

Signature Standard specified by Federal Information Processing Standard 186. This waiver was made pursuant to section 111(d) of the Federal Property and Services Act of 1949, as amended (40 U.S.C. 759(d)), and in accordance with the procedures for waivers contained in Federal Information Processing Standard 186.

**DATES:** The waiver took effect April 2, 1996.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. John B. Belfrage, Staff Veterinarian, USDA, APHIS, VS, CEAH, 555 S. Howe St., Ft. Collins, CO 80521, (970) 490-7939, e-mail jrbelfrage@aphis.usda.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 186, "Digital Signature Standard," established a standard for generating a digital signature that can be used to verify that electronic documents originated with the signatory of the document, and to protect the entire document against unauthorized modifications of its text. FIPS 186 also allows Federal agency heads to waive use of the FIPS 186 Digital Signature Standard (DSS) under certain circumstances.

A waiver may be granted if compliance with the standard would adversely affect the accomplishment of the mission of an operator of a Federal computer system.

A waiver may also be granted if compliance with the standard would cause a major adverse financial impact on the operator that is not offset by Government-wide savings.

The Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has granted a waiver for APHIS computer systems to employ the RSA digital signature algorithm instead of the DSS for electronic forms. The RSA algorithm provides document security that is at least comparable to the DSS, but unlike the DSS, the RSA algorithm is widely used in a variety of commercial software applications, making development of applications to generate secure APHIS forms feasible and cost-effective. There is very little commercial software available that employs DSS, and none that meets the current digital signature needs of APHIS. Therefore, employing the DSS would adversely affect APHIS missions that are currently beginning to rely on secure electronic documents, such as animal health certificates. The DSS would also cause major adverse financial impacts on the agency, because the cost of developing new software employing DSS would be many times the cost of using existing

commercial software that employs the RSA algorithm.

In accordance with the requirements of FIPS 186 and section 111(d) of the Federal Property and Services Act of 1949, as amended (40 U.S.C. 759(d)), notice of this waiver has been sent to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, United States Department of Commerce; to the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives; and, to the Committee on Government Affairs of the United States Senate.

Done in Washington, DC, this 28th day of October 1996.

A. Strating,

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 96-27977 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-34-P**

## Forest Service

### Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Eastern Washington Cascades PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on November 14, 1996 in Campbell's Conference Center (River Room), 104 W. Wooden, Chelan, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until 4:00 p.m. The focus of this meeting will be to discuss riparian zone and grazing management under the Northwest Forest Plan. All Eastern Washington Cascades Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are welcome to attend.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Direct questions regarding this meeting to Paul Hart, Designated Federal Official, USDA, Wenatchee National Forest, P.O. Box 811, Wenatchee, Washington 98807, 509-662-4335.

Dated: October 25, 1996.

Sonny J. O'Neal,

*Forest Supervisor, Wenatchee National Forest.*

[FR Doc. 96-27928 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-M**

## Natural Resources Conservation Service

### Depatee Creek Watershed, Independence and Jackson Counties, Arkansas

**AGENCY:** Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR Part 1500); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is being prepared for the Depatee Creek Watershed, in Independence and Jackson Counties, Arkansas.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Room 5404, Federal Building, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, Telephone (501) 324-5445.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The environmental assessment of this federally assisted action indicates that the project may cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist, has determined that the preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is needed for this project.

The project concerns a plan for flood prevention. Alternatives under consideration to reach this objective include two upland dams and conservation easements in the floodplain for wetland restoration.

A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared and circulated for review by agencies and the public. The Natural Resources Conservation Service invites participation and consultation of agencies and individuals that have special expertise, legal jurisdiction, or interest in the preparation of the draft environmental impact statement. Further information on the proposed action may be obtained from Thomas H. Wehri, State Conservationist at the above address and telephone number.

(This activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.904—Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention—and is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials)

Dated: October 18, 1996.  
 Kalven L. Trice,  
*Deputy State Conservationist.*  
 [FR Doc. 96-27959 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]  
 BILLING CODE 3210-16-M

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102496A]

#### North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Committee Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Improved Retention/Improved Utilization (IR/IU) Committee will meet November 14-15, 1996, in Seattle, WA.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on November 14-15, 1996, beginning at 9:00 a.m. on November 14, and concluding by 5:00 p.m. on November 15.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Room 2079, Building 4, Seattle, WA.

*Council address:* North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Chris Oliver, telephone: 907-271-2809.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Committee's agenda will include the following:

(1) Discussion of issues associated with implementation of IR/IU regulations for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries.

(2) Discussion of the current vessel incentive program and how it will interact with the IR/IU program.

(3) Preparation of an outline of an IR/IU program for the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries for Council review in December.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Helen Allen, 907-271-2809, at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: October 25, 1996.  
 Bruce Morehead,  
*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
 [FR Doc. 96-27978 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]  
 BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

[Docket No. 960412111-6297-04; I.D. 102396C]

RIN 0648-ZA20

#### West Coast Salmon Fisheries; Northwest Emergency Assistance Plan—Washington Salmon License Buy Out

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

**ACTION:** Final program notice.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS issues this notice to describe the final program requirements and to respond to comments on proposed bidding options for the 1996 Washington Salmon License Buy Out (WSLB). Pursuant to the authority under the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IFA), the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) has made funds available to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to buy out salmon permits. The objectives of the program are to provide financial assistance to commercial salmon fishermen adversely impacted by the salmon fishery disaster, and to aid the long-term viability of the fishery resource.

**DATES:** Effective upon October 25, 1996.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Stephen Freese, (206) 526-6113.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On August 2, 1995, the Secretary declared that a fishery resource disaster continued in 1995 for the salmon fisheries of the Pacific States of California (north of San Francisco), Oregon, and Washington, excluding Puget Sound. Under the authority of the IFA of 1986 (16 U.S.C. 4107(d)), as amended, an additional \$12.7 million in Federal financial assistance was made available for affected salmon fishermen, of which \$5.25 million was set aside for a WSLB program. However, the Governor of Washington has requested that \$50,000 be transferred to the Data Collection Jobs Program for use in a troll data collection study. If approved, this \$50,000 will be taken from the funds initially allocated for the purchase of troll licenses, and will reduce the 1996 WSLB funds available to \$5.2 million. The Secretary already provided \$4 million for a similar program in 1995, bringing the total amount allocated to

license buy outs to \$9.2 million. (See Federal Register notice of October 11, 1994 (59 FR 51419), with subsequent amendments published on January 31, 1995 (60 FR 3908), and June 22, 1995 (60 FR 32507)).

On April 23, 1996, NMFS published a Federal Register notice (61 FR 17879) that provided the public with notice of a proposed WSLB program and requested comment on four proposed bidding options. The August 1, 1996, final notice (61 FR 40197) announced the final description for the Northwest Emergency Assistance Plan (NEAP) Habitat Restoration Program and the Data Collection Jobs Program, but cited state and local concerns and a lack of public consensus as grounds for the agency's deferral of the final decision on a buy out program until new bidding options were developed and the public was given notice and an opportunity to comment.

NMFS and the State of Washington then worked together to develop two new options that were similar to the options presented in the April 23, 1996, Federal Register notice, but with important differences. One difference was that the calculation of uninsured loss was no longer necessary under the recently amended IFA. (The IFA was amended during the public comment period associated with the April 23, 1996 notice.) This calculation was replaced by an analogous calculation, "salmon disaster impact" (SDI), which is equal to 2.5 times the difference between a fisherman's highest gross salmon fishery income derived from fishing during any calendar year 1986 through 1991 (base year), and the sum of the least amount of gross salmon fishery income derived from commercial salmon fishing during any calendar year from 1991 through 1995 (comparison year). The use of SDI in place of an uninsured loss determination puts similar restrictions on new participants as were placed on the original participants in the 1995 WSLB. Another difference was that the two new options placed lower ceilings on the maximum amount a fisherman can receive for his permit.

The following options were presented for public comment in the notice of August 29, 1996 (61 FR 45408).

*Option 1*—License holders may offer their licenses for any amount up to \$40,000 or their SDI, whichever is less. Licenses will be purchased starting with the lowest bid. In the event of a tie, preference will be given to the fisherman with the highest SDI.

*Option 2*—License holders may offer their licenses for any amount up to \$50,000 or their SDI, whichever is less.