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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Revised Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland; Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Grand, Jefferson, Larimer, Park, and Weld Counties, Colorado

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revised Notice; intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Supervisor of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and the Pawnee National Grassland gives notice of the agency's intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on the revision of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

The original Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for this Forest Plan Revision was published July 10, 1990. Due to the delay in publishing a Draft EIS, this Notice serves to revise the Notice of July 1990.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Howard Sargent, Forest Planner, (970) 498-1201, 240 West Prospect Road, Fort Collins, CO 80526.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Forest Plan shall ordinarily be revised on a 10-year cycle or at least every 15 years. A plan may also be revised whenever the Forest Supervisor determines that conditions or demands in the area covered by the plan have changed significantly. The current Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan was approved on May 4, 1984. The Forest is

scheduled to complete its revision of the Forest Plan and FEIS in Fall, 1996.

Through evaluation of the Forest Plan, documented in the "Five Year Evaluation: Forest Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Report" (1990) and further refined in 1993 in the "Analysis of the Management Situation," the Forest Supervisor of the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and the Pawnee National Grassland has determined that the following topics should be the primary focus of the Forest Plan Revision:

1. Biological diversity including old growth;
2. National Forest-residential intermix areas;
3. Oil and gas leasing;
4. Recreation-related items such as recreation settings, scenic resources and wild and scenic rivers;
5. Roadless areas and additions to the Wilderness Preservation System;
6. Timber management, including suitable lands, allowable sale quantity, silvicultural practices;
7. Travel management; and
8. Water yield and management.

Public involvement in the Plan Revision process has been extensive since the original Notice of Intent was published, utilizing a variety of scoping techniques. These included mailings to individuals and organizations known to be interested in the Plan Revision, newspaper articles, newsletters, public meetings, and open houses. After release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, more open houses will be held and will be announced in local news media and in newsletters.

Revision of the Forest Plan began in 1990; the draft environmental impact statement and Proposed Revised Forest Plan should be available for public review in November, 1995. The final environmental impact statement, Record of Decision, and Revised Forest Plan are scheduled to be completed by Fall, 1996.

The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be a minimum of 90 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, 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 objections that could be 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 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 on 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 chapters 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 at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

The official responsible for approving the revised Forest Plan is the Regional Forester, Rocky Mountain Region, USDA Forest Service, 11177 West 8th Avenue, P.O. Box 25127, Lakewood, Colorado 80225. The Forest Supervisor, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland, is delegated responsibility for preparing the revision.

Dated: August 29, 1995.

William P. Lisowsky,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

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