

including objectives, proposed activities, benefits to U.S. agricultural exports, target country/countries for proposed activities, projected starting date for project, and funding amount requested; summary and detailed description of proposed project; statement of problem (specific trade constraint) to be addressed through the proposed project; benefits to U.S. agricultural exports; agricultural trade data for target country/countries, including existing percentage of U.S. export market share; information on whether similar activities are or have previously been funded in target country/countries (e.g., under MAP and/or FMD programs); a clearly stated explanation as to why participating organization(s) are unlikely to carry out activities without Federal financial assistance; time line(s) for project implementation; detailed project budget, including other sources of funding for the project and contributions from participating organizations (additional requirements are contained in the Program Guidelines); Federal tax ID number of the responsible organization. Qualifications of applicant(s) should be included, as an attachment.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on February 11, 1998.

Lon Hatamiya,

Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.
[FR Doc. 98-4169 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-10-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Cottonwood Coal Lease Tract, UTU-68012; Manti-La Sal National Forest, Emery County, Utah

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a third-party Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management will direct preparation of a Third-Party Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the analysis and disclose the environmental and human effects of proposed actions to offer the Cottonwood Coal Lease Tract for competitive bidding in accordance with 43 CFR part 3425. As the surface management agency, the Forest Service will be the lead agency for preparation of the EIS and the Bureau of Land Management will be a joint lead agency. The Office of Surface Mining and Bureau of Reclamation will also participate as cooperating agencies.

The coal lease tract, as delineated by the Tract Delineation Team, encompasses 9,243.87 acres of Federal coal lands on the Manti-La Sal National Forest as follows:

T. 17 S., R. 6 E., SLM,
Section 2, SW4;
Section 3, lots 1-12, SE4;
Section 4, lots 1-2, S2NE4, SE4;
Section 9, E2, E2W2;
Section 10, lots 1-8, E2;
Section 11, All;
Section 12, W2W2;
Section 13, W2W2;
Section 14, lots 1-4, E2, NW4;
Section 15, lots 1-12, NE4;
Section 16, NE4NW4;
Section 20, E2E2;
Section 21, All;
Section 22, All;
Section 23; lots 1-12, NE4;
Section 24, W2W2;
Section 25, N2NW4;
Section 26, N2NE4, W2SW4NE4, NW4, N2SW4, W2NW4SE4;
Section 27, N2, N2S2;
Section 28, All;
Section 29, E2;
Section 32, E2;
Section 33; All.

(Additions and/or deletions to the delineated tract may be considered as alternatives to the proposed action, to be developed and analyzed based on issues and management needs.)

PacifiCorp applied to the Bureau of Land Management for the lease to obtain additional coal reserves to increase the production life of their Cottonwood/Wilberg/Trail Mountain mine complex. The tract lies west and north of the boundary of the existing approved permit area for the Trail Mountain Mine. If PacifiCorp obtains the tract, it would be mined by longwall and room-and-pillar methods through underground workings in the existing permit area. Existing portal facilities in Cottonwood/Wilberg/Trail Mountain mine complex would be used. If another company obtains the tract, it is most likely that new portal facilities would be required in Cottonwood Canyon, north of the existing Trail Mountain Mine facility. The underground mining methods and layout would be similar. The EIS would consider the effects of both scenarios, the No Action Alternative, and other alternatives to be developed after completion of project scoping.

AGENCY DECISIONS: In accordance with the Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1975, which amended the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, the Forest Supervisor, Manti-La Sal National Forest, must decide whether or not to consent to leasing by the Bureau of Land Management and identify special coal

lease stipulations needed to protect non-mineral resources.

In accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Utah State Director of the Bureau of Land Management must decide whether or not to offer the tract for competitive leasing and under what terms, conditions, and stipulations.

DATES: Written comments concerning the scope of the analysis described in this notice should be received on or before March 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Manti-La Sal National Forest, 599 West Price River Drive, Price, Utah 84501.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions concerning the proposed action and EIS should be addressed to Dale Harber or Aaron Howe, Manti-La Sal National Forest, phone (435) 637-2817.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This EIS will tier to the Final EIS and Record of Decision for the Manti-La Sal National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Manti-La Sal Forest Plan provides the overall guidance (Goals, Objectives, Standards, and Management Area Direction) to achieve the Desired Future Condition for the area being analyzed, and contains specific management area prescriptions for the entire Forest. The proposed lease tract is available for further consideration for coal leasing. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have determined that data are available to meet the Data Adequacy Standards for Federal Coal Leasing, Uinta-Southwestern Utah Coal Region.

Issues and alternatives to be evaluated in the analysis will be determined through public scoping. The major issues are expected to include the socioeconomic benefits of mining; the potential impacts of underground mining and mining-induced subsidence to surface and ground water, vegetation, wildlife, cultural/paleontological resources, range improvements, and other land uses; the potential for impacts on the Joes Valley Dam; and the potential impacts of any new surface facilities to the Forest and human environments.

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. The Forest Service invites written comments and suggestions on the issues related to the proposal and the area being analyzed. Information received will be used in preparation of the Draft EIS and Final

EIS. For most effective use, comments would be submitted to the Forest Service within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. Preparation of the EIS will include the following steps:

1. Define the purpose of and need for action.
2. Identify potential issues.
3. Eliminate issues of minor importance or those that have been covered by previous and relevant environmental analysis.
4. Select issues to be analyzed in depth.
5. Identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action.
6. Describe the affected environment.
7. Identify the potential environmental effects of the alternatives.

Steps 2, 3, and 4 will be completed through the scoping process.

Step 5 will consider a range of alternatives developed from the key issues and management needs. At a minimum, the "No Action" and "Propose Action" Alternatives will be analyzed. Other alternatives could involve modified tract boundaries (additions and/or reductions) and different sets of special lease stipulations for the protection of non-mineral resources. Alternatives may also be developed to include analysis of mining in the existing adjacent lease area and a potential modification of adjacent existing leases to add up to 160 acres/lease to prevent bypassing minable reserves.

Step 6 will describe the physical attributes of the area to be affected by this proposal, with special attention to the environmental factors that could be adversely affected.

Step 7 will analyze the environmental effects of each alternative. This analysis will be consistent with management direction outlined in the Forest plan. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of each alternative will be analyzed and documented. In addition, the site specific mitigation measures for each alternative will be identified and the effectiveness of these mitigation measures will be disclosed.

Agency representatives and other interested people are invited to visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the EIS process. Two specific time periods are identified for the receipt of formal comments on the analysis. The two comment periods are, (1) during the scoping process, the next 30 days following publication of this Notice in the **Federal Register**, and (2) during the formal review period of the Draft EIS.

The Draft EIS is estimated to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in September, 1998. At this time the EPA will publish an availability notice of the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**.

The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency's notice of availability appears in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate at that time. To be the most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be as specific as possible and may address the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed (See The Council on 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 U.S. 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 and respond to them in the final document.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns related to the proposed action, comments on the Draft EIS should be as specific as possible. Referring to specific pages or chapters of the Draft EIS is most helpful. Comments may also address the adequacy of the Draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (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.)

The final EIS is expected to be released in December, 1998.

The Forest Supervisor for the Manti-La Sal National Forest and Utah State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, who are the responsible

officials for the EIS, will then make their respective decisions regarding this proposal, after considering the comments, responses, and environmental consequences discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The rationale for the respective agency decisions will be documented in the Record(s) of Decisions.

Dated: February 11, 1998.

Janette S. Kaiser,

Forest Supervisor, Manti-La Sal National Forest.

[FR Doc. 98-4168 Filed 2-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business—Cooperative Service

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Rural Business—Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; comments request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of the Cooperative Development Division (CDD), Cooperative Development Program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by April 20, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Wells, Director, Cooperative Development Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 3254, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3254, Telephone: (202) 720-3350.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Cooperative Services Questionnaire:

New Cooperative Volume and Structure, Producer Survey for New Cooperative Activity.

OMB Number: 0570-0008.

Expiration Date of Approval: May 31, 1998.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) Cooperative Services Programs conducts feasibility studies to assist in the development of new cooperatives. The Cooperative Development Division (CDD) specializes