

acreage would have remained fallow for crop rotation purposes.

(v) For the purpose of determining eligible acreage for prevented planting coverage, acreage for all units will be combined and be reduced by the number of acres of the insured crop that are timely planted and late planted, if the late planting period is applicable. For example, assume you have 100 acres eligible for prevented planting coverage in which you have a 100 percent (100%) share. The acreage is located in a single FSA Farm Serial Number which you insure as two separate optional units consisting of 50 acres each. If you planted 60 acres of the insured crop on one optional unit and 40 acres of the insured crop on the second optional unit, your prevented planting eligible acreage would be reduced to zero (i.e., 100 acres eligible for prevented planting coverage minus 100 acres planted equals zero).

(5) In accordance with the provisions of section 6 (Report of Acreage) of the Crop Revenue Coverage Insurance Policy, you must report by unit any insurable acreage that you were prevented from planting. This report must be submitted on or before the acreage reporting date for spring-planted acreage of the insured crop in counties for which the Special Provisions designates a spring final planting date, or the acreage reporting date for fall-planted acreage of the insured crop in counties for which the Special Provisions designates a fall final planting date only. For the purpose of determining acreage eligible for a prevented planting guarantee, the total amount of prevented planting and planted acres cannot exceed the maximum number of acres eligible for prevented planting coverage. Any acreage you report in excess of the number of acres eligible for prevented planting coverage, or that exceeds the number of eligible acres physically located in a unit, will be deleted from your acreage report.

Signed in Washington, DC, on June 23, 1997.

Kenneth D. Ackerman,
Manager, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

[FR Doc. 97-16911 Filed 6-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-08-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement; Finger Mountain Timber Sale(s), Sitka Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, Sitka, AK

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to disclose the environmental impacts of proposed actions within the Finger Mountain Project Area, which is located on Chichagof Island in South-east Alaska. The proposed action provides for: (1) Timber harvest and subsequent regeneration of approximately 1872 acres of forested land. This harvest would result in the production of approximately 49 million board feet of sawlog and utility timber. (2) Construction of approximately 50 miles of permanent and temporary road and reconstruction of approximately 1 mile of road. (3) Construction of one log transfer facility and use of two existing log transfer facilities. This proposed action is one alternative for meeting the purpose and need for the project.

The Forest Service is seeking information and comments from Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as individuals and organizations who may be interested in, or affected by the proposed action.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing by August 15, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Finger Mountain Planning Team, Sitka Ranger District, 204 Siginaka Way, Sitka, AK 99835.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Winn, Team Leader, Sitka Ranger District, 204 Siginaka Way, Sitka, AK 99835, phone (907) 747-6671, fax (907) 747-4331.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Environmental Impact Statement for the Finger Mountain Project will tier to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan of May 1997. The Land and Resource Management Plan provides the overall guidance (goals, objectives, management prescriptions, standards and guidelines) to achieve the desired future condition for the area in which this project is proposed.

The Finger Mountain Project Area is located about 38 air miles north of Sitka, Alaska, 24 air miles of northeast of Angoon, Alaska, and 3 air miles southwest of Tenakee Springs, Alaska on the southeastern part of Chichagof Island. The Project Area covers approximately 73,000 acres and extends from Peril Strait on the south to Tenakee Inlet on the north. In includes all of Management Area C34 and encompasses six Value Comparison Units (230, 231, 232, 233, 234, and 246) as described in the 1979 Tongass Land Management Plan. These Value Comparison Units include the watersheds of In between Creek, Saltery Bay, Crab Bay, Fog Creek, Broad Finger Creek, and Broad Creek. The Project Area is administered by the Sitka Ranger District of the Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, Sitka, Alaska.

Purpose and Need

The Finger Mountain Project is being scheduled at this time to provide supplemental analysis for six Value Comparison Units within the 1992 Southeast Chichagof Project Area. This supplemental analysis is undertaken to meet the terms of the Settlement Agreement (filed May 16, 1996) for *Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association v. Morrison*, Case No J94-033. It is intended to supplement the analysis contained in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision for the Southeast Chichagof Project Area, published in September 1992.

The purpose and need for the Finger Mountain Project is: (1) To implement the direction contained in the Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan of May 1997, including goals, objectives, management prescriptions, and standards and guidelines; (2) to maintain wood production from suitable timber lands, providing a continuous supply of wood to meet society's needs; (3) to help provide a stable supply of timber from the Tongass National Forest which meets existing and potential market demand and is consistent with sound multiple use and sustained yield objectives; and (4) to help meet the desired future condition of the landscape as described by the Land and Resource Management Plan.

The Finger Mountain Project Area is expected to provide between 20 and 60 million board feet of timber to the timber industry in one or more timber sales.

Public Comment

Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as individuals and organizations

who may be interested in, or affected by, the proposed action are invited to participate in the scoping process. This process will determine the scope and significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Following the publication of this notice, a scoping document will be mailed to interested people and organizations. The document will briefly describe the project and project area, the purpose and need for the project, the proposed action, and will invite public comment. Scoping meetings will then be held in Sitka and Tenakee Springs, Alaska. Locations and times of the scoping meetings will be announced in local newspapers and on local radio stations.

Following scoping, the Interdisciplinary Planning Team will review comments received during the scoping period to determine which issues as significant and within the scope of this project. The team will then develop a range of alternatives to address the significant issues. One of these will be the "No Action" alternative, in which no additional timber harvest or road construction is proposed. Other alternatives will consider various levels and locations of timber harvest in response to issues and non-timber objectives. The team will then prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement which will display the alternatives and the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of each alternative.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency after March, 1998. The comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. In addition to commenting on the proposed action and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement when it is released, agencies and other interested persons or groups are invited to write to or speak with Forest Service officials at any time during the planning process.

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 important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45 day comment period so that substantive comments or objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider 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 Environmental Impact Statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the document. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 CFR 1503.3, in addressing these points.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without the name and address.

Decisions To Be Made

Gary A. Morrison, Forest Supervisor of the Chatham Area, is the Responsible Official and will decide whether or not to authorize timber harvest within the Finger Mountain Project Area. In addition, if timber harvest will occur, he will determine the following: (1) Is the design of the timber sales consistent with meeting resource protection standards and guidelines in the Land and Resource Management Plan? (2) How much timber volume is to be made available and what are the effects of the planned activities? (3) What is the location and design of the timber harvest units, log transfer facilities, and road system needed to develop the project area? (4) What mitigation and monitoring measures are required for sound resource management? (5) Is there a significant possibility of a significant restriction on subsistence uses?

The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision is expected to be released by August, 1998. The Responsible Official will make a decision regarding this proposal after considering public comments, and the environmental consequences displayed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The decision and supporting reason will be documented in the Record of Decision.

Dated: June 23, 1997.

Gary A. Morrison,

Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

California Coast Province Advisory Committee (PAC)

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The California Coast Province Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on July 16, 1997, at the Six Rivers National Forest Supervisor's Office Conference Room, 1330 Bayshore Drive, Eureka, California. Agenda items to be covered include: (1) Presentation on implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan; (2) Presentation on the federal wildland fire policy; (3) Presentation on the role of fuels management in forest ecology; (4) Report and recommendations from Public/Private/Tribal Partnership Opportunities Subcommittee; (5) Report and recommendations from Monitoring