

Management, 810 East Main Street, Billings, Montana 59105.

Dated: September 8, 1998.

David C. Jaynes,

Assistant Field Manager, Billings Field Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

60 Day Notice of Intent To Request Clearance for Collection of Information; Opportunity for Public Comment

AGENCY: Big Thicket National Preserve, National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service proposes to conduct visitor surveys to assess the social and visual impacts of oil and gas activities within Big Thicket National Preserve (Preserve). The overall project goals are: (1) to provide critical decision-making information that is currently fragmented and/or loosely organized for the purposes of evaluating impacts of oil and gas exploration and development on federal lands throughout the United States, and particularly within the Preserve; (2) to identify the critical variables and their relative importance in affecting standards of performance for oil and gas activities within the Preserve; (3) to illustrate how social and visual impacts can be assessed and incorporated into management decisions under alternative operational procedures affecting oil and gas activities within the Preserve; and (4) to adapt standard methodologies for assessing user perceptions, visitor behavior, and landscape attributes (including policy capture evaluations) that can be incorporated in environmental impact statements addressing oil and gas operations on federal lands. Such information would be incorporated in the forthcoming Draft Oil and Gas Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Preserve.

Under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and 5 CFR Part 1320, Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements, the National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting comments on the need for gathering information in the proposed surveys. The NPS further requests comments on the practical utility of the information being gathered; the accuracy of the burden hour estimate; ways to enhance the

quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden to respondents, including use of automated information collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Public comments will be accepted on or before November 16, 1998.

SEND COMMENTS TO: Rick Strahan, Division of Resources Management, Big Thicket National Preserve, 3785 Milam Street, Beaumont, Texas 77701; phone: 409/839-2689, ext. 224; fax: 409/839-2599.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Strahan, phone: 409/839-2689, ext. 224; fax: 409/839-2599; e-mail: rick_strahan@nps.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Big Thicket National Preserve Visitor Trip Fact Sheet.

Bureau Form Number: None.

OMB Number: To be requested.

Expiration Date: To be requested.

Type of request: Request for new clearance.

Description of need: The National Park Service needs information regarding changes in visual perception and social acceptance as alternative activities associated with oil and gas operations are considered. Such information would be incorporated in the forthcoming Draft Oil and Gas Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Preserve.

Automated data collection: Surveys will be both mailed to respondents and administered at selected areas by NPS personnel and Michigan State University faculty and students trained in survey administration. Collection of data in the field will occur during peak visitation periods (June-August) and off-peak visitation periods (September-December). Automated collection of data is limited to survey by mail.

Description of respondents: To achieve a statistically valid survey, surveys must be completed and received from approximately 491 trail users, 334 boaters, and 525 hunters who use the Preserve.

Estimated average number of respondents: 1350.

Estimated average number of responses: Each respondent will respond only once, therefore the number of responses will be the same as the number of respondents.

Estimated average burden hour per response: 20 minutes.

Frequency of Response: one time per respondent.

Estimated annual reporting burden: 450 hours.

Betsy Chittenden,

Acting Information Collection Clearance

Officer, WASO Administrative Program Center, National Park Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Final Lake Crescent Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, Olympic National Park, Washington

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of Final Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of the final Lake Crescent management plan/environmental impact statement (FEIS), Olympic National Park, Washington. The FEIS presents the proposed action and alternatives for management of the Lake Crescent area for the next 10 to 15 years. The proposed action best satisfies the park and NPS mission, as well as the park's management objectives and long-term vision for Lake Crescent. It recognizes both the need to protect natural and cultural resources and to provide appropriate recreational opportunities for visitors and area residents.

The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for this action was released for public review on October 18, 1996, (**Federal Register**, Vol. 61, No. 203) and the public comment period closed on March 19, 1997. The FEIS contains five alternative strategies for management of the Lake Crescent area. The range of alternatives includes the four alternatives presented in the draft plan, with modifications based on public comment received and further impact analysis. In addition, another alternative has been added since publication of the draft plan. This alternative, depicted in the final plan as Alternative E, was submitted for consideration during the public comment period by the Friends of Lake Crescent.

The FEIS contains letters received from agencies and organizations during the public comment period, and responses to all substantive comments are included. A summary of comments received during public meetings on the DEIS is also contained in the FEIS, as is a representative sample of comment letters received from individuals during the public comment period.

During the public comment period, controversy arose over recreational use