

Dated: September 22, 1998.

Geoffrey J. Haskett,

*Acting Regional Director, Region 2,
Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

[FR Doc. 98-25967 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Availability of Addendum #1 to the Assessment Plan for the Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor Ship Canal, Indiana Harbor and Associated Lake Michigan Environments

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of 30-day comment period.

SUMMARY: Notice is given that the document titled "Addendum #1 to the Assessment Plan for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment of the Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor Ship Canal, Indiana Harbor and Associated Lake Michigan Environments" ("The Addendum") will be available for public review and comment on the date of publication in the **Federal Register**.

The U.S. Department of the Interior, and The State of Indiana ("trustees") are acting as trustees for natural resources considered in this assessment, pursuant to subpart G of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, 40 CFR 300.600 and 300.610, and Executive Order 12580.

The assessment, including the activities addressed in this addendum, will be conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Regulations found at 43 CFR Part 11. The public review of the Addendum announced by this Notice is provided for in 43 CFR 11.32(c).

Interested members of the public are invited to review and comment on the Addendum. Copies of the Addendum, and the "Assessment Plan for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment of the Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor Ship Canal, Indiana Harbor and Associated Lake Michigan Environments" ("The Plan") issued on October 14, 1997 (FR Doc. 97-26788), can be requested from the address listed below. All written comments will be considered and included in the Report of Assessment, at the conclusion of the assessment process.

DATES: Written comments on the Plan must be submitted on or before November 2, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the Addendum and/or the Plan may be made to:

Supervisor, Ecological Services Office,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 620 S.
Walker Street, Bloomington, Indiana
47403

or:

Natural Resource Trustee, Office of
Legal Counsel, Indiana Department of
Environmental Management, 100 N.
Senate Avenue, P.O. Box 6015,
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6015;
(317) 233-6822.

Comments on the Addendum should be sent to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management at the address listed above. The trustees will coordinate comment review.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of this natural resource damage assessment is to confirm and quantify the suspected injuries to natural resources in the Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor Ship Canal, Indiana Harbor and Associated Lake Michigan Environments resulting from exposure to hazardous substances released by area steel mills, refineries and other potential sources. It is suspected that this exposure has caused injury and resultant damages to trustee resources. The injury and resultant damages will be assessed under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended, and the Clean Water Act, as amended. The Addendum addresses additional collection activities that will be undertaken to provide additional information.

John Christian,

*Acting Regional Director, Region 3, U.S. Fish
and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-25968 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[MT-020-1610-00]

Availability of Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; Montana, South Dakota

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and Section 1501 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, an environmental

assessment and proposed resource management plan amendment has been prepared for the Powder River, Billings, and South Dakota planning areas. The Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment describes and analyzes future options for management of proposed areas of critical environmental concern on 39,145 federal surface acres managed by the Bureau of Land Management within the following counties: Carbon, Carter, Musselshell, Powder River, Rosebud, Treasure, Yellowstone, Montana; Big Horn County, Wyoming, and Fall River County, South Dakota. The Resource Management Plan Amendment provides a comprehensive plan for managing the federal surface and mineral resources in these areas.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: The Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Environmental Assessment and Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment was available for public review from December 29, 1997 to March 9, 1998. Written comments were received from agencies, individuals and organizations. All comments were considered in the preparation of the Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment.

The resource management planning process includes an opportunity for review through a plan protest to the BLM's Director. Any person or organization who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval of this resource management plan amendment may protest the plan. Careful adherence to the following guidelines will assist in preparing a protest that will assure the greatest consideration for your point of view.

Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process may protest the plan.

A protesting party may raise only those issues which were commented on during the planning process.

Additional issues may be raised at any time and should be directed to the Miles City Field Office for consideration in plan implementation, as potential plan amendments, or as otherwise appropriate.

DATES: The protest period lasts 30 days and begins the day the Notice of Availability for this document is published in the **Federal Register**. There is no provision for an extension of time. Protests filed late, or filed with the State Director or Field Manager shall be rejected by the Director. To be

considered "timely" your protest must be sent to the Director of BLM and must be postmarked no later than November 2, 1998. Although not a requirement, sending your protest by certified mail, return receipt requested, is recommended.

ADDRESSES: Reading copies of the environmental assessment and proposed resource management plan amendment will be available at the following Bureau of Land Management locations:

Miles City Field Office, 111 Garryowen Road, Miles City, Montana 59301
Billings Field Office, 810 East Main, Billings, Montana 59105
South Dakota Field Office, 310 Roundup Street, Belle Fourche, South Dakota 57717

All protests must be filed in writing to: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attention: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protests Coordinator, WO-210/LS-1075, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

The Overnight Mail address is: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attention: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protests Coordinator, 1620 L Street, N.W. Room 1075, Washington, D.C. 20036.

To expedite consideration, in addition to the original sent by mail or overnight mail, a copy of the protest may be sent by: FAX to (202) 452-5112; or Email to bhudgens@wo.blm.gov

In order to be considered complete, your protest must contain, at a minimum, the following information:

The name, mailing address, telephone number, and interest of the person filing the protest.

A statement of the issue being protested.

A statement of the portion of the plan being protested. To the extent possible, this should be done by reference to specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, and maps in the proposed resource management plan amendment.

A copy of all documents addressing the issue submitted during the planning process or a reference to the date the issue was discussed for the record.

A concise statement explaining why the BLM State Director's decision is believed to be incorrect is a critical part of the protest. Take care to document all relevant facts and to reference or cite the planning documents, environmental analysis documents, and available planning records (meeting minutes, summaries, correspondence). A protest without data will not provide us with the benefit of your information and insight, and the Director's review will be based on the existing analysis and supporting data.

At the end of the 30-day protest period, the BLM may issue a Decision Record, approving implementation of any portion of the proposed plan not under protest. Approval will be withheld on any portion of the plan under protest, until the protest is resolved.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Aden Seidlitz, (406) 233-2816.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment analyzes three alternatives for the management and designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Each alternative represents a complete management plan. The alternatives can be summarized by (1) current management or no action, (2) resource protection and (3) the preferred alternative, which may be a combination of the previous two.

The Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment recommends designating 12 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern: Bridger Fossil, Castle Butte, Meeteetse Spires, Petroglyph Canyon, East Pryor Mountains, Stark Site, Weatherman Draw, Battle Butte, Finger Buttes, Howrey Island, Reynolds Battlefield, and Fossil Cycad.

The Bridger Fossil area (575 public surface acres) in Carbon County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect paleontological resources. Management actions affecting this area are: rights-of-way, mineral material sales and permits, and oil and gas leasing would not be allowed; off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails; and noncommercial collection of common invertebrate and plant fossils would be allowed.

Castle Butte (185 public surface acres) in Yellowstone County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, wood product sales would not be allowed. Rights-of-way that avoid the significant cultural resource sites in the area would be allowed, and geophysical exploration for oil and gas (surface methods and vibroseis) that avoids the significant cultural resource sites would be allowed.

East Pryor Mountains (29,500 public surface acres) in Carbon County, Montana and Big Horn County, Wyoming would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and

managed to protect and enhance the wild horse, wildlife habitat and paleontology values. Management actions affecting this area are: oil and gas leasing would not be allowed, locatable minerals would be withdrawn from entry, and noncommercial collection of common invertebrate and plant fossils would be allowed.

Meeteetse Spires (960 public surface acres) in Carbon County would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to provide recreation for the public while protecting the area's unique vegetation. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, selected timber harvests would be allowed, wood product sales would not be allowed, rights-of-way would not be allowed, livestock grazing, except for sheep, would be allowed, locatable minerals would be withdrawn from entry, geophysical exploration for oil and gas would not be allowed in the sensitive plant area, and in the remaining area geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be accessed by air only (vibroseis would not be allowed,) and off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Petroglyph Canyon (240 public surface acres) in Carbon County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: wood product sales, oil and gas leasing and geophysical exploration for oil and gas would not be allowed, and the area would be closed to off-road vehicle use.

Stark Site (800 public surface acres) in Musselshell County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, wood product sales, rights-of-way, mineral material sales and permits, and oil and gas leasing would not be allowed. Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would not be allowed on the significant cultural resource sites, and off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Weatherman Draw (4,268 public surface acres) in Carbon County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to enhance significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, wood product sales would not be allowed, rights-of-way associated with valid

existing oil and gas lease rights would be allowed, other rights-of-way would not be allowed, locatable minerals would be withdrawn from entry, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation, the area would be closed to geophysical exploration for oil and gas, and off-road vehicle use would be limited to authorized use.

Battle Butte (120 public surface acres) in Rosebud County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, rights-of-way would not be allowed, mineral material sales and permits would not be allowed, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation, geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on designated roads and trails with restrictions, and off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Finger Buttes (1,520 public surface acres) in Carter County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed for its scenic values. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, rights-of-way would avoid the area, livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed, mineral material sales and permits and nonenergy mineral leasing would not be allowed, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation, geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on designated roads and trails with restrictions, and off-road vehicle use would be allowed with restrictions.

Howrey Island (321 public surface acres) in Treasure County, Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect and enhance its special wildlife habitat. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, wood product sales would be allowed with restrictions, rights-of-way would not be allowed, livestock grazing would be allowed, range improvements would be allowed when they do not degrade the values of the Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Off-road vehicle use would be limited to the BLM road except from February 15 to June 1. During that time, no vehicles would be allowed, including on the BLM road.

Reynolds Battlefield (336 public surface acres) in Powder River County,

Montana would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect its significant cultural resources. Management actions affecting this area are: fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, timber and wood product sales would be allowed with restrictions, rights-of-way would avoid the area, livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed, coal leasing would not be allowed, mineral material sales and permits and oil and gas leasing would not be allowed, geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on designated roads and trails with restrictions, and off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Fossil Cycad (320 public surface acres) in Fall River County, South Dakota would be designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and managed to protect its significant paleontological values. Management actions affecting this area are: the surface and minerals would be retained in public ownership, fire would be managed with conditional fire suppression, timber sales and wood products sales would not be allowed, rights-of-way would not be allowed, livestock grazing would be allowed, locatable minerals would be withdrawn from entry, geophysical exploration for oil and gas would not be allowed, off-road vehicle use would be limited to designated roads and trails, and noncommercial collection of common invertebrate and plant fossils would be allowed.

Management prescriptions for these proposed areas of critical environmental concern vary by alternative and are described in the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Environmental Assessment and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment.

Public participation has occurred throughout the resource management planning process. A Notice of Intent was filed in the **Federal Register** in April 1995. All comments presented throughout the process have been considered.

This notice meets the requirements of 43 CFR 1610.7-2 for designation of areas of critical environmental concern.

Dated: September 14, 1998.

Aden Seidlitz,

Associate Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 98-25220 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-050-1220-00]

Establishment of Moratorium on New Commercial Operations on the Gulkana National Wild River Throughout the Upcoming Limits of Acceptable Change Planning Process

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

SUMMARY: Public notice is hereby given that no new Special Recreation Permit applications for commercial operations on the Gulkana National Wild River will be authorized for a period of three years, the tentative time frame under which a Limits of Acceptable Change planning process to update the Gulkana National Wild River Management Plan of December, 1983, is expected to be completed. Only annual renewal applications submitted by qualified commercial operators authorized for at least one of the use seasons between 1995-1998 will be considered. No new types of use or requests for increases in levels of use by individual operators will be authorized during the moratorium. Since the original Gulkana National Wild River Management Plan was written in 1983, estimated visits to the river have nearly doubled, and commercial use, estimated in 1983 at 5% or less of all river use, is estimated to have increased to nearly 8%. This temporary moratorium is being established to stabilize the number of, and user days associated with, commercial outfitters during the planning process to update the Gulkana National Wild River Management Plan. Future use levels will be determined by the Limits of Acceptable Change planning process. Data related to the environmental impacts of river use have been collected since 1994 in preparation for the Limits of Acceptable Change planning process. By limiting the availability of Special Recreation Permits to operators with historical use of the Gulkana National Wild River between 1995 and 1998, and limiting the types and levels of use of the historical operators to 1995-1998 levels, this data should remain relevant during the planning process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathy J. Liska, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Glennallen Field Office, Mile 186.5 Glenn Highway, P.O. Box 147, Glennallen, Alaska 99588; email: kliska@ak.blm.gov; Telephone: (907) 822-3217; Fax: (907) 822-3120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The authority for this decision comes from