

families Lemnidae, Indrididae, Cheirogaleidae, Daubentoniidae, Tarsiidae, and Lorisidae for scientific research and for enhancement of the propagation and survival of the species. PRT-839795

Applicant: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Boone, IA.

The applicant requests a permit to import up to 12 captive-hatched peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) over the next two years from the Great Lakes Raptor Conservancy, Ontario, Canada for the purposes of reintroduction into the wild to enhance the survival of the species.

PRT-839796

Applicant: Zoological Society of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA.

The applicant requests a permit to import two captive-born Siberian tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*) from Zoo Leipzig, Leipzig, Germany, for the purpose of enhancement of the species through captive propagation and conservation education.

PRT-703757

Applicant: Tarzan Zerbini Circus, Webb City, MO.

The applicant requests renewal of a permit to export and reimport captive-held Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*), and captive-born tigers (*Panthera tigris*), and progeny of the animals currently held by the applicant and any animals acquired in the United States by the applicant to/from worldwide locations to enhance the survival of the species through conservation education. This notification covers activities conducted by the applicant over a three year period.

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203 and must be received by the Director within 30 days of the date of this publication.

The public is invited to comment on the following application for a permit to conduct certain activities with marine mammals. The application was submitted to satisfy requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing marine mammals (50 CFR 18).

Applicant: USGS-BRD California Sea Otter Project, Santa Cruz, CA, PRT-672624.

Permit Type: Take for scientific research.

Name and Number of Animals: Southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*), up to 500.

Summary of Activity to Be Authorized: The applicant requests renewal of their permit to capture and tag sea otters and an amendment to the permit to allow for radio implantation and blood sample collection for scientific research on population biology and ecology.

Source of Marine Mammals: Entire range of sea otters in California.

Period of Activity: Up to 5 years from issuance date of permit, if issued.

Applicant: Dan L. Duncan, Houston, TX, PRT-838492.

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport-hunted from the Lancaster Sound polar bear population, Northwest Territories, Canada for personal use taken prior to April 30, 1994.

Applicant: Edwin E. Smith, Houston, TX, PRT-838493.

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport-hunted from the Lancaster Sound polar bear population, Northwest Territories, Canada for personal use taken prior to April 30, 1994.

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203 and must be received by the Director within 30 days of the date of this publication.

Documents and other information submitted with these applications are available for review, *subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act*, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Phone: (703/358-2104); FAX: (703/358-2281).

Dated: March 9, 1998.

MaryEllen Amtower,

Acting Chief, Branch of Permits, Office of Management Authority.

[FR Doc. 98-6433 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment and the Draft Strategy and Guidelines for the Recovery and Management of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Its Habitat on National Wildlife Refuges

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability of a Draft Strategy and Guidelines for the Recovery of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) and Its Habitat on National Wildlife Refuges (Guidelines). Included in the Guidelines are population management objectives for 644-654 active clusters of RCWs on approximately 141,900 acres of pine and pine hardwood forest on 13 refuges in the southeastern United States. Actions proposed are directed at protection of clusters, management of nesting habitat, population management, management of foraging habitat, forest management (including silvicultural activities), and management of RCWs in federally designated Wilderness.

The Service also announces the availability of an environmental assessment (EA) which includes an evaluation of the environmental impact of four alternatives: (1) implementing the Guidelines as proposed, (2) taking no action to comprehensively implement revised recovery guidelines and strategies, (3) implementing the Guidelines, intensifying management efforts and expanding the area to be managed for RCWs, and (4) implementing the Guidelines on a smaller area of refuge land.

Copies of the Strategy and Guidelines and the EA may be obtained by making a request to the Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). Requests must be in writing to be processed. This notice also advises the public that the Service has made a preliminary determination that issuing the Guidelines is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on an evaluation of the information contained in the Guidelines. The final determination will be made no sooner than 60 days from the date of this notice. This notice is provided pursuant to NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

DATES: Written comments on the Draft Strategy and Guidelines and Draft EA, should be sent to the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**) and should be received on or before April 27, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to obtain a copy of the Draft Strategy and Guidelines, should submit a request in writing to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, Georgia 30345. (Attn: Assistant Regional Director, Refuges and Wildlife). Copies may also be reviewed at the Southeast Regional Office (address above) and at the following locations: Office of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Clemson University, Department of Forest Resources, 261 Lehotsky Hall, Clemson, SC 29634-1003, and Office of the Refuge Manager, Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, Route 1, Brooksville, MS 39739. Documents will be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at these locations. Comments concerning the Strategy and Guidelines or EA should be submitted in writing to the Southeast Regional Office address above. Please reference the Draft Strategy and Guidelines for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Its Habitat on National Wildlife Refuges in your comments, or in requests for the documents discussed herein.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Ralph Costa, Red-cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Coordinator, Clemson Field Office, (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 864/656-2432; Mr. David Richardson, Biologist, Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge (see **ADDRESSES** above), 601/323-5548, or Mr. Jon Andrew, Fish and Wildlife Administrator, Southeast Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 404/679-7123.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Service is the lead Federal agency responsible for preserving, protecting and enhancing nonmarine endangered species. Pursuant to the terms of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) the red-cockaded woodpecker was listed as an endangered species by the Service in 1970. In addition to responsibilities under the Act, the Service administers National Wildlife Refuge system lands. There are an estimated 141,900 acres of pine and pine-hardwood habitat capable of supporting RCWs on 13 national wildlife refuges in the southeast United States.

The RCW is a territorial, non-migratory cooperative breeding species. RCWs live in social units called groups or clans which generally consist of a breeding pair, the current year's offspring, and one or more helpers (normally adult male offspring of the breeding pair from previous years). Groups maintain year-round territories near their roost and nest trees. The RCW is unique among the North American woodpeckers in that it is the only woodpecker that excavates its roost and nest cavities in living pine trees. Each group member has its own cavity, although there may be multiple cavities in a single pine tree. The aggregate of cavity trees is called a cluster. RCWs forage almost exclusively on pine trees and they generally prefer pines greater than 10 inches in diameter at breast height. Foraging habitat is contiguous with the cluster. The number of acres required to supply adequate foraging habitat depends on the quantity and quality of the pine stems available.

The RCW is endemic to the pine forests of the Southeastern United States and was once widely distributed across 16 States. The species evolved in a mature fire-maintained ecosystem. The RCW has declined primarily due to the conversion of mature pine forests to young pine plantations, agricultural fields, and residential and commercial developments, and to hardwood encroachment in existing pine forests due to fire suppression. The species is still widely distributed (presently occurring in 13 southeastern states), but the remaining populations are highly fragmented and isolated. Presently, the largest known populations occur on Federally owned lands such as military installations and national forests.

The most recent estimate of the status of RCW populations on National Wildlife Refuge lands indicates that 237 to 242 active RCW clusters are present.

The EA contains an evaluation of the environmental consequences of four alternatives, including the proposed action. The proposed action alternative would result in implementation of the Guidelines as prepared by the Service. The No Action alternative would result in a continuance of the current management activities with no revision to the guidelines prepared in 1987. No management actions or recovery on refuge lands would be implemented beyond those contained in the 1987 Guidelines and the recovery plan for this species. The third alternative is to implement the Guidelines and expand their application to include additional habitat on Alligator River, Piedmont and Santee National Wildlife Refuges. The fourth alternative would result in the

implementation of the Guidelines on approximately one half of the area identified for management under the revised Guidelines and a reallocation of resources to other wildlife management needs.

As stated above, the Service has made a preliminary determination that the issuance of the Guidelines is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. This preliminary information may be revised due to public comment received in response to this notice and is based on information contained in the EA and the Guidelines. An excerpt from the FONSI reflecting the Service's finding on the application is provided below:

Based on the analysis conducted by the Service, it has been determined that:

1. Issuance of the Guidelines would not have significant indirect or cumulative adverse effects on the human environment.

2. Implementation of the Guidelines will contribute substantially to the recovery of the RCW by providing for consistent application of the most appropriate forms of management available on all refuge lands. Application of the guidelines will also assure that forest management will be accomplished in a manner which will result in accelerated recovery of the species.

3. Population goals contained in the strategy and guidelines are substantially higher than the current population levels and would represent a major positive step towards recovery of the RCW.

The Service will also evaluate whether the issuance of the Guidelines complies with section 7 of the Act by preparing an intra-Service section 7 consultation. The results of the consultation in combination with the above findings, and public comment will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue and implement the Guidelines.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the draft management guidelines described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of final guidelines.

Authority

The authorities for this action are the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), The National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347) and the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (Public Law

105-57 to be codified at 16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*).

Dated: March 6, 1998.

Sam D. Hamilton,

Regional Director, Region 4.

[FR Doc. 98-6494 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ID-933-1430-00; IDI-86C]

Termination of Desert Land Entry Classification; Idaho

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice terminates a Desert Land Entry Classification on 320 acres of land in Ada County as this classification is no longer needed. A portion of these lands will be exchanged pursuant to Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 13, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Catherine D. Foster, BLM Idaho State Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, Idaho 83709, 208-373-3863.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 8, 1967, the lands listed below were classified under the authority of the Desert Land Act of March 3, 1877, as amended and supplemented (43 U.S.C. 321, *et seq.*). This classification is hereby terminated on the following described land:

T. 4 S., R. 3 E., B.M.

Section 27, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;

Section 28, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.

The area described above aggregates 320 acres in Ada County.

At 9:00 a.m. on March 13, 1998, the Desert Land Entry Classification identified above will be terminated. The lands identified above will remain closed to location and entry under the public land laws and the general mining laws (30 U.S.C. Ch. 2), as they are currently withdrawn for the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area. The lands have been, and will remain open to mineral leasing.

Dated: March 2, 1998.

Jimmie Buxton,

Branch Chief, Lands and Minerals.

[FR Doc. 98-6441 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-GG-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-050-1020-001]

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council—Notice of Meeting Locations and Times

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Resource Advisory Council Meeting locations and times.

DATES: Date is May 7, 1998, from 1:00 p.m. to approximately 4 p.m. and will reconvene on May 8, 1998 and meet from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The public comment period will begin at 6 p.m., May 7, 1998.

ADDRESSES: The council will meet at the Tonopah Convention Center, 301 West Brougner Avenue, Tonopah, NV 89049 (702) 482-3558.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Phillip L. Guerrero, Las Vegas Field Office, Public Affairs Officer, telephone: (702) 647-5046.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), 5 U.S.C., the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), council meeting of the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will be held as indicated above. The agenda includes a public comment period, and discussion of public land issues.

The Resource Advisory Council develops recommendations for BLM regarding the preparation, amendment, and implementation of land use plans for the public lands and resources within the jurisdiction of the council. For the Mojave-Great Basin RAC this jurisdiction is Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln and Nye counties in Nevada. Except for the purposes of long-range planning and the establishment of resource management priorities, the RAC shall not provide advice on the allocation and expenditure of Federal funds, or on personnel issues.

The RAC may develop recommendation for implementation of ecosystem management concepts, principles and programs, and assist the BLM to establish landscape goals and objectives.

All meetings are open to the public. The public may present written comments to the council. Public comments should be limited to issues for which the RAC may make recommendations within its area of jurisdiction. Depending on the number

of persons wishing to comment, and time available, the time for individual oral comments may be limited. Individuals who plan to attend and need further information about the meetings, or need special assistance such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations, should contact Phillip L. Guerrero at the Las Vegas District Office, 4765 Vegas Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89108, telephone, (702) 647-5000.

Dated: March 6, 1998.

Phillip L. Guerrero,

Public Affairs Officer.

[FR Doc. 98-6541 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ID-025-1220-00]

Road Closure Notice

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of road closure of the Ridgeline Road in the Malad Resource Area in Power County.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, effective immediately, that the "ridgeline road" (see legal description below), located within the Malad Resource Area in Power County is closed to all motorized vehicle traffic.

The road bisects the following sections:

Boise Meridian

T. 10 S., R. 32 E., Sections 3, 10, 15, 22 and 27.

Branches of the road also occur in sections 23, 26, and 35.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 15, 1998. The restriction will remain in effect until further notice.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Steele, Area Manager, Malad Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management, 138 S. Main, Malad City, Idaho, 83252 or call 208-766-4766.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with Title 43, CFR 8340 (specifically 8341.2) and in conformance with principles established by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the above mentioned road is closed to all motorized vehicle traffic.

The decision to close this road was included in the Malad Hills Management Framework Plan (1981). Careful review and analysis, in cooperation with the Idaho Fish & Game Department and the public, has