

the summer and 155 head in the winter is also included. To meet objectives, approximately \$71,450 will be spent on structural improvements. The Forest Service will spend approximately \$31,565 primarily for materials and the permittee will spend approximately \$39,885 primarily for construction of the improvements. These improvements are designed to reduce cattle impacts in large pastures by improving cattle distribution, reducing graze periods and increasing rest periods. A reduction in pasture size will also improve overall management by reducing time needed to gather cattle from these large and rough pastures. Annual Operating Plans will adjust cattle numbers and/or grazing rotations so cattle use is consistent with current productivity (as in drought conditions) and so plant, soil and watershed conditions can be maintained or improved while range structures are built over time.

The Proposed Action was mailed to over 30 individuals, organizations and cooperating resource agencies for review and comment on July 5, 2000. From comments received, the Team will develop statements to capture the substantive issues and developed alternatives other than the proposed action. If you would like a copy of the proposed action please contact our office. Your comments will be included in our environmental analysis.

It is anticipated that environmental analysis and preparation of the draft and final environmental impact statements will take about four months. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement can be expected June of 2001 and the Final EIS in late summer. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement extends 45 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 ruling related to public participation in the environmental review process. To be the most helpful, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible and may address the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed (see Council of Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3).

In addition, Federal court decisions have established that 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 reviewers' position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC* 435 US 519, 553 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. *City of Angoon v. Hodel 9th Circuit, 1986* and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). The reason for this is to ensure that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider 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 of Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Dated: March 12, 2001.

Jim Golden,

Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area (SRA) Advisory Council; Notice of Meeting.

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

SUMMARY: An Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council meeting will convene in Stayton, Oregon on Monday, April 16, 2001. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m., and will conclude at approximately 8:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the South Room of the Stayton Community Center located on 400 West Virginia Street in Stayton, Oregon.

The Opal Creek Wilderness and Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Act of 1996 (Opal Creek Act) (P.L. 104-208) directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is comprised of

thirteen members representing state, county and city governments, and representatives of various organizations, which include mining industry, environmental organizations, inholders in Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area, economic development, Indian tribes, adjacent landowners and recreation interests. The council provides advice to the Secretary of Agriculture on preparation of a comprehensive Opal Creek Management Plan for the SRA, and consults on a periodic and regular basis on the management of the area. The tentative agenda will focus on describing the desired future condition of the SRA.

The public comment period is tentatively scheduled to begin at 8:00 p.m. Time allotted for individual presentations will be limited to 3 minutes. Written comments are encouraged, particularly if the material cannot be presented within the time limits of the comment period. Written comments may be submitted prior to the April 16 meeting by sending them to Designated Federal Official Stephanie Phillips at the address given below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For more information regarding this meeting, contact Designated Federal Official Stephanie Phillips; Willamette National Forest, Detroit Ranger District, HC 73 Box 320, Mill City, OR 97360; (503) 854-3366.

Dated: March 15, 2001.

Darrel Kenops,

Forest Supervisor.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area (SRA) Advisory Council; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

SUMMARY: An Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council meeting will convene in Salem, Oregon on Saturday, April 7, 2001. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m., and will conclude at approximately 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Salem City Council Chamber, located on 555 Liberty Street SE in Salem, Oregon. The Opal Creek Wilderness and Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Act of 1996 (Opal Creek Act) (P.L. 104-208) directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is comprised of