

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Boundary Establishment for the Presque Isle National Wild and Scenic River, Ottawa National Forest, Gogebic County, MI

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Section 3(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the USDA Forest Service, Washington Office, is transmitting the final boundary of the Presque Isle National Wild and Scenic River to Congress.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Information may be obtained by contacting Bill Baer, Recreation Program Manager, Ottawa National Forest, E6248 US Hwy 2, Ironwood, MI 49938, (906) 932-1330, ext. 342.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Presque Isle Wild and Scenic River boundary is available for review at the following offices: USDA Forest Service, Office of the Chief, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington DC 20024; USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region, Suite 400, 626 East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202 and; Ottawa National Forest, E6248 US Hwy 2, Ironwood, MI 49938. A detailed legal description is available upon request.

The Michigan Scenic River Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102-249-March 3, 1992) designated the Presque Isle River, Michigan, as a National Wild and Scenic River, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture. As specified by law, the boundary will not be effective until ninety days after Congress receives the transmittal.

Dated: March 7, 2012.

Anthony V. Scardina,
Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 2012-7560 Filed 3-28-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Rim Lakes Forest Restoration Project; Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Black Mesa Ranger District, Coconino County, AZ

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

SUMMARY: The U.S. Forest Service (FS) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposed action to conduct selective cutting and prescribed burn in forest across approximately 33,010 acres of National Forest System lands. The project intends to conserve and restore the Rim Lakes Project Area to make—over time—the forest ecosystem more sustainable and resilient to natural disturbances such as drought and climatic variability, insects, disease, fire, and wind.

The purpose of the project is to restore forest health, move forests toward an uneven-aged forest structure with all age classes represented, and restore frequent, periodic surface fire as an ecological process, as well as reduce the risk of a stand-replacing fire. The project will also improve hydrologic function, improve wildlife habitat—in particular for Northern goshawk and Mexican spotted owl—and improve scenic quality, as well as move the project area towards forest plan old growth management allocation goals.

In order to meet the purpose, this project includes a site-specific, forest plan amendment to the Apache-Sitgreaves Land and Resource Management Plan. This amendment clarifies guidelines to assure the proposed action can meet its restoration objectives, and to assure consistency with the forest plan. Information about the project can be found at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/asnf/landmanagement/projects>.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by April 30, 2012. The draft environmental impact statement is expected to be available in July 2012 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in October 2012, followed by a 30-day objection period pursuant to 36 CFR part 218 subpart A.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Dee Hines, District Ranger, Black Mesa

Ranger District, P.O. Box 968, Overgaard, AZ 85933. Comments may also be sent via email to comments-southwestern-apache-sitgreaves-black-mesa@fs.fed.us, or via facsimile to (520) 535-5972.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sandy Hurlocker, project team leader. Phone: (505) 660-8715.

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: This project is being authorized under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003, following regulations at 36 CFR part 218. To date, analysis for this proposed action was documented in an environmental assessment that underwent an objection period in September 2011. After reviewing objections, the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Supervisor elected to document the analysis in an environmental impact statement (EIS). The Forest Supervisor also elected to include an amendment to the forest plan as part of the proposed action in order to achieve project restoration objectives and to assure consistency with the Apache-Sitgreaves Land and Resource Management Plan (forest plan).

Purpose and Need for Action

The underlying purpose and need for the project has been determined by comparing the desired conditions to the existing conditions within the planning area. Desired conditions relevant to this project relate to forest health and ecosystem function and resiliency, as defined in the forest plan.

Currently, forested lands in the project area have departed from the structures and processes that historically kept them in a healthy, resilient condition. For example, 97 percent of the forested lands reflect a high stand density that makes these forests susceptible to insects and disease. Forests are also at risk of uncharacteristically high-severity wild fires, which can lead to loss of entire stands during one fire event. About 67 percent of the project area has potential for either active crown fire or passive crown fire because of the amount of ladder fuels and the continuous and interlocking tree crowns. As