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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

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2026–0925]

Notice of Request for Revision to and Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Importation of Beef and Ovine Meat From Uruguay and Beef From Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request revision to and extension of approval of an information collection associated with regulations for the importation of beef and ovine meat from Uruguay and beef from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before September 28, 2026.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to www.regulations.gov. Enter APHIS–2026–0925 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.
- **Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:** Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS–2026–0925, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, #AP760, Beltsville, MD 20705.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at www.regulations.gov or in our reading room, which is located in Room 1620 of the USDA South

Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799–7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the regulations for the importation of beef and ovine meat from Uruguay and beef from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, contact Dr. Lindsay Chase, Veterinary Medical Officer, Animal Product Imports, Strategy and Policy, VS, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705; apie@usda.gov; (301) 851–3300. For more detailed information on the information collection process, contact Ms. Sheniqua Harris, APHIS' Paperwork Reduction Act Coordinator, at (301) 851–2538; APHIS.PRA@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Importation of Beef and Ovine Meat From Uruguay and Beef From Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.

OMB Control Number: 0579–0372.

Type of Request: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to, among other things, prohibit or restrict the importation and interstate movement of animals and animal products into the United States to prevent the introduction of animal diseases and pests. The regulations for the importation of animals and animal products are contained in 9 CFR parts 92 through 98; part 94 is pertinent to this collection.

The regulations in part 94 provide the requirements for the importation of specified animals and animal products to prevent the introduction into the United States of various animal diseases, including foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). Among other things, the regulations in § 94.1 place certain restrictions on beef and ovine meat exported to the United States in accordance with § 94.29, when the beef or ovine meat enters a port or otherwise transits a region where FMD exists during shipment to the United States. An authorized official of the exporting region must provide the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) with certification that specific

conditions for importation listed in § 94.1 have been met.

Section 94.29 places certain restrictions on the importation of beef and ovine meat from Uruguay and fresh (chilled or frozen) beef from certain regions in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay into the United States to prevent the introduction of FMD. These conditions involve information collection activities such as the requirement that APHIS collect, for each shipment, certification from an authorized veterinary official of the country of export that the conditions in § 94.29 have been met. For some of these conditions to be met, the facility in which the bovines and sheep are slaughtered must allow periodic on-site evaluation and subsequent inspection of its facilities. Additional information collection activities included in this extension of approval include animal identification and testing of select lambs.

The information collection activities currently reported under OMB number 0579–0487 (Importation of Fresh Beef from Paraguay) are being merged into this collection (0579–0372). After OMB approves and combines the burden for both collections under 0579–0372, 0579–0487 will be discontinued.

We are asking OMB to approve our use of these information collection activities, as described, for an additional 3 years. APHIS has amended this information collection by decreasing the number of Respondents, and Responses; however, the Total Burden Hours being reported has increased.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. These comments will help us:

- (1) Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic,

mechanical, and other collection technologies; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.999 hours per response.

Respondents: Authorized veterinary officials employed by the governments of Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay and managers of foreign facilities that process meat and meat products.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 22.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 1,063.

Estimated annual number of responses: 23,379.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 23,361 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the reporting burden per response.)

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 23rd day of July 2026.

Kelly Moore,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2026-15276 Filed 7-28-26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Black Hills National Forest; Wyoming; Bear Lodge Rare Earth Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA).

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

SUMMARY: The USDA Under Secretary, Natural Resources and Environment, through the Forest Service, Black Hills National Forest, intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose effects from the proposed Mine Plan of Operations (MPO), submitted by Rare Element Resources Inc. (proponent), for the development of the Bear Lodge Rare Earth Project. This EIS will evaluate potential impacts of the proposed open-pit mining for rare earth elements from National Forest System (NFS) lands and its associated infrastructure. The proposed action is expected to require a project-specific forest plan amendment to authorize deviation from existing visual standards and guidelines in the

Black Hills Forest Plan. The Planning, Administrative Reviews, and Litigation System identification number for the project is #291093.

DATES: This notice initiates a 30-day period to solicit public comments and identify issues. The Forest Service requests that the public submit comments on the alternatives or effects and on relevant information, studies, or analyses with respect to the proposal by August 28, 2026. The Black Hills National Forest will publish the complete EIS in late 2027. Associated documentation will be published on the project web page, listed below. The Forest Service will not publish a draft environmental impact statement or conduct an objections process. A schedule for the decision-making process and additional information about the project can be found here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/blackhills/projects/291093>.

This project is a “covered project” under Title 41 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41). FAST-41 provides increased transparency and predictability by requiring Federal agencies to publish comprehensive permitting timetables for all covered projects on the Permitting Council’s public dashboard. To view the FAST-41 Permitting Dashboard for the Project, visit: <https://www.permits.performance.gov/permitting-project/fast-41-covered-projects/bear-lodge-rare-earth-project>.

ADDRESSES: Additional information about the proposal; documents pertinent to this proposal; and direction regarding comment submission can be found on the following website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/blackhills/projects/291093>.

Written Comments

Comments may be sent electronically to <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=291093>. Written comments may also be submitted to Black Hills National Forest Supervisor’s Office, 1019 N 5th Street, Custer, SD 57730. Written comments will be accepted by 11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on August 28, 2026. Comments submitted after this date may not be included in the analysis. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Wendy Schuyler, Project Manager, Black Hills National Forest, by email at

wendy.schuyler@usda.gov, or by phone at 605-673-9361.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the hearing-impaired may call 711 to reach the Telecommunications Relay Service, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Rare Element Resources Inc. submitted a proposed Mine Plan of Operations (MPO) to the Forest Service, Black Hills National Forest on March 20, 2026, proposing to develop the Bear Lodge Rare Earth Project, in accordance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 228, subpart A.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the Forest Service action is to respond to the applicant’s proposal for the mining and development of essential rare earth elements, specifically neodymium-praseodymium (Nd/Pr), from its unpatented lode mining claims located on NFS administered lands in the project area and land use authorizations requested for siting of proposed support facilities and infrastructure. The need for Forest Service action is established by the Agency’s responsibilities under the Organic Administration Act of 1897 (16 U.S.C. 478, 482, and 551) and the locatable minerals regulations at 36 CFR 228 Subpart A. This sets forth rules and procedures through which use of the surface of NFS lands in connection with operations authorized by the United States Mining laws (30 United States Code 21–54) confer a statutory right to enter upon the public lands to search for minerals. In accordance with 36 CFR 228.5, the Forest Service must analyze and provide a timely response to the submittal of an MPO. Furthermore, the Forest Service must assess whether the proposed operations will be conducted so as, where feasible, to minimize adverse environmental impacts on National Forest surface resources in accordance with 36 CFR 228.8.

Preliminary Proposed Action and Alternatives

Under the Proposed Action, the Forest Service would approve, with terms and conditions for the protection of surface resources and any necessary modifications to comply with applicable laws and regulations, the applicant’s MPO, which describes the development of an open pit mine and associated infrastructure and support facilities. The proposed action includes extracting rare earth elements-bearing material via open-pit mining methods, hauling on NFS land, and mineral processing at a facility located on adjacent private