinnett County, Georgia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephanie Strength, Environmental Protection Specialist, USDA, Rural Development, Utilities Programs, Engineering and Environmental Staff, USDA, Rural Development, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, Telephone: (202) 720-0468 or e-mail: stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Georgia Transmission Corporation proposes to construct a 230 kilovolt transmission line between the Jim Moore Substation (located on Auburn Road (SR324), 3.2 miles north of Dacula, Georgia, and 14.3 miles northwest of Auburn, Georgia) to the Old Freeman Mill Road Switching Station (located 2 miles northeast of Dacula, Georgia and 0.2 miles south of State Highway 29 (Winder Highway) on Old Freemans Mill Road. The transmission line connects the Old Freeman Mill switching station in-line with the existing Lawrenceville-Winder Primary 230 kilovolt Transmission Line to the proposed Jim Moore Road 230/25 kilovolt transmission substation.

Concrete or steel poles ranging in height from 85 to 115 feet would support the conductors and would require a right-of-way of 25 to 100 feet. The approximate length of the transmission line is 4.4 miles. It is anticipated that the transmission line and substations would be in service by the summer of 2006.

Alternatives considered by RUS and Georgia Transmission Corporation include: (a) No action, (b) alternative transmission improvements, and (c) alternative transmission line corridors.

An environmental report, which describes the project further and discusses anticipated environmental impacts thereof has been prepared by Georgia Transmission Corporation.

Copies of the Finding of No Significant Impact are available from RUS at the address provided herein or from Ms. Susan Ingall of Georgia Transmission Corporation, 2100 East Exchange Place, Tucker, Georgia 30085-2088 telephone (770) 270-7425. Ms. Ingall's e-mail address is susan.ingall@gatrans.com.

Dated: December 5, 2005.

James R. Newby,

Assistant Administrator, Electric Program, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. E5-7197 Filed 12-9-05; 8:45 am]

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COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Vermont Advisory Committee

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that a briefing by conference call of the Vermont Advisory Committees will convene at 10:30 a.m. and adjourn at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, December 7, 2005. The purpose of the conference call is to update members with news from headquarters on Commission's activities and plan a forum to be conducted spring 2006.

This conference call is available to the public through the following call-in number: 1-800-597-0731, access code: 46290994. Any interested member of the public may call this number and listen to the meeting. Callers can expect to incur charges for calls not initiated using the supplied call-in number or over wireless lines, and the Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Callers will incur no charge for calls using the call-in number over land-line connections. Persons with hearing impairments may also follow the proceedings by first calling the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-977-8339 and providing the Service with the conference call number and access code.

To ensure that the Commission secures an appropriate number of lines for the public, persons are asked to register by contacting Barbara de La Viez of the Eastern Regional Office at 202-376-7533 by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 6, 2005. The meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the Commission.

Dated at Washington, DC, December 6, 2005.

Ivy L. Davis,

Chief, Regional Programs Coordination Unit.

[FR Doc. E5-7182 Filed 12-9-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6335-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Foreign-Trade Zones Board

[Docket 59-2005]

Foreign-Trade Zone 68—El Paso, Texas; Application for Expansion

An application has been submitted to the Foreign-Trade Zones Board (the Board) by the City of El Paso, Texas, grantee of FTZ 68, requesting authority to expand its zone in El Paso, Texas, within the El Paso Customs port of entry. The application was submitted pursuant to the provisions of the