



File Code: 1350-2

Date: February 24, 2010

Dear Interested Citizen:

On October 3, 2008, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was reauthorized as part of Public Law 110-343. The new Secure Rural Schools Act has some significant changes that encourages counties to collaborate with National Forests on federally funded projects to benefit National Forest lands.

Projects may include, but are not limited to: road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration; soil productivity improvement; improvements in forest ecosystem health; watershed restoration and maintenance; restoration, maintenance and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat; control of noxious and exotic weeds; and reestablishment of native species. Project funding can also be used to leverage grant dollars and collaboration with partners, such as federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations.

A percentage of revenue from timber sales received during fiscal years 2008-2011 will be available for these projects. The projects must be approved by September 30, 2011 and funds must be obligated by September 30, 2012.

Currently Delta and Chippewa counties in the Upper Peninsula have elected to allocate funding for projects benefiting the Hiawatha National Forest. The Forest is working with the counties to organize two Resource Advisory Committees (RACs), as authorized by Title II in the law.

Funding for Title II projects for Chippewa County in Fiscal Year 2008 was \$88,703 and 2009 is estimated to be \$80,000. Funding for Title II projects in Delta County in Fiscal Year 2008 was \$37,181 and for 2009 is estimated to be \$33,000.

Each RAC will consist of 15 people who will develop, recommend and monitor projects that benefit National Forest land in each of the two counties.

The 15 members needed would represent the following interests as described in the Act:

Category I – Five persons representing the following interests–

- (a) Organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups;
- (b) Developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities;
- (c) Energy and mineral development, or commercial or recreational fishing interests;
- (d) Commercial timber industry; or
- (e) Hold Federal grazing permits or other land use permits or represent non-industrial private forest land owners.



Category II – Five persons who represent--

- (a) Nationally recognized environmental organizations;
- (b) Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations;
- (c) Dispersed recreational activities;
- (d) Archaeological and historical interests; or
- (e) Nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations.

Category III – Five persons who –

- (a) Hold State elected office or their designee;
- (b) Hold County or local elected official;
- (c) Represent American Indian tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the committee is organized;
- (d) Are school officials or teachers; or
- (e) Represent the affected public-at-large.

This is a unique opportunity to provide advice and recommendations on management activities on National Forest land in these counties. RAC member terms are four years and the number of meetings depends on the type and number of projects submitted and how active a role the RAC chooses to take. While there is no compensation for serving on a RAC, members are reimbursed for travel expenses.

If you wish to be considered for participation on either RAC, please complete the enclosed Form AD-755. Some blocks may not be applicable to Secure Rural Schools RACs, e.g. block 10 and 13, and may be noted as N.A. or non-applicable.

Mail your application form, along with a cover letter indicating which RAC you wish to be considered for and which category(ies) you wish to represent, to: USDA Forest Service, Attn: Janel Crooks, 2727 N. Lincoln Rd., Escanaba, Michigan 49829 by April 1, 2010. You may also wish to include a brief (one paragraph to one page) resume explaining your experience relevant to representing the interests of the subcategory for which you wish to be nominated.

We anticipate that organizing the RACs will take several months, due to the selection process and background check requirements. The final determination on RAC membership will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture.

For more information on the Hiawatha National Forest RAC, please contact Janel Crooks at the Hiawatha National Forest, 2727 N. Lincoln Rd., Escanaba, MI, 49829, or (906) 786-4062. You can also visit the national Secure Rural Schools website located at <http://www.fs.fed.us/srs> to learn more.

Sincerely,

/s/ Thomas A. Schmidt
THOMAS A. SCHMIDT
Forest Supervisor

cc: District Rangers
Janel M Crooks