Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[TM–98–00–8]

Notice of a Teleconference Meeting of the National Organic Standards Board

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announces a forthcoming Teleconference meeting of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB).

DATES: December 7, 1998, at 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). You must register in advance if you want to be present on the teleconference call, no later than 12:00 p.m. EST November 30, 1998. Comments to be considered by the NOSB prior to the teleconference, should be received by November 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Keith Jones, Program Manager, Room 2945 South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, AMS, Transportation and Marketing, National Organic Program, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090–6456; telephone (202) 720–3235; Fax (202) 205–7808; or by e-mail: t__keith__jones@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 2119 (7 U.S.C. 6518) of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 6501 *et seq.*), requires the establishment of the NOSB. The purpose of the NOSB is to assist in the development of standards for substances to be used in organic production and to advise the Secretary on any other aspects of the implementation of the OFPA. The NOSB met for the first time in Washington, DC, in March 1992 and currently has six committees working on various aspects of the program. The committees are: Crops Standards; Processing, Labeling and Packaging; Livestock Standards; Accreditation; Materials; and International Issues. In August 1994, the NOSB provided its initial recommendations for the National Organic Program (NOP) to the Secretary of Agriculture and since that time has submitted 30 addenda to its recommendations, and reviewed more than 170 substances for inclusion on the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances. The last meeting of the NOSB was held in July 1998, in Washington, DC. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) published its proposed rule in the **Federal Register** on December 16, 1997 (62 FR 65849). An extension of the comment period on the proposed rule was published in the **Federal Register** on February 9, 1998 (63 FR 6498). The comment period was extended until April 30, 1998. The USDA published for public comment three issue papers in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 57624) on October 28, 1998. The papers addressed certain issues raised during the National Organic Program's proposed rule comment period. The issue papers are: Issue paper 1. Livestock Confinement in Organic Production Systems; Issue Paper 2. The Use of Antibiotics and Parasiticides in Organic Livestock Production; and Paper 3. Termination of Certification by Private Certifiers. Comments received on these papers will be considered during the development of a revised National Organic Program proposed rule.

Purpose and Agenda

The NOSB will conduct a public meeting by teleconference on Friday, December 7, 1998, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. EST inclusive. After the teleconference, the NOSB will make its final recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture on the above described issue papers.

Type of Meeting

The teleconference meeting will be open to the public. If you wish to be present on the teleconference call you must register in advance to receive the dial-in number (teleconference lines are limited and are available on a first come, first served basis). Please contact Karen Thomas at: (202) 720–3252 or fax: (202) 205–7808 with your name, company name, and telephone number, *no later than* 12:00 p.m. EST November 30, 1998, if you want to be present on the teleconference call. Opportunities for oral comment will be given at the beginning of the call and will be limited to no more than two minutes per speaker and no more than 20 minutes total for the public comment period. Public statements presented at the teleconference meeting should not repeat prior oral or written statements made to USDA by a commenter on the Issue Papers.

In its October 28, 1998 **Federal Register** Notice, USDA established December 14, 1998 as the last date for submission of comments on the Issue Papers. Persons, however, who want the NOSB to consider their comments prior to the teleconference, should submit them to USDA by November 30, 1998 (address above) and indicate that they are being submitted for the December 7, 1998 NOSB teleconference. All comments on the issue papers received by USDA by December 14, 1998, will be considered by it.

Copies of the meeting agenda can be obtained from Karen Y. Thomas at (202) 720–3252 or at the above fax number and copies of the issue papers that will be discussed can be obtained from Keith Jones using the contact information listed at the beginning of this notice. Minutes of the meeting will be available through Keith Jones. All of this information is also available through the NOP web page at: www.ams.usda.gov/nop.

Dated: November 16, 1998.

Eileen S. Stommes,

Deputy Administrator, Transportation and Marketing.

[FR Doc. 98–31185 Filed 11–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Pilgrim Project, Tahoe National Forest, Sierra County, CA

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; cancellation of intent to prepare an environmental impact settlement.

SUMMARY: On May 22, 1997, a notice was published in the **Federal Register** (at 62 FR 28002–28003) stating that an

environmental impact statement (EIS) would be prepared for proposed timber harvest, plantation thinning, fuels reduction, and wildlife habitat improvement projects for areas in the Wolf/Kanaka/Indian Creek and Middle Yuba River watersheds. On March 20, 1998, a revised notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement was published in the **Federal Register** (at 63 FR 13620) that modified the scope of the EIS to just address vegetation management actions and directly connected activities such as fuels treatment and reduction, timber harvesting, and road construction and reconstruction. That notice is hereby cancelled.

After scoping and receiving public comments, we reevaluated and redesignated our proposal so that the proposed activities are now not considered major actions that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. As a result, we are now preparing an environmental assessment instead of an environmental impact statement.

DATES: This action is effective November 20, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Fildes, Inderdisciplinary Team Leader, Downieville Ranger District, Tahoe National Forest, 15924 Highway 49, Camptonville, CA 95922, (530) 288–3231.

Dated: November 12, 1998.

Steven T. Eubanks,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 98–31006 Filed 11–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Project EIS

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Regions 4 and 5 will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to amend eleven National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans and the Regional Guides for the Intermountain and Pacific Southwest Regions in response to changed circumstances and new information resulting from the report of the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project, the Sierra Nevada Science Review, and the Summary of Existing Management Direction. The Land and Resource Management Plans to be amended encompass the Humboldt-Toiyabe, Modoc, Lassen, Plumas, Tahoe, Eldorado, Stanislaus, Sierra, Sequoia, and Inyo National Forests, and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

DATES: The public is asked to provide any additional information they believe the Forest Service may still not have at this time, and to submit any issues (points of concern, debate, dispute or disagreement) regarding potential effects of the proposed action or alternatives by January 9, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Steve Clauson, EIS Team Leader, USDA Forest Service, Sierra Nevada Framework Project, Room 419, 801 ''I'' Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact Steve Clauson, EIS Team Leader, USDA Forest Service, Sierra Nevada Framework Project, Room 419, 801 ''I'' Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone number—916–492–7554.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In the Pacific Southwest Region, Region 5 of the Forest Service, a Sierra Nevada-wide planning effort was initiated in 1992 to protect the California spotted owl (CASPO). This planning responded to Forest Service research on the status and viability of the California spotted owl (CASPO Technical Report, 1992). The CASPO report recommended interim management guidelines be adopted to protect California spotted owl populations while a more comprehensive management plan was developed. An environmental assessment to implement interim guidelines was prepared and a Decision Notice approving implementation of interim guidelines was signed on January 13, 1993. To develop a comprehensive management plan, the Forest Service prepared a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the comprehensive management of California spotted owl in 1995. A revised draft EIS was scheduled for release in 1996, however new scientific information came to light and work was suspended pending the report of a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) that was chartered to review the revised draft EIS. The work of the FAC was influenced by the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP), which produced four volumes of scientific assessments including several papers exploring possible management strategies, and made available large databases and maps for the Sierra Nevada.

The Federal Advisory Committee concluded that the revised draft EIS was inadequate in its current form as either an owl or ecosystem management EIS (''Final Report of the California Spotted Owl Federal Advisory Committee'', USDA, December 1997). The FAC report identified specific critical shortcomings and offered recommendations to address inconsistencies with scientific information, flaws in some key elements of the analysis process, and the need for a more collaborative planning process. The Forest Service has redirected the EIS effort in response to the FAC report and other information.

On July 24, 1998, a team of scientists from the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, produced the Sierra Nevada Science Review (USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, July 24, 1998), a review of current scientific information with attention to issues of urgent priority at Sierra Nevada Range-wide scale. A companion document, the Summary of Existing Management Direction, released on August 11, 1998, summarized existing management direction related to issues brought forward in the Science Review. This new scientific information has implications for existing forest plans, social values, and environmental trends in the Sierra Nevada.

The report of the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project concludes: ''Most of the problems of the Sierra can be solved, although the timeframe and degree of solution will differ depending on the problem.'' (''Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project, Final Report to Congress'', Davis: University of California, Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, 1996.) For many of these problems, a range-wide or multi-forest planning approach is needed.

The Land and Resource Management Plans for the eleven national forests in the Sierra Nevada Range and Modoc Plateau were developed in the 1980's and early 1990's. These plans were independently prepared and adopted in response to concerns at the scale appropriate for each forest. Given the science that recently emerged concerning issues that go beyond the individual forest and ownership boundaries, there is an urgent need to amend the plans to reflect this new information and achieve range-wide consistency. In response to this need, on July 10, 1998 Regional Forester G. Lynn Sprague, in cooperation with Region 4, committed to developing new management direction, where necessary, to address concerns on the Sierra Nevada national forests (63 FR 37314). This EIS is part of the overall Sierra