

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

[Docket No. FV96-944-2, FV96-980-1, FV96-999-3]

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), this notice announces the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection for specified exempt import commodities.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by February 24, 1997 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this proposal. Comments must be sent in triplicate to the Docket Clerk, USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Marketing Order Administration Branch, P.O. Box 96456, Room 2525-S, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; or, FAX: (202) 720-5698. All comments should reference the docket number, the date, and page number of this issue of the Federal Register. Comments will be made available for public inspection in the Office of the Docket Clerk during regular business hours.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Shoshana Avrishon, USDA, AMS, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, P.O. Box 96456, Room 2525-S, Washington, DC 20090-6456; telephone: 202-720-6467.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Specified Commodities Imported into the United States Exempt from Import Requirements.

OMB Number: 0581-0167.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 1997.

Type of Request: Extension of currently approved information collection.

Abstract: Section 8e of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, As Amended; 7 U.S.C. 601-674 (Act) requires that whenever the Secretary of Agriculture issues grade, size, quality, or maturity regulations under domestic marketing orders for certain commodities, the same or comparable regulations on imports of those commodities must be issued. Import regulations apply only during those periods when domestic marketing order regulations are in effect. Currently, the following commodities are subject to Section 8e import regulations: avocados, dates (other than dates for processing), filberts, grapefruit, table grapes, kiwifruit, limes, olives (other than Spanish-style olives), onions, oranges, Irish potatoes, prunes, raisins, tomatoes, and walnuts. However, imports of these commodities are exempt from such requirements if they are imported for such outlets as processing, charity, animal feed, seed, and distribution to relief agencies, when those outlets are exempt under the applicable marketing order.

Safeguard procedures in the form of importer and receiver reporting requirements are used to ensure that the imported commodity is provided to authorized exempt outlets. The safeguard procedures are similar to the reports currently required by most domestic marketing orders. The import regulations require importers and receivers of imported fruit, vegetable, and specialty crops to submit a form, as provided in sections 944.350, 980.501, and 999.500.

An importer wishing to import commodities for exempt purposes must complete, in triplicate, prior to importation, an Importer's Exempt Commodity Form (FV-6). Copy one is presented to the U.S. Customs Service. The importer files copy two with the Marketing Order Administration Branch (MOAB) of the Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, within two days after the commodity enters the United States. The third copy of the form accompanies the exempt shipment to its intended destination. The receiver certifies that the commodity has been received and that it will be utilized for authorized

exempt purposes. The receiver then files copy three with MOAB, within two days after receiving the commodity.

The Department of Agriculture (Department) utilizes this information to ensure that imported goods destined for exempt outlets are given no less favorable treatment than that afforded to domestic goods destined for such exempt outlets. These exemptions are consistent with Section 8e import regulations under the Act.

This form requires the minimum amount of information necessary to effectively carry out the requirements of the orders, and its use is necessary to fulfill the intent of the Act as expressed in the orders, and to administer Section 8e compliance activities.

The information collected is used primarily by authorized representatives of the Department, including AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Division regional and headquarters staff. AMS is the primary user of the information.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response.

Respondents: Importers and receivers of exempt commodities.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 714.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 3.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 119 hours.

Comments are invited on: (1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and, (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who respond, including use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technologies.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated: December 17, 1996.

Robert C. Keeney,

Director, Fruit and Vegetable Division.

[FR Doc. 96-32852 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

Forest Service

Red Mountain Project—Twin, Muddy Creek, and Gee Timber Sales, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Baker County, Oregon

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Cancellation of a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: On December 17, 1990, a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Red Mountain Project, on the Baker District of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, was published in the Federal Register (55 FR 51739). A notice of availability for the draft EIS for the Red Mountain Project was published in the Federal Register on March 8, 1996 (61 FR 9450). USDA, Forest Service, has decided to cancel the preparation of a final EIS analyzing timber sale proposals and related activities within an unloaded portion of the east face of Elkhorn Ridge. The notice of intent is hereby rescinded.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Questions may be addressed to Joanne Britton, Environmental Coordinator, Baker Ranger District, 3165 10th Street, Baker City, Oregon, 97814, telephone: 541-523-4476.

Dated: December 10, 1996.

R.M. Richmond,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 96-32714 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Olympic Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Olympic PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on January 24, 1997 at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Community Center, 1033 Old Blyn Highway, Sequim, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. Agenda topics to be covered include: (1) Review of Field Trip; (2) Quilcene District Overview of Watershed Analysis, Projects, Access & Travel Management Updates; (3) Second half of FY97 Priorities for Restoration Projects; (4)

Regional Ecosystem Office: role and relation to PACs; (5) Adaptive Management Area planning and strategies; (6) Open Forum; and (7) Public Comments. All Olympic Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Direct questions regarding this meeting to Kate Snow, Province Liaison, USDA, Quilcene Ranger District, P.O. Box 280, Quilcene, WA 98376, (360) 765-2211 or Ronald R. Humphrey, Forest Supervisor, at (360) 956-2301.

Dated: December 18, 1996.

Ronald R. Humphrey,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 96-32848 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 121996A]

Small Takes of Ringed Seals Incidental to On-Ice Seismic Activity

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of issuance of letters of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that letters of authorization to take ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic operations in the Beaufort Sea off Alaska were issued on December 19, 1996, to BP Exploration, Western Geophysical, and Northern Geophysical of America, all of Anchorage, AK.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These letters of authorization are effective from January 1, 1997, through May 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The applications and letters are available for review in the following offices: Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, 701 C Street, Anchorage, AK 99513.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2055 or Ron Morris, Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, (907) 271-5006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs NMFS to allow, on

request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region, if certain findings are made and regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term "taking" means to harass, hunt, capture or kill or to attempt to harass, hunt, capture or kill marine mammals.

Permission may be granted for periods up to 5 years if the Secretary of Commerce finds, after notification and opportunity for public comment, that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses. In addition, NMFS must prescribe regulations that include permissible methods of taking and other means effecting the least practicable adverse impact on the species and its habitat and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds and areas of similar significance. The regulations must include requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Regulations governing the taking of ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic activities were published on January 13, 1993 (58 FR 4091), and remain in effect until December 31, 1997.

Summary of Requests

NMFS received requests for letters of authorization on the dates specified from (1) Northern Geophysical of America, 2361 Cinnabar Loop, Anchorage, AK 99507 (September 10, 1996), (2) Western Geophysical Inc. 351 E. International Airport Road, Anchorage, AK 99518-1299 (September 18, 1996), and (3) BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc., 900 East Benson Blvd. P.O. Box 196612, Anchorage, AK 99519-6612 (October 7, 1996). All letters request a take by harassment of a small number of ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic work in the Beaufort Sea, AK.

Issuance of these letters of authorization is based on findings that the total takings will have a negligible impact on the ringed seal species or stock and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of this species for subsistence uses.

Dated: December 19, 1996.

Patricia Montanio,

Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-32775 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F