

**Justification**  
**Request for approval of electronic Christmas Tree Lottery Permit**  
**Application**

August 22, 2007

Expedited review requested

On behalf of the Tonto, Prescott, Kaibab, and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, the Tonto National Forest (NF) is planning a Christmas tree permit lottery that would run from September 1, 2007 through November 1, 2007. In light of this, Tonto NF is requesting approval for paper and electronic versions of a Christmas Tree Lottery Permit Application for use in the lottery.

The form will be used by members of the public who desire to apply for a permit to cut a Christmas tree for personal use in one of the five areas specified on the form (see R5-2400-New), which are located on the four national forests listed above. The Tonto NF will use a lottery system to issue Christmas tree permits to 3,950 individuals (from 10,000 submissions received). Subject to OMB approval, the project will begin September 1, 2007, as an experiment to improve service to several thousand residents in the Southwest who wish to cut down a limited number of available Christmas trees in one of five specified areas.

The Forest Service seeks to use both the paper and electronic forms as a proof-of-concept project to demonstrate the utility, efficiency, and public benefit of using e-forms to support e-permitting. The approach is designed to improve public access to government services, with reduced burden, improved timeliness, and quality of service. The form, R3-2400-New will be used instead of FS-2400-1 (Forest Products Removal Permit and Cash Receipt).

Individuals may contact the Tonto National Forest to request and submit lottery applications by mail, or access the electronic version via the Internet to submit a lottery application. All applicants will receive notification of the lottery results. Winners are contacted via e-mail (or by USPS if no e-mail address provided) and given instructions on how to pay the \$10 per tree permit fee.

Once notification of payment is received, the Tonto NF will issue a Christmas tree tag (permit). The tag (permit) is mailed to the recipient using the name and address on the lottery application.

The form submitted for OMB approval. R3-2400-New is available in both paper and via the Intranet. The Forest Service will post information about the upcoming lottery on the Tonto NF Internet site and make the electronic form available for download from that site, together with a no-cost, one-time download of the small (< 1 MB) software program that is used to fill out and submit the form.

The information collected by the form is a fraction of that approved for collection under OMB 0596-0085 (Free Use Permits Timber) and all data elements on the form are within the scope of the approved collection.

It is anticipated that the use of this form will reduce the burden on applicants while improving the quality and speed of government service. Estimates are that total time to complete the paper form or download, fill out, submit the e-form; and make payment is 5 minutes. The difference in burden between the paper and Internet versions will be determined during the validation process of the pilot program.

A version of the electronic form has been posted to a temporary demonstration site and is available to preview at <http://www4.formatta.com/efmdemo/catalog/publishedforms.jsp?catid=17>

As previously noted, it is hoped that the Forest Service can begin the proof of concept testing beginning September 1, 2007. Expedited review and approval for the use of the form would be appreciated.