

*Proposed topics for comment include:*

(a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected; or (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of the information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503 and to David M. Nix, Agricultural Program Specialist, USDA, Farm Service Agency, Compliance and Production Adjustment Division, STOP 0517, PO Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20250-2415, (202) 690-4091.

Signed at Washington, DC, on January 9, 1997.

Grant Buntrock,

*Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.*

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BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

## **Food and Consumer Service**

### **The Emergency Food Assistance Program; Availability of Commodities for Fiscal Year 1997**

**AGENCY:** Food and Consumer Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the surplus and purchased commodities that the Department expects to make available for donation to States for use in providing food assistance to the needy under the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) in Fiscal Year (FY) 1997. The commodities made available under this notice shall, at the discretion of the State, be distributed to organizations for use in preparing meals, and/or for distribution to households for home consumption.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 1996.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Lillie Ragan, Assistant Branch Chief, Program Administration Branch, Food Distribution Division, Food and Consumer Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive,

Alexandria, Virginia 22302-1594 or telephone (703) 305-2662.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background and Need for Action**

**Surplus Commodities**

Surplus commodities donated for distribution under TEFAP are Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) commodities determined to be available for donation by the Secretary of Agriculture under the authority of section 416 of the Agricultural Act of 1949, Public Law 81-439 (hereinafter referred to as section 416) and commodities purchased under the surplus removal authority of section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935, Public Law 74-320 (hereinafter referred to as section 32), which have been determined by the Secretary to be in excess of the quantities needed to carry out other programs, including CCC sales obligations. The types of commodities available under section 416 include dairy, grains, oils, and peanut products. The types of commodities purchased under section 32 include meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, and fruits. Donations of surplus commodities were initiated in 1981 as part of the Department's efforts to reduce stockpiles of government-owned commodities, such as cheese, flour, butter, and cornmeal, which had been acquired under section 416. These donations responded to concern over the costs to taxpayers of storing large quantities of foods, while at the same time there were persons in need of food assistance. The authority to donate surplus commodities for distribution through TEFAP was codified in Title II of Public Law 98-8, the Emergency Food Assistance Act (EFAA) of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 612c note).

In recent years, the supply of surplus commodities has been drastically reduced. These reductions are the result of changes in the commodity loan programs which have brought supply and demand into better balance, and accelerated donations and sales. As a result, the Department anticipates that there will not be sufficient quantities of commodities available under section 416 to support their donation for distribution through TEFAP in FY 1997. However, the Secretary of Agriculture anticipates that sufficient quantities of dried figs, dried prunes, canned salmon and frozen ground beef will be purchased under section 32 to warrant their donation for distribution through TEFAP during FY 1997. While sufficient quantities of these commodities may be available in FY 1997 to support such donations, the Department would like to point out that commodity purchases

under section 32 are based on changing agricultural market conditions; therefore, such commodities may not be available for donation in FY 1998.

**Purchased Commodities**

Congress responded to the reduced availability of surplus commodities with section 104 of the Hunger Prevention Act of 1988, Public Law 100-435, which added sections 213 and 214 to the EFAA. Those sections required the Secretary to purchase commodities for distribution to States, in addition to those surplus commodities which otherwise might be provided to States for distribution under TEFAP. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193 (hereinafter referred to as "the Personal Responsibility Act"), signed by President Clinton on August 22, 1996, amended the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to require the Secretary to use \$100 million from the funds made available to carry out the Food Stamp Act of 1977 for each of FYs 1997 through 2002 to purchase a variety of nutritious and useful commodities and distribute the commodities to States for distribution through TEFAP. The Act also amends the EFAA to delete the authorization of appropriations for food purchases under section 214. However, in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Appropriations Act, 1997 (P.L. 104-180), Congress appropriated funds that can be used for TEFAP commodity purchases in addition to the \$100 million earmarked by the Personal Responsibility Act. The Department has determined that up to \$45 million of the funds appropriated and available to TEFAP under P.L. 104-180 will be used for TEFAP commodity purchases, bringing the maximum amount of funds potentially available to buy TEFAP commodities to \$145 million.

For FY 1997, the Department anticipates purchasing for distribution through TEFAP the following commodities: peanut butter, vegetable oil, rice, macaroni, spaghetti, grits, fortified cereal, roasted peanuts, dehydrated potatoes, dry bagged beans and dried egg mix; canned apple, grapefruit, orange and tomato juices, vegetarian beans, carrots, green beans, tomatoes, tomato sauce, corn, peaches, applesauce, pineapple, pork, salmon, beef, and chicken; and frozen ground beef and turkey, cut-up chicken, and turkey roasts. The amounts of each item purchased will depend on the prices USDA must pay, as well as the quantity of each item requested by the States. Changes in agricultural market

conditions may result in the availability of additional types of commodities or the non-availability of one or more types listed above. Once USDA has made the commodities available to States, State officials will be responsible for determining how to allocate the State's "fair share" to eligible organizations. States have full discretion in determining the amount of commodities that will be made available to organizations for distribution to needy households for use in home-prepared meals or for providing prepared meals to the needy at congregate feeding sites. In accordance with section 871 of the Personal Responsibility Act, which amended section 202A of the EFAA, the Department does, however, encourage States to establish a State advisory board comprised of public and private entities with an interest in the distribution of TEFAP commodities. Such advisory boards can provide valuable input on how commodities should be allocated among various eligible outlet types, what areas have the greatest need for food assistance, and other important issues that will help States to use their resources in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

In section 110 of the Hunger Prevention Act, Congress established the Soup Kitchens/Food Banks Program. Under the provisions of section 110, the Secretary was required to purchase and distribute commodities to States for use by soup kitchens and food banks. Section 873 of the Personal Responsibility Act deletes section 110 of the Hunger Prevention Act and provides for the absorption of the Soup Kitchens/Food Banks Program into TEFAP. Therefore, commodities will not be purchased for distribution under the Soup Kitchens/Food Banks Program in FY 1997. Organizations that had been eligible for SK/FB will, however, be eligible to receive commodities under the expanded TEFAP.

Dated: January 13, 1997.

William E. Ludwig,  
Administrator.

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## Forest Service

### Permitting Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) Huts and Pinkham Notch Visitor Center (PNVC) in the White Mountain National Forest

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

#### SUMMARY:

**Proposed Federal Action.**—The proposed Federal action is to authorize AMC under a 30-year term special use permit (38 Stat., 11.01, as amended) to continue to occupy National Forest System (NFS) land in order to operate, maintain, and reconstruct its facilities to provide public recreation and information services as defined in the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and to provide other services as outlined in the AMC's Master Development Plan (MDP), consistent with the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and Special Use Permit Authority.

Based on Forest Plan goals, the primary purposes of the Huts and Pinkham Notch Visitor Center (PNVC) are to provide recreation opportunities and information services. Other uses proposed in AMC's master plan are not essential to these two purposes; however, they are not in conflict. Therefore, uses at the huts within the proposed action include: Food and lodging (seasonally); information services; education programs; support for research, trails, and search and rescue; and retail sales. Uses at PNVC include: Food and lodging; visitor information services; educational programs; administration of programs; public meeting space; a support center for search and rescue; employee housing; visitor center store; and other public facilities (parking, showers). The specific activities within the authorized uses will be reviewed through the annual Operating Plan, and subject to environmental review as necessary. For example, we propose to authorize Pinkham Notch Visitor Center as an administrative center for research. Specific research proposals will be addressed on a case by case basis.

The facilities on National Forest System lands are Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, Greenleaf Hut, Galehead Hut, Zealand Hut, Mizpah Hut, Lakes of the Clouds Hut, Carter Notch Hut, and the area around Madison Spring Hut (the Hut itself is on one acre of private land). There is no proposed change to the overnight capacity at PNVC or the Huts. There are also no proposed changes to the facilities, except for the reconstruction of Galehead Hut and the PNVC parking lot.

The proposal to reconstruct Galehead Hut includes adding 430 square feet to the existing footprint and rotating the Hut southward 33 degrees. In addition, the septic system (gray water and grease trap) would be moved to the north of the Hut away from the

viewshed of the Pemigewasset Wilderness.

The proposed redesign and reconstruction of the parking lot at PNVC will occur within the existing footprint. The proposal includes: Paving and marking the lot to maximize utilization of available parking space; improving vegetation barriers between the lot and highway; parking and access for persons with disabilities; a minimum 3-foot grass perimeter for snow loading and filtering runoff; and recycling pavement where removed. The existing parking lot lighting will be retained.

This proposed action includes monitoring impacts of solid and sanitary waste disposal on water quality, and the effects of soil compaction on surrounding vegetation within the permitted area of the huts.

**Responsible Official.**—The responsible official is Donna Hepp, Forest Supervisor, White Mountain National Forest, 719 Main Street, Laconia, New Hampshire.

**Decision to be Made.**—The decision is whether or not to authorize AMC under a 30 year term special use permit to continue to occupy National Forest System (NFS) land in order to operate, maintain, and reconstruct its facilities to provide public recreation and information services as defined in the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and to provide other services as outlined in the AMC's MDP, consistent with the White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and Special Use Permit Authority. The decision includes the Forest Supervisor's approval of site specific mitigation and/or monitoring requirements.

**Issuing authority.**—The issuing authority will be a term special use permit under the Term Permit Act of March 4, 1915 (38 Stat., 11.01, as amended). The length of permit depends on the level of investment on National Forest System lands. The value of PNVC and the Huts indicates a term of 30 years.

**Alternatives.**—In preparing the environmental impact statement the Forest Service will consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed action, including a "no action" alternative. The no action alternative will be the continuation of operations under the terms and conditions of the permit issued to the AMC in 1965, as amended up through October 29, 1995. The no action alternative is the baseline against which the effects of other alternatives are