

useful to the holder and the Forest Service, because it specifies procedures and policies for conducting the authorized use. Typically, operating plans contain daily operating guidelines, fire abatement and control procedures, monitoring guidelines, maintenance standards, safety and emergency plans, and inspection standards. Operating plans are usually necessary for complex operations, commercial uses, and uses conducted in environmentally sensitive areas.

#### **Category 5: Preparing and Updating Maintenance Plans (no designated form)**

A permit or easement issued under FLPMA or FRTA may require the holder or grantee to submit and update a road maintenance plan or information necessary for the preparation of a road maintenance plan. A road maintenance plan governs the responsibility of the holder or grantee to perform or pay for maintenance of an NFS road.

#### **Category 6: Compliance Reports and Information Updates**

1. FS-2700-34 (new), *Outfitter or Guide Trip Ticket* is used by an outfitter or guide to provide use information to Forest Service officials via the Internet or other media. The Forest Service uses the information to track use of NFS lands.

2. *Compliance Reports and Information Updates* (no designated form). Special use authorizations may contain a clause requiring the holder to provide the Forest Service with compliance reports, information reports, and other information required by Federal law or to manage NFS lands to ensure adequate protection of national forest resources and public health and safety. Examples of compliance and information updates include dam maintenance inspection reports and logs required by the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978; the Federal Dam Safety Inspection Act of 1979; and the Dam Safety Act of 1983; documentation that authorized facilities passed safety inspections; documentation showing that the United States is named as an additional insured in an insurance policy issued to a holder; notifications involving a change in ownership of authorized improvements or a change in control of the holder; and documentation of compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

*Estimate of Annual Burden:* 2.37 burden hours per response.

*Type of Respondents:* Individuals, Businesses, Non-profit Organizations, and Non-Federal Governmental entities.

*Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:* 88,505 respondents.

*Estimated Annual Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 161,017 hours.

#### **Comment Is Invited**

*Comment is invited on:* (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical or scientific utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the submission request toward Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: October 17, 2008.

**Gloria Manning,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

[FR Doc. E8-25396 Filed 10-23-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **Forest Service**

**[WO-300-9131-PP]**

#### **Notice of Availability of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Leasing of Geothermal Resources in Eleven Western United States and Alaska, Including Proposed Amendments to Selected Land Use Plans**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior; and U.S. Forest Service, Agriculture.

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability (NOA).

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with section 202 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C.

4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), and applicable agency guidance, a Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) has been prepared on the leasing of geothermal resources in 11 Western United States (U.S.) and Alaska. The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (FS) are co-lead agencies for the PEIS. The Department of Energy (DOE) participated as a core team member. The PEIS has been developed, in part, to support the amendment of 122 resource management plans (RMP) covering public lands managed by the BLM under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

In accordance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109-58, August 8, 2005), the goal of the proposed action is to make geothermal leasing decisions on pending lease applications submitted prior to January 1, 2005, and to facilitate geothermal leasing decisions on other existing and future lease applications and nominations on the Federal mineral estate. The planning area encompasses about 530 million acres of land with the potential for geothermal development in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

**DATES:** The proposed RMP amendments and Final PEIS for Leasing of Geothermal Resources will be available for review for 30 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jack G. Peterson, BLM Project Manager at (208) 373-4048 ([Jack\\_G\\_Peterson@blm.gov](mailto:Jack_G_Peterson@blm.gov)), Bureau of Land Management, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, Idaho 83706 or Ivette Torres, FS Program Manager at (703) 605-4792 ([ietorres@fs.fed.us](mailto:ietorres@fs.fed.us)), Forest Service, Mail Stop 1126 RPC 5th, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250 or visit the PEIS Web site at [http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal\\_EIS](http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal_EIS).

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the proposed RMP amendments and Final PEIS is available for review via the Internet from a link at [http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal\\_EIS](http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal_EIS). Hardcopies are available for review at BLM State Offices and Field Offices. Electronic (on CD-ROM) and paper copies may also be obtained by contacting Jack Peterson at the address and phone number listed in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. The proposed RMP amendments and Final

PEIS consist of three volumes: Volume I contains the proposed RMP amendments and associated programmatic analyses; Volume II provides the specific environmental analysis for the pending lease applications; and Volume III contains the appendices, including responses to public comments on the Draft PEIS.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In accordance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the BLM and FS propose to facilitate geothermal leasing of the Federal mineral estate on lands administered by the BLM (termed "public lands") and by the FS (National Forest System [NFS] lands) that have geothermal potential in the 11 Western States and Alaska. Under the proposal, the BLM and FS would do the following: (1) Identify public and NFS lands with geothermal potential as being open or closed to leasing; (2) on public lands, identify lands that are administratively closed or open to leasing and development, and under what conditions; (3) develop a comprehensive list of stipulations, best management practices (BMPs), and procedures to serve as consistent guidance for future geothermal leasing and development on public and NFS lands; (4) amend BLM RMPs to adopt the resource allocations, stipulations, BMPs, and procedures; and (5) provide FS consent, if applicable, to issue or deny geothermal lease applications pending as of January 1, 2005, on public and NFS lands.

The need for the action is to: (1) Issue decisions on pending lease applications in accordance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005; (2) address other provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, respond to other policy directives calling for clean and renewable energy (such as state renewable portfolio standards), and meet the increasing energy demands of the Nation; and (3) facilitate geothermal leasing decisions on other existing and future lease applications and nominations on the Federal mineral estate. The purpose of the action is to: (1) Complete processing active pending geothermal lease applications; (2) amend BLM land use plans to allocate lands with geothermal potential as being closed or open with minor to major constraints to leasing; and (3) provide suitable information to the FS to facilitate its subsequent consent decisions for BLM leasing on NFS lands.

Over 530 million acres of the Western U.S. and Alaska have been identified as potentially containing geothermal resources suitable for commercial electrical generation and other direct

uses, such as heating. Much of the resource base is held in the Federal mineral estate, for which the BLM has the delegated authority for processing and issuing geothermal leases. The BLM is prohibited from issuing leases on statutorily closed lands (see 43 CFR 3201.11), including Wilderness Areas, wilderness study areas, lands contained in a unit of the National Park System, National Recreation Areas, Indian trust or restricted lands, and the Island Park Geothermal Areas (around the border of Yellowstone National Park). Other areas closed to leasing by existing laws, regulations, and Executive Orders include National Monuments and designated wild rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would also apply discretionary closures to: (1) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern where the BLM determines that geothermal leasing and development would be incompatible with the purposes for which the ACEC was designated, or that have management plans that expressly preclude new leasing; (2) National Conservation Areas, except the California Desert Conservation Area; and (3) other lands in the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, such as historic and scenic trails.

The Notice of Intent to prepare the PEIS, published in the **Federal Register** (72 FR 32679) on June 13, 2007, initiated the public scoping process and invited the public to provide comments on the scope and objectives of the PEIS. During the scoping process, the BLM and FS held public scoping meetings in ten cities across the Western U.S., including Alaska. Over 170 individuals attended the scoping meetings.

The NOA announcing the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS was published in the **Federal Register** on June 13, 2008. The public was given the opportunity to provide comments on the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS from June 13, 2008, to September 19, 2008. The BLM and FS held 13 public meetings to collect comments and answer questions on the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS. Meetings were held in Reno, Nevada; Salt Lake City, Utah; Tucson, Arizona; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Denver, Colorado; Cheyenne, Wyoming; Helena, Montana; Boise, Idaho; Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Sacramento, California; Anchorage, Alaska; and Fairbanks, Alaska. About 220 people attended the meetings. The RMP amendments and Draft PEIS were posted on the project Web site at [http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal\\_EIS](http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal_EIS)

and provided on request as a CD or printed document.

Sixty-three individuals or organizations submitted comment letters with about 500 unique comments on the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS. In addition, two form letters were received. One form letter generated over 700 copies pertaining to development in areas with sensitive resources, such as National Parks. The second form letter generated over 20 copies about development in the Medicine Lake, California, area.

Public comments on the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS have been incorporated into Volume 3 of the PEIS. The public provided input on a wide variety of issues. The most prevalent comment pertained to geothermal development in areas with sensitive resources, followed by water resources and compatibility with other resource uses, such as recreation and grazing.

Public comments on the RMP amendments and Draft PEIS were considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into the proposed RMP amendments and Final PEIS. Public comments resulted in the addition of clarifying text for the analysis and proposed action, but did not significantly change the proposed action.

Approximately 143 million acres of public (BLM) lands and 104 million acres of NFS lands have geothermal potential. The proposed RMP amendments and Final PEIS proposes to identify approximately 118 million acres of public lands and 79 million acres of NFS lands as available to potential geothermal leasing subject to existing laws, regulations, formal orders, stipulations attached to the lease form, and terms and conditions of the standard lease form. To protect special resource values, the BLM and FS have developed a comprehensive list of stipulations, conditions of approval, and BMPs.

In addition, a reasonable foreseeable development (RFD) scenario was developed to predict future geothermal development trends. The RFD scenario in the proposed RMP amendments and Final PEIS estimates a potential for 5,540 megawatts (MW) of new electric generation capacity from 111 new geothermal power plants in the 11 Western States and Alaska by 2015. It also estimated an additional 6,600 MW from another 133 plants by 2025. The RFD scenario recognizes the great potential for direct uses, including up to 270 western communities being able to develop geothermal resources for heating buildings to offset the use of conventional energy sources.

As noted above, the BLM manages the public lands pursuant to FLPMA. Under FLPMA, in order for geothermal resource leasing and development to take place on the public lands that BLM manages, such activities must be provided for in the land use plan (also termed resource management plan or

RMP) for the affected administrative unit. Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would amend 122 RMPs to adopt the allocations, stipulations, best management practices, and procedures analyzed in the PEIS. Therefore, in most cases, the BLM would be able to issue geothermal leases on the basis of the

analysis contained in this document. The FS would use the document to facilitate subsequent consent decisions for leasing on NFS lands. The following BLM RMPs and Management Framework Plans (MFPs) (provided in Chapter 2 of the Final PEIS) are proposed for amendment:

TABLE 1—BLM LAND USE PLANS PROPOSED FOR AMENDMENT UNDER THE PEIS

State	Land use plan(s)
ALASKA .....	Central Yukon RMP, Kobuk-Seward RMP, Ring of Fire RMP.
ARIZONA .....	Arizona Strip RMP, Kingman RMP, Lake Havasu RMP, Lower Gila North MFP, Lower Gila South RMP, Phoenix RMP, Safford RMP, Yuma RMP.
CALIFORNIA .....	Alturas RMP, Arcata RMP, Bishop RMP, Caliente RMP, Cedar Creek/Tule Mountain Integrated RMP, E. San Diego County RMP, Eagle Lake RMP, Headwaters RMP, Hollister RMP, Redding RMP, S. Diablo Mountain Range and Central Coast RMP, South Coast RMP, Surprise RMP, West Mojave RMP.
COLORADO .....	Glenwood Springs RMP, Grand Junction RMP, Gunnison RMP, Kremmling RMP, Little Snake RMP, Northeast RMP, Royal Gorge RMP, San Juan/San Miguel RMP, Uncompahgre Basin RMP, White River RMP.
IDAHO .....	Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP, Big Desert MFP, Big Lost MFP, Bruneau MFP, Cascade RMP, Cassia RMP, Challis RMP, Chief Joseph MFP, Jarbidge RMP, Kuna MFP, Lemhi RMP, Little Lost-Birch MFP, Magic MFP, Malad MFP, Medicine Lodge RMP, Monument RMP, Owyhee RMP, Pocatello RMP, Sun Valley MFP, Twin Falls MFP.
MONTANA .....	Big Dry RMP, Billings Resource Area RMP, Dillon RMP, Garnet Resource Area RMP, Judith Valley Phillips RMP, North Headwaters RMP, Powder River Resource Area RMP, West HiLine RMP.
NEVADA .....	Carson City Consolidated RMP, Elko RMP, Las Vegas RMP, Paradise-Denio MFP, Shoshone-Eureka RMP, Sonoma-Gerlach MFP, Tonopah RMP, Wells RMP.
NEW MEXICO .....	Carlsbad RMP, Farmington RMP, MacGregor Range RMP, Mimbres RMP, Rio Puerco RMP, Roswell RMP, Socorro RMP, Taos RMP, White Sands RMP.
OREGON .....	Brothers/LaPine RMP, Eugene District RMP, John Day River MP, John Day RMP, Lower Deschutes RMP, Medford RMP, Roseburg RMP, Salem RMP, Three Rivers RMP, Two Rivers RMP.
UTAH .....	Book Cliffs MFP, Box Elder RMP, Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony RMP, Diamond Mountain RMP, Henry Mountain MFP, House Range Resource Area RMP, Iso-tract MFP, Mountain Valley MFP, Paria MFP, Park City MFP, Parker Mountain MFP, Pinyon MFP, Pony Express RMP, Randolph MFP, St. George (formerly Dixie) RMP, Vermilion MFP, Warm Springs Resource Area RMP, Zion MFP.
WASHINGTON .....	Spokane RMP.
WYOMING .....	Big Horn Basin RMP, Buffalo RMP, Cody RMP, Grass Creek RMP, Great Divide RMP, Green River RMP, Kemmerer RMP, Lander RMP, Newcastle RMP, Pinedale RMP, Platte River RMP, Snake River RMP, Waskakie RMP.

In addition to the Proposed Action, the PEIS evaluates two other alternatives: The No Action Alternative and an alternative termed Leasing Near Transmission Lines. Under the No Action Alternative, no land use plans would be amended. Therefore, lease applications would continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and would require additional environmental review and possible land use plan amendments.

The Leasing Near Transmission Lines Alternative was developed based on input from scoping. Under this alternative, the scope of lands considered for leasing for commercial electrical generation would be limited to those lands that are near transmission lines that currently exist or are under development. While this alternative minimizes the potential footprint of tie-in transmission lines from power plants to distribution lines, it would limit the potential for geothermal energy generation.

Based on analysis within the PEIS and public comments on the Draft PEIS, the

BLM has identified the Proposed Action as their preferred alternative.

The BLM initiated activities to coordinate and consult with the governors of each of the 12 states addressed in the PEIS and with state agencies. Prior to the issuance of a record of decision approving the land use plan amendments, the governor of each affected state will be given the opportunity to identify any inconsistencies between the proposed land use plan amendments and state or local plans and to provide recommendations in writing.

Because developing this and other alternative energy resources is of strategic importance in enhancing the Nation's domestic energy supplies, the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, in the Department of the Interior is the responsible official for these proposed BLM RMP amendments. The FLPMA and its implementing regulations provide land use planning authority to the Secretary of the Interior, as delegated to this Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary, Land and

Minerals Management will be approving these proposed RMP amendments. Therefore, there will be no administrative review (protest) of the proposed amendments under the BLM or Departmental regulations (43 CFR 1610.5–2). The Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, is the responsible official for the decision (Record of Decision) to be made with respect to the BLM RMP amendments.

In addition to the programmatic analysis pertaining to the land use planning process, the PEIS provides environmental analysis for 19 pending leases in 7 geographical locations in Alaska, California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington that were pending as of January 1, 2005. The alternatives evaluated for this analysis are intended to support FS decision making as to whether or not to provide consent to the BLM lease decisions, and to support BLM decision making as to whether to issue or deny the lease.

Dated: October 3, 2008.

**Henri Bisson,**

*Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management.*

**Gloria Manning,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-25294 Filed 10-23-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-84-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Deschutes Provincial Advisory Committee (DPAC)

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Deschutes Provincial Advisory Committee will meet on October 29, 2008, starting at 8 a.m. at the Deschutes National Forest Supervisor's Office, 1001 SW Emkay Drive, Bend, Oregon. There will be a 1 hour business meeting. Then, members will go to the field to the Bend Ft. Rock Ranger District to discuss strategies for the local forest at risk to insects. The trip is scheduled to end at 4:30 p.m. All Deschutes Province Advisory Committee Meetings are open to the public and an open public forum is scheduled from 8:30 to 9 a.m.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Chris Mickle, Province Liaison, Crescent Ranger District, Highway 97, Crescent, Oregon 97733, Phone (541) 433-3216.

**John Allen,**

*Deschutes National Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. E8-25281 Filed 10-23-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee will hold a meeting on November 6, 2008 at The Chateau, 955 Fairway Boulevard, Incline Village, NV 89451. This Committee, established by the Secretary of Agriculture on December 15, 1998 (64 FR 2876), is chartered to provide advice to the Secretary on implementing the terms of the Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Region and other matters raised by the Secretary.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held November 6, 2008, beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at 4 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at The Chateau, 955 Fairway Boulevard, Incline Village, NV 89451.

*For Further Information or to Request an Accommodation (One Week Prior to Meeting Date) Contact:* Arla Hams, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Forest Service, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150, (530) 543-2773.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Items to be covered on the agenda on November 6, 2008: (1) Total Maximum Daily Load update, and (2) public comment.

All Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend at the above address. Issues may be brought to the attention of the Committee during the open public comment period at the meeting or by filing written statements with the secretary for the Committee before or after the meeting. Please refer any written comments to the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit at the contact address stated above.

Dated: October 10, 2008.

**David Marlow,**

*Acting Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. E8-25226 Filed 10-23-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-11-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Revision of Land Management Plan for National Forests in Mississippi

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of adjustment for resuming the land management plan revision process.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture is resuming preparation of the National Forests in Mississippi revised land management plan as directed by the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). Preparation of the revised plan was halted when the 2005 Forest Service planning rule was enjoined. A new planning rule (36 CFR Part 219) took effect on April 21, 2008, allowing the planning process to be resumed. This notice marks the resumption of the National Forests in Mississippi plan revision process under the new planning rule.

**DATES:** This notice is effective on October 24, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to; Forest Plan Revision, National Forests in Mississippi, 100 West Capitol

Street, Suite 1141, Jackson, MS 39269. Submit electronic comments and other data to: *Mississippi\_Plan@fs.fed.us*. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for file formats and other information about electronic access and filling.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jeff Long, Team Leader Plan Revision, National Forests in Mississippi, (601) 965-1629; TTY (601) 965-1791.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Bienville, Delta, De Soto, Holly Springs, Homochitto, and Tombigbee National Forests are managed as a single administrative unit (National Forests in Mississippi). Notification of adjustment of the plan revision process for the National Forests in Mississippi land management plan was provided in the **Federal Register** on July 27, 2005 (70 FR 43391). The plan revision was being developed under the planning procedures contained in the 2005 Forest Service planning rule (36 CFR 219 (2005)). On March 30, 2007, the Federal district court for the Northern District of California enjoined the Department from implementing and using the 2005 planning rule until the Agency complied with the court's order regarding the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act (*Citizens for Better Forestry v. USDA*, 481 F. Supp 2d 1059 (N.D. Cal. 2007)). Revision of the National Forests in Mississippi land management plan under the (36 CFR 219 (2005)) rule was suspended in response to the injunction. On April 21, 2008, following a notice and comment opportunity, completion of an environmental impact statement and consultation under the Endangered Species Act, the Department of Agriculture promulgated a new planning rule (36 CFR part 219 (2008)). This new planning rule explicitly allows the resumption of plan revisions started under the 2005 rule based on a finding that the revision process conforms to the new planning rule (36 CFR 219.14(b)(3)(ii)).

Prior to the injunction of the 2005 planning rule, the National Forests in Mississippi had substantially engaged the public in collaboration efforts to develop plan components, completed a draft Comprehensive Evaluation Report, worked with the scientific community on addressing concerns for species viability and sustainability to be addressed in the revised plan, had developed the model for timber suitability and sustainability analysis, and had completed initial drafts of major plan components.

Based on the discussions above, I find that the planning actions taken prior to