

haddock; 1,575 lb (715 kg) cod). A total of 35 percent of haddock caught is estimated to be viable for tagging. Thus, vessels would not be allowed to land more 65 percent of their overall haddock catch from the GB (40,937 lb, 18,569 kg) and GOM (20,469 lb, 9,285 kg) closure areas. If any of the maximum limits (haddock caught, haddock landed, or cod caught) is reached within GB or the GOM, vessels would not be allowed to continue fishing in the corresponding closure areas.

The target fishery is the groundfish mixed-species fishery. The main species expected to be caught under this EFP are haddock and Atlantic cod. Other commercially important fish commonly found in the groundfish mixed-species fishery are expected to be caught incidentally. The incidental catch is expected to be comprised of yellowtail flounder, pollack, American plaice, monkfish, skates, spiny dogfish, white hake, winter flounder, and witch flounder.

The applicant may place requests for minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and result in only a minimal change in the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. The applicant has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes the impacts of the proposed experimental fishery on the human environment. The draft EA examines whether the proposed activities are consistent with the goals and objectives of the FMP, whether they would be detrimental to the well-being of any stocks of fish harvested, and whether they would have any significant environmental impacts. The draft EA also examines whether the proposed experimental fishery would be detrimental to essential fish habitat, marine mammals, or protected species. After publication in the **Federal Register** the EFP may become effective following a 15 day public comment period.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 14, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Inland Waterways Users Board; Request for Nominations

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DOD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Section 302 of Pub. L. 99-662 established the Inland Waterways Users Board. The Board is an independent Federal advisory committee. The Secretary of the Army appoints its 11 members. This notice is to solicit nominations for six (6) appointments or reappointments to two-year terms that will begin after June 14, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Attention: Inland Waterways Users Board Nominations Committee, 103 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310-0103.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), (703) 697-8986.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The selection, service, and appointment of Board members are covered by provisions of section 302 of Public Law 99-662. The substance of those provisions is as follows:

a. *Selection.* Members are to be selected from the spectrum of commercial carriers and shippers using the inland and intracoastal waterways, to represent geographical regions, and to be representative of waterborne commerce as determined by commodity ton-miles statistics.

b. *Service.* The Board is required to meet at least semi-annually to develop and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Army on waterways construction and rehabilitation priorities and spending levels for commercial navigation improvements, and report its recommendations annually to the Secretary and Congress.

c. *Appointment.* The operation of the board and appointment of its members are subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended) and departmental implementing regulations. Members serve without compensation but their expenses due to Board activities are reimbursable. The considerations specified in Section 302 for the selection of the Board members, and certain terms used therein, have been interpreted, supplemented, or otherwise clarified as follows:

(1) *Carriers and Shippers.* The law uses the terms "primary users and shippers." Primary users have been interpreted to mean the providers of

transportation services on inland waterways such as barge or towboat operators. Shippers have been interpreted to mean the purchasers of such services for the movement of commodities they own or control. Individuals are appointed to the Board, but they must be either a carrier or shipper, or represent a firm that is a carrier or shipper. For that purpose a trade or regional association is neither a shipper or primary user.

(2) *Geographical Representation.* The law specifies "various" regions. For the purpose of selecting Board members, the waterways subjected to fuel taxes and described in Public Law 95-502, as amended, have been aggregated into six regions. They are: (1) The Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries above the mouth of the Ohio; (2) the Lower Mississippi River and its tributaries below the mouth of the Ohio and above Baton Rouge; (3) the Ohio River and its tributaries; (4) the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in Louisiana and Texas; (5) the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway east of New Orleans and associated fuel-taxed waterways including the Tennessee-Tombigbee, plus the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway below Norfolk; and (6) the Columbia-Snake Rivers System and Upper Willamette. The intent is that each region shall be represented by at least one Board member, with that representation determined by the regional concentration of the individual's traffic on the waterways.

(3) *Commodity Representation.* Waterway commerce has been aggregated into six commodity categories based on "inland" ton-miles shown in Waterborne Commerce of the United States. These categories are: (1) Farm and Food Products; (2) Coal and Coke; (3) Petroleum, Crude and Products; (4) Minerals, Ores, and Primary Metals and Mineral Products; (5) Chemicals and Allied Products; and (6) All other. A consideration in the selection of Board members will be that the commodities carried or shipped by those individuals or their firms will be reasonably representative of the above commodity categories.

d. *Nomination.* Reflecting preceding selection criteria, the current representation by the six (6) Board members whose terms will expire is one member each representing regions 1, 2, 4, and 5, and two members representing region 3. Also, four of these Board members represent carriers, one represents a shipper and one represents a carrier/shipper.

Five of the six members whose terms will expire are eligible for reappointment. Nominations to replace

Board members whose terms expire may be made by individuals, firms or associations. Nominations will:

- (1) State the region to be represented.
- (2) State whether the nominee is representing carriers, shippers or both.
- (3) Provide information on the nominee's personal qualifications.
- (4) Include the commercial operations of the carrier and/or shipper with whom the nominee is affiliated. This commercial operations information will show the actual or estimated ton-miles of each commodity carried or shipped on the inland waterways system in a recent year (or years) using the waterway regions and commodity categories previously listed.

Nominations received in response to **Federal Register** notice published on January 14, 2004 (69 FR 2122) have been retained for consideration. Renomination is not required but may be desirable.

e. *Deadline for Nominations.* All nominations must be received at the address shown above no later than April 22, 2005.

Brenda S. Bowen,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Record of Decision for the Proposed Leasing of Lands at Fort Bliss, Texas for the Proposed Siting, Construction, and Operation by the City of El Paso of a Brackish Water Desalination Plant and Support Facilities

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Army announces the execution of a Record of Decision (ROD) to grant an easement to the City of El Paso, El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU), for land in the South Training Areas of Fort Bliss for construction and operation of a desalination plant and support facilities, including wells, pipelines, and disposal sites for the residual brine, referred to as concentrate, resulting from the desalination process. The ROD was signed on March 7, 2005, pursuant to the completion of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) dated December 2004.

ADDRESSES: To obtain copies of the ROD, contact John F. Barrera (915) 568-3908 or write to: Fort Bliss Directorate of the Environment, ATTN: IMSW-

BLS-Z, Building 624, Pleasanton Road, Fort Bliss, TX 79916-6812.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John F. Barrera, (915) 568-3908.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The desalination plant is needed to provide an additional reliable source of potable water for the City of El Paso and Fort Bliss. Currently, both EPWU and Fort Bliss pump fresh groundwater from the Hueco Bolson Aquifer. Ongoing withdrawals of fresh groundwater from the bolson exceed the aquifer's recharge rate. Pumping of fresh groundwater by EPWU, the Army, Ciudad Juarez, and others has resulted in declining groundwater levels in the bolson. Brackish groundwater is intruding into the aquifer's freshwater area and has the potential to affect existing water wells on Fort Bliss and in other areas of El Paso. The desalination plant will treat brackish (salty) water from the Hueco Bolson Aquifer to provide potable water for use by the city and Fort Bliss.

The FEIS addressed the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and analyzed seven alternatives in detail; six action alternatives and the No Action Alternative. The six action alternatives comprised alternative combinations of three candidate sites for the desalination plant itself—Sites 1, 2, and 3—and two alternatives for disposing of the concentrate, deep-well injection and evaporation ponds. The Army has decided to grant an easement to EPWU to implement Alternative 3, consisting of desalination plant Site 3, an undeveloped site near Montana Avenue east of El Paso International Airport, and disposal of the concentrate through deep-well injection at a location in the northeast corner of the South Training Areas of Fort Bliss near the Texas-New Mexico border.

In reaching this decision, the Army considered its own needs for a reliable source of potable water, compatibility with its training mission, and the environmental consequences associated with each alternative. The Army decided not to select the No Action Alternative because it fails to address the issues of declining freshwater supplies and impending brackish groundwater intrusion on Fort Bliss wells. Among the action alternatives, the Army selected deep-well injection as the preferred concentrate disposal method because it is the preferred method of EPWU and, with the protection provided by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality permitting process, appears to have less potential for adverse environmental impacts than the evaporation ponds. The three desalination plant sites do not

differ materially in their compatibility with the Army's mission or their environmental effects; therefore, the Army selected Site 3 because it is EPWU's preferred site due to its proximity to roads and utilities, as well as to EPWU's water distribution system.

All practicable means of avoiding or minimizing environmental harm have been adopted through site selection and mitigation measures. The desalination plant site does not contain sensitive cultural or biological resources, and a desalination plant is compatible with near-by land uses. Mitigation measures to be implemented by EPWU to further reduce the potential for adverse environmental impact include the following:

1. Using dust suppression measures during ground disturbance to prevent erosion and wind-blown dust.

2. Installing pressure monitors in the concentrate pipeline to detect leaks or catastrophic failures and developing an emergency action plan to minimize the release of concentrate during an accident or equipment failure.

3. Designing the access road to the desalination plant site to minimize impact to traffic flow on Montana Avenue.

4. Establishing a procedure for EPWU to coordinate access to the injection wells and concentrate pipelines with Fort Bliss to ensure required maintenance can be performed with minimal interference with the Army's mission at Fort Bliss.

These mitigation measures will be included as conditions of the easement to be granted by the Army to EPWU.

Hugh M. Exton, Jr.,

Director, SWRO, Installation Management Agency.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Board of Visitors, United States Military Academy (USMA)

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), announcement is made of the following meeting:

Name of Committee: Board of Visitors, United States Military Academy.

Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2005.