donation of lands to a public or private conservation organization, participation in State or Federal incentive programs for land conservation, partnerships with other participants in the HCP effort, agreement to the terms of the HCP(s) and the incidental take permit(s), exemption from regulation based on the terms of the HCP or permit, or other methods.

2. *Multiple Individual HCP(s) and Incidental Take Permits for Individual Landowners*—This alternative would involve individual landowners, or groups of landowners, preparing individual HCP(s) for individual land use or development projects as the need arises. Any conservation strategy listed in the proposed action could be applied to similar facts or circumstances in an individual HCP. Conservation strategies not discussed earlier also could be developed. This alternative would involve separate HCP development and application processes. In addition, it would require separate permit review processes by the Service with the necessity of conducting separate EA or EIS review procedures and documents. Implementation and oversight would probably not involve the county government or CDNR, but would require oversight and implementation as described in separate implementation agreements and the permits themselves.

3. *Single Statewide HCP and Incidental Take Permit*—This alternative would involve the development of a single HCP for the seven Colorado counties listed, and a single incidental take permit related to that HCP. Individual public and private landowners, including county, town, and city governments, might participate in the HCP through voluntary management programs, implementing agreements, certificates of inclusion in the single incidental take permit, sale or donation of lands to a public or private conservation organization, participation in State or Federal incentive programs for land conservation, partnerships with other participants in the HCP effort, agreement to the terms of the HCP and the incidental take permit, exemption from regulation based on the terms of the HCP or permit, or other methods. Implementation of the terms of the HCP might require an intergovernmental agreement with each local government whose boundaries include a participating landowner.

Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 also incorporate the concept of ''adaptive management.'' As science and conservation strategies evolve or demonstrate a need to change, the landowner could modify the conservation strategies as needed. Therefore, as science and information progress, so may the conservation strategies and activities under the HCP(s) and permit(s).

4. *No Action Alternative*—Under the No Action Alternative, no section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would be issued and activities involving the take of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse would remain prohibited under section 9 of the Act. Activities that would avoid the take of the species could continue. Proposed activities on non-Federal land that may affect the Preble's meadow jumping mouse would require submitting an individual section 10(a)(1)(B) permit to the Service. If a Federal action (such as construction of a proposed road or interchange with Federal funds) would affect the species, incidental take could be allowed through the consultation process outlined in section 7 of the Act, and through the development of an incidental take statement if the proposed action were determined to not jeopardize the continued existence of the species.

Issue Resolution and Environmental Review

The primary issue to be addressed through the scoping and planning process for the HCP(s) and related EA or EIS documents is how to resolve potential conflicts between development and land management practices and listed species in each county. A tentative list of issues, concerns, and opportunities has been developed. There will be discussion of the potential effects of each alternative, which will include the following areas:

a. The Preble's meadow jumping mouse and its habitat in each county.

b. Other federally listed threatened or endangered species in each county.

c. State listed species in the State of Colorado.

d. Effects on other species of plants and animals.

e. Socioeconomic effects.

f. The use of Federal, State, county, or local public lands for conservation of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

g. The use of privately owned lands for conservation of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

h. Need for adequate funding.

i. Effects on species recovery.

Environmental review of the proposed action will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), other appropriate Federal regulations, and our procedures for compliance with those regulations. This notice is being furnished in accordance with section 1501.7 of the National Environmental Policy Act to obtain suggestions from other agencies, tribes, and the public on the scope of issues to be addressed in the EA or EIS.

Public Comments Solicited

We solicit written comments on the information described above. All comments received by the date specified in the **DATES** section above will be considered.

Authority: National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*).

Dated: August 17, 1999.

Terry Terrell,

Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 99–21891 Filed 8–25–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Navajo Ten-Year Forest Management Plan Alternatives, Navajo Nation, Arizona/New Mexico

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (DPEIS) for the proposed Navajo Nation Ten-Year Forest Management Plan Alternatives is now available for public review and comment. The DPEIS, prepared by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in cooperation with the Navajo Nation Forestry Department, describes alternative ways to promote the protection and sustained use of forest resources and guide the development of multi-year implementation programs for the Navajo Nation Forestry Department. A description of the proposed project location and of the environmental issues addressed in the DPEIS follow as supplementary information. This notice also announces a series of public hearings to receive public comments on the DPEIS.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before October 20, 1999. The dates and locations of the public hearings are listed below. All of these public hearings will begin at 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

September 21, 1999, Fort Defiance Chapter House, Fort Defiance, AZ.

September 22, 1999, Chinle Chapter House, Chinle, AZ.

September 23, 1999, Shiprock Chapter House, Shiprock, NM.

ADDRESSES: If you wish to comment, you may submit your comments by any one of several methods. You may mail or hand-deliver comments to Harold D. Russell, Area Forester, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Area Office, Federal Building, 301 West Hill, P.O. Box 1060, Gallup, New Mexico 87305. You may also comment via the Internet to: Russell@105.doi.gov. Please submit Internet comments as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Include your name and return address in your Internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your Internet message, contact the Navajo Area Office directly at (520) 729–7228. Comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the above address during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

The public hearings will be held at the locations listed in the **DATES** section.

The DPEIS is available for review at two locations: (1) The Branch of Environmental Services, Navajo Area Office, Federal Building, 301 West Hill, Gallup, New Mexico; and (2) the Branch of Forestry, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1 mile north on Route 12, Fort Defiance, Arizona. To obtain a copy of the DPEIS, please write to the Navajo Nation Forestry Department, P.O. Box 230, Fort Defiance, Arizona 86504, or call (520) 729–4007.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Harold D. Russell, (520) 729–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed action is to adopt a ten-year management plan for the Navajo Forest. The Navajo Forest lies in the Chuska Mountains and Defiance Plateau areas of the Navajo Nation, along the Arizona-New Mexico border. The area encompasses nearly 600,000 acres.

The DPEIS presents a preferred alternative, the no action alternative and three other action alternatives. Under the preferred alternative, approximately 79,500 acres out of 253,754 acres designated as commercial timberland would be harvested over the next ten years. Individual treatment areas would be limited to 100 acres or less, and harvesting would incorporate a combination of even-aged and uneven-aged management systems designed to promote more diversity in the vegetative structure. This alternative also designates 74,735 acres as Special Management Areas (SMA's), which would be excluded from commercial timberland in order to protect critical wildlife habitat and vital watershed areas, even where these SMA's are located within the most productive areas of the forest.

Timber protection activities under the preferred alternative include, where needed, fire prevention, prescribed burns, trespass control and insect and disease control. An estimated 680 acres per year would be subjected to prescribed burns, and 75 acres per year treated for insects and disease. Additional activities include monitoring and mitigation in accordance with published plans, guidelines or handbooks referenced in the DPEIS.

The no action alternative continues current levels of production—approximately 88,000 acres over the next ten years, with even-aged management and without SMA's. The three other action alternatives include: (1) No timber harvesting and no SMA's; (2) even-aged management, with a lower rate of harvest—approximately 79,000 acres over the next ten years—than the no action alternative, and with SMA's; and (3) uneven-aged management, with approximately 84,400 acres to be harvested over the next ten years and without SMA's. All of the alternatives include timber protection plus monitoring and/or mitigation measures.

The DPEIS addresses the environmental issues identified during public scoping. These include timber resources, other forest resources, water resources, biological resources, air quality, cultural resources and socio-economics.

This notice is published in accordance with section 1503.1 of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508), implementing the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and the Department of the Interior Manual (516 DM 1–6), and is in the exercise of authority delegated to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs by 209 DM 8.

Dated: August 20, 1999.

Kevin Gover,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 99–22130 Filed 8–25–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Intent to Amend Existing Land Use Plans of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Northern and Central California Regions, for Purposes of Establishing Standards for Land Health

AGENCY: Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to amend existing land use plans of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), northern and central California regions, for purposes of establishing Standards for Land Health.

SUMMARY: BLM California recently completed a process to incorporate Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing into the existing land use plans of the northern and central California regions (Alturas, Arcata, Bakersfield, Eagle Lake, Redding, Surprise, Ukiah Field Offices). However, the standards and guidelines were limited in scope to BLM's grazing management program.

This proposal will apply the Rangeland Health Standards to all other resource uses and activities through BLM's planning process in accordance with 43 CFR 1610. 5–5. All existing land use plans will be amended at the same time. BLM anticipates no significant adverse environmental effects of implementing this proposal. Since the standards will help ensure consistent management of the public lands, BLM expects the environmental effects to be positive. BLM will complete an environmental assessment (EA) as part of the plan amendment process. A separate planning process to establish Land Health Standards for the California desert region is expected to be completed in the year 2000.

The intent of the standards is to provide for a balance of sustainable development and multiple use along with progress toward attaining healthy, properly functioning ecosystems. The standards will be implemented, to the extent feasible, through terms and conditions of permits, leases, and other authorizations. BLM authorizations should determine whether the standards