

relevant previous environmental analysis, such as the Kootenai Forest Plan.

4. Identify alternatives to the proposed action.
5. Identify potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative effects).
6. Determine potential cooperating agencies and task assignments.

The Draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review in April of 1995. At that time, the EPA will publish a Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA's notice of availability appears in the **Federal Register**. It is very important that those interested in management of the analysis area participate at that time. To be most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be as site-specific as possible. The Final EIS is scheduled to be completed by September, 1995.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, 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 reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 30-day scoping comment period so 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 developing issues and alternatives.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues on the proposed action, comments should be as specific as possible. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy

Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

I have the final authority for issuing a decision regarding this proposal. I have delegated the responsibility of preparing the EIS to Three Rivers District Ranger, Michael Balboni. My address is Kootenai National Forest, Supervisor's Office, 506 Hwy 2 West, Libby, MT 59923.

Dated: January 27, 1995.

**Robert L. Schrenk**,  
Forest Supervisor.

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### Winter Recreation Plan for the Lakes Basin/Sierra Buttes Area, Tahoe National Forest, Sierra County, CA

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a Winter Recreation Plan for the Lakes Basin/Sierra Buttes Area on the Downieville District of the Tahoe National Forest. Winter use in the area has been monitored as required by the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, to determine management needs. The EIS will analyze several proposed snow groomer shed construction sites, possible opportunities for resorts and organizational camps to broaden services to include winter sports activities, and further develop both snowmobile trails and nordic ski trails where snowmobiles may be restricted.

The Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), completed March, 1990, proposes to prepare a winter recreation management plan "to assure orderly development and management of cross country skiing and snowmobiling use within the area."

The agency invites comments and suggestions on the scope of the analysis. In addition, the agency gives notice of the full environmental analysis and decision-making process that will occur on the plan so that interested and affected people are aware of how they may participate and contribute to the final decision.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the analysis should be received in writing by March 20, 1995.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments concerning the project should be directed to Jean M. Masquelier, District Ranger, Downieville Ranger District, North Yuba Ranger Station, 15924 Hwy 49, Camptonville, CA 95922.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Furney, Dispersed Recreation Assistant, Downieville Ranger District, North Yuba Ranger Station, Camptonville, CA 95922, telephone 916 288-3231 or 916 478-6253.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In preparing the environmental impact statement, the Forest Service will identify and analyze a range of opportunities in the plan.

Public participation will be important at several points during the analysis, especially the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The first point is during the scoping process. The Forest Service will be seeking information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. This input will be used in preparation of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). The scoping process includes:

1. Identifying potential issues.
2. Identifying issues to be analyzed in depth.
3. Eliminating insignificant issues or those both which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis.
4. Exploring additional alternatives.
5. Identifying potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e., direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).
6. Determining potential cooperating agencies and task assignments.

Organizations, and individuals who may be interested in, or affected by the decision, will be solicited to identify significant issues. Public participation has been previously solicited through mailing letters to private land owners, politicians, county supervisors, continued participation will be emphasized through public meetings and mailings.

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by May 30, 1995. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, 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