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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Prescott National Forest, Bradshaw Ranger District; Arizona; Bradshaw Vegetation Management Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: This project is a proposal to improve the health of fire adapted ecosystems while simultaneously reducing hazardous fuels on the Bradshaw Ranger District. The project area encompasses about 55,554 acres. Within the project area, the proposal is to commercially thin approximately 16,312 acres in ponderosa pine, pine-oak, and mixed conifer forest types. Fuels treatments include mechanized fuel reduction on 34,445 acres of chaparral, pinyon-juniper, and oak sites and non-mechanized fuel reduction treatments on 6,242 acres of chaparral, juniper, pinyon, oak, pine, and mixed conifer sites. Prescribed fire is proposed on 44,641 acres and fuelbreak construction is proposed on 791 acres. It is expected that this project will require a site specific forest plan amendment to the Prescott National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986), as amended, in order to implement treatments within Mexican Spotted Owl habitat.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received within 30 days after publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in December, 2010 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in March, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Jodi Stevens, Bradshaw Ranger District, 344 South Cortez Street, Prescott, Arizona 86303. Comments may also be submitted by e-mail to: comments-southwestern-prescott@fs.fed.us. Include "Bradshaw Vegetation Management" in the subject line of e-mail comments. Electronic comments must be submitted in Word (.doc), RichText (.rtf), or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jodi Stevens, 928-443-8041 or jodistevens@fs.fed.us. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8

p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action: The purpose of the proposed action is to improve the health of fire adapted ecosystems while simultaneously reducing hazardous fuels. The EIS will describe existing conditions and desired conditions, analyze environmental consequences of shifting existing conditions towards desired conditions, and assist the decision maker in selecting management strategies that will achieve desired conditions. The proposed action is needed due to prominent changes in the structure and function of vegetation and fire behavior within the analysis area, and the proximity of homes and private property to these changed conditions. The changes in vegetation and fire behavior are a result of aggressive fire suppression over the past several decades. One of the most effective ways to protect communities is to create defensible fuel profile zones both adjacent to homes and private property and on adjacent public lands.

Proposed Action: The Prescott National Forest proposes to commercially thin approximately 16,312 acres in ponderosa pine, pine-oak, and mixed conifer forest types.

Proposed fuels treatments include mechanized fuel reduction on 34,445 acres of chaparral, pinyon-juniper, and oak sites, and non-mechanized fuel reduction treatments on 6,242 acres of chaparral, juniper, pinyon, oak, pine, and mixed conifer sites. Prescribed fire is proposed on 44,641 acres and fuelbreak construction is proposed on 791 acres. The project area is located to the southeast, south, southwest, west and northwest of the city of Prescott. Implementation of this proposed project could begin as early as June 1, 2011.

Responsible Official

The Responsible Official for this project is the Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest, Prescott, Arizona.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The Forest Service will evaluate the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action. After reviewing the proposed action, the alternatives, the environmental analysis, and considering public comment, the Forest Supervisor will reach a decision that is in accordance with the purpose and need for this project. The decision will include a description of activities that will be implemented. Issues identified as being outside the scope of this proposal (such as grazing cattle on the

Forest or the need for additional recreation opportunities) will not be addressed in this planning effort.

Scoping Process

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and be as specific as possible. There will be a public scoping meeting on Thursday, February 25, 2010 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Arizona Time. This meeting will be held at the Mackin Building at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds, 840 Rodeo Drive, Prescott, AZ, 86305. Scoping letters will be mailed to individuals and entities who have identified themselves as interested publics regarding proposed actions on the Prescott National Forest. Additionally, scoping input will be requested through a publication in the Prescott Courier, the newspaper of local circulation in the proposed project area.

Dated: February 18, 2010.

Reta Laford,

Acting Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest.

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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Board for International Food and Agricultural Development; One Hundred and Fifty-Ninth Meeting; Notice of Meeting

Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, notice is hereby given of the one hundred and fifty-ninth meeting of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD). The meeting will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 3, 2010 at the National Press Club located at 529 14th St., NW., Washington, DC. "Higher Education: A Critical Partner in Global Agricultural Development" will be the central theme of BIFAD's initiatives and the March meeting.

Dr. Robert Easter, Chairman of BIFAD, will preside over the proceedings. Dr. Easter is Interim Chancellor for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The confirmation of Dr. Rajiv Shah as USAID's new administrator will define the work of BIFAD, consistent with

BIFAD's legislative mandate, for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the 159th BIFAD meeting will attempt to respond to Dr. Shah's priorities. Dr. Shah brings a strong background in global food security issues. Within this context comes the recognition that only through broad-based partnerships and multidisciplinary approaches will the US achieve priority foreign assistance goals in a dramatically changed development world. It is in the spirit of the Title XII mandates and in view of today's development realities, underpinned by complex socio-economic conditions and regional conflicts, that BIFAD is leading as a "gateway" to the university community.

It is expected that Dr. Shah will participate in the meeting and present to the Board his vision and priorities for the Agency. If the situation in Haiti or other unanticipated contingencies preclude him from attending, Karen Turner, the Director of the Office of Development Partners or Carol Grigsby, the Office's Deputy Director, will represent the Administrator. In the event that new BIFAD members are announced, there is a possibility that they could be officially sworn in by Administrator Shah, or Director Turner or Deputy Director Grigsby.

The Board and USAID have been collaborating closely to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to define our strategic partnership. The purpose of the MOU is to set forth the understandings and intentions of USAID and BIFAD with regard to shared goals and to mobilize the capacities of U.S. universities to implement program components under Section 103 (Agriculture, Rural Development and Nutrition) and 103A (Agriculture Research) of the Foreign Assistance Act. Five key areas were identified for maximum collaboration: USG Food Security Strategy and Program; USG Global Climate Change Strategy and Program; Education and Training for Youth; Afghanistan/Pakistan Agriculture Strategy and Program; and Rebuilding USAID Technical Capacity. The MOU was vetted during the last BIFAD meeting in October. It should be ready for signing during the 159th meeting with a brief ceremony.

Next, Gebisa Ejeta, last year's World Food Prize recipient, will present to the Board a presentation, "Food Security: the Science, Sociology and Economics of Food Production and Access to Food." He will emphasize the critical need to strengthen science-based thinking within development planning and implementation and rational decision-making into the policy formulation process. Dr. Ejeta is

currently at Purdue University. Dr. Easter will also be making a presentation, with possible responder to Dr. Ejeta.

During 2009, the Board held a number of sessions and activities related to the agricultural strategy for Afghanistan and how universities can help USAID turn battle space into development space. This session will provide an update on the Trilateral Af-Pak process, building towards a conference later this spring in Doha, Qatar. The conference will bring together university representatives managing on-the-ground agricultural projects in Afghanistan with key Afghans and Pakistanis, to develop a 5 year plan for integrating long-term agricultural training and capacity building into the agricultural development strategy.

The devastating earthquake in Haiti will be the focus of a session to demonstrate how BIFAD and universities can bring value to USAID on Haiti, as well as the Caribbean region. The session will be led by Board member Dr. Elsa Murano, University of Texas. Walter Bowen, Acting Director, International Programs, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, will share some experiences University of Florida has had in Haiti. His project, Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources, is aimed at implementing broad scale investments in sustainable natural resource management at the scale and density needed to produce future positive landscape level reductions in environmental, infrastructural, and economic vulnerability. The Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (LAC) at USAID will be intimately involved, and there will be discussion on wider application throughout the Caribbean region.

Concluding the morning session, John Becker, USAID Office of Development Partners, will make a presentation and lead discussion on application of the Bumpers Amendment. The Bumpers Amendment forbids the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from giving money to any program that would increase the production of a crop that could compete with the United States on the world market.

After an executive luncheon (closed to the public) the Board will re-convene. Scheduled as the afternoon's first session will be a follow-on to the Board's efforts to highlight the critical role that Minority Serving Institutions continue to play in international agricultural development, particularly in improving the livelihood of small farmers. William DeLauder, Board

member and President-Emeritus of Delaware State University, will lead the session. This discussion is being designed to open a new dialogue and begin exploring effective partnering with USAID.

Following the MSI panel, Montague Demment, Director, Global Livestock Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP), will lead a discussion on the Borlaug Leap Program and other BIFAD long-term training activities, in cooperation with USAID's Economic Growth, Agricultural, and Trade Bureau (EGAT). These are very important programs that help build human and institutional capacity in agriculture.

Concluding the afternoon session, the Board will hear an update on BIFAD's efforts to establish a Joint Committee on Operations, as called for in Title XII, to increase the technical capacity of the Board. Such a Committee would replace the Strategic Partnership for Agricultural Research and Education (SPARE). Ray Miller, Director of International Programs, University of Maryland, will lead the discussion.

The Board meeting is open to the public. The Board welcomes open dialogue to promote greater focus on critical issues facing USAID, the role of universities in development, and applications of U.S. scientific, technical and institutional capabilities to international agriculture. *Note on Public Comments:* Due to time constraints public comments to the Board will be limited to three (3) minutes to accommodate as many as possible. It is preferred to have requests for comments submitted to the Board in writing. Two periods for public comment will be provided during the Board meeting—just before lunch and adjournment.

Those wishing to attend the meeting or obtain additional information about BIFAD should contact Dr. Ronald S. Senykoff, Executive Director and Designated Federal Officer for BIFAD. Write him in care of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Ronald Reagan Building, Office of Development Partners, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Room 6.7-153, Washington, DC 20523-2110 or telephone him at (202) 712-0218 or fax (202) 216-3124.

Ronald S. Senykoff,

Executive Director and USAID Designated Federal Officer for BIFAD, Office of Development Partners, U.S. Agency for International Development.

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