

financial responsibility and familiarity with the FHWA's safety regulations. The financial responsibility coverage of for-hire motor carriers is continuously monitored. Policy pre-expiration notices obtained from the insurance companies as well as internal audits are used to determine compliance. Prior to an insurance policy lapsing, the carrier is contacted. Enforcement action, including litigation, can be used to stop the carrier from operating without financial responsibility. A carrier's operating authority can be revoked if financial responsibility is not obtained. A similar procedure applies to motor carriers that have been authorized to self-insure.

The Single State Registration System (SSRS) program was created to succeed the "bingo card" program administered by the ICC. The SSRS program is a base-State system whereby a motor carrier registers its interstate operating authority with and provides proof of financial responsibility coverage to one State (a base-State) instead of multiple States. The base State then distributes the collected fees to other participating States in which the motor carrier's vehicles operate. State participation in the System was limited to those States participating in the bingo card program prior to January 1991. Fee amounts were limited to those imposed prior to November 1991, not to exceed \$10 per vehicle.

Under the Act, the SSRS will continue to operate. However, the Department is required to consolidate the current USDOT identification number system, the SSRS, the ICC registration system (including financial responsibility registration) into a single, on-line Federal system. The new system will contain information on, and identification of, all foreign and domestic motor carriers, brokers, and freight forwarders (as well as others required to register with the Department of Transportation) as well as information on safety fitness and compliance with the required levels of financial responsibility coverage. The Secretary may establish fees to fully operate the system, including any personnel to support the overall registration and financial responsibility filing system.

#### Request for Comments

The FHWA requests comments on the Alliance's final report and recommendations, as outlined in this notice. As discussed above, several major activities related to the hazardous materials transportation registration and permitting processes are also underway. The FHWA encourages commenters to

consider these activities and their relationship to the final report and recommendations of the Alliance. Based upon the comments received, the FHWA may hold public meetings to further discuss these issues.

Copies of the report ("Final Report: Uniform Program Pilot Project," March 15, 1996) may be ordered at no charge from the National Governors' Association. Requests should be addressed to: National Governors' Association, c/o Mr. Kyle Winston, Hall of the States, 444 North Capitol Street, Suite 267, NW., Washington, D.C. 20001-1512. Request for copies may also be made by calling the NGA at (202) 624-5300 or via fax (202) 624-5395.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above will be considered and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address. Comments received after the comment closing date will be filed in the docket and will be considered to the extent practical. In addition to late comments, the FHWA will also continue to file relevant information in the docket as it becomes available after the closing date. Interested persons should continue to examine the docket for new material.

#### List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 397

Hazardous materials transportation, Highway safety, Motor carriers.

Issued on: July 2, 1996.

Rodney E. Slater,

*Federal Highway Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 96-17420 Filed 7-8-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### 50 CFR Part 17

#### RIN 1018-AC63

### Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reopening of Comment Period on Proposed Endangered Status for Five Freshwater Mussels and Proposed Threatened Status for Two Freshwater Mussels From Eastern Gulf Slope Drainages of Alabama, Florida, and Georgia

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; reopening of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** The Fish and Wildlife Service provides notice that the comment

period is reopened on a proposal to list the fat three-ridge, shiny-rayed pocketbook, Gulf moccasinshell, Ochlockonee moccasinshell, and oval pigtoe as endangered, and the Chipola slabshell and purple bankclimber as threatened, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended. The Service is reopening the comment period on this proposal to allow members of the public to submit comments on these proposals.

**DATES:** The comment period on this proposal is extended until July 26, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and materials concerning the proposal should be sent to the Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6620 Southpoint Drive South, Suite 310, Jacksonville, Florida, 32216. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robert S. Butler at the above address (telephone: 904/232-2580, fax 904/232-2404).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

On August 3, 1994, the Service proposed to add seven freshwater mussels (fat three-ridge, shiny-rayed pocketbook, Gulf moccasinshell, Ochlockonee moccasinshell, oval pigtoe, Chipola slabshell, and purple bankclimber) to the list of endangered and threatened animals (59 FR 39524). These seven species are endemic to the Apalachicola Region of the eastern Gulf Slope, defined as the rivers from the Escambia River in the west to the Suwannee River in the east. These drainages comprise southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, and north Florida.

Section 4(b)(5)(E) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, requires that a public hearing be held if it is requested within 45 days of the publication of a proposed rule. By September 19, 1994, the Service had received 12 public hearing requests on the proposal to list these seven mussels. The Service conducted five public informational meetings and five public hearings in January 1995. A notice of the public informational meetings, public hearings, and reopening of the comment period until February 10, 1995, was published in the Federal Register on December 12, 1994 (59 FR 63987). In a Federal Register notice appearing on April 24, 1995 (60 FR 20072), the Service extended the open comment period until May 5, 1995.

A moratorium on listing actions (Public Law 104-6) took effect April 10,

1995, and prevented the Service from making a final decision on these proposals by the August 1995 administrative deadline. The moratorium was lifted on April 26, 1996, when the appropriation for the Department of the Interior for the remainder of fiscal year 1996 was enacted into law. In a Federal Register document published on May 16, 1996 (61 FR 24722), the Service outlined in detail the history of the moratorium and indicated the priorities it would follow in eliminating the listing program backlog resulting from the moratorium. Preparation of final rules for these proposed species is considered a Tier 2 priority—processing final decisions on proposed listings. For more information on the moratorium and the priority for backlogged listing actions, refer to the May 15, 1996, Federal Register notice.

The Service hereby announces another reopening of the comment period until July 26, 1996. Reopening of the comment period will allow the Service to accept information on scientific studies conducted since the comment period last closed on May 5, 1995. Any other comments from the interested public will also be solicited concerning these proposals.

#### Author

The primary author of this notice is Robert S. Butler, Jacksonville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6620 Southpoint Drive South, Suite 310, Jacksonville, Florida 32216 (904/232-2580 or fax 904/232-2404).

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1361-1407; 16 U.S.C. 1531-1544; 16 U.S.C. 4201-4245; Pub. L. 99-625, 100 Stat. 3500, unless otherwise noted).

Dated: July 1, 1996.

Noreen K. Clough,

Regional Director, Southeast Region, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 96-17222 Filed 7-8-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

#### 50 CFR Part 17

##### **Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants: 90-day Finding on a Petition to List the Santa Ana Speckled Dace, Santa Ana Sucker, and the Shay Creek Threespine Stickleback as Endangered**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of 90-day petition finding.

**SUMMARY:** The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces a 90-day

finding on a petition to list three fish as endangered, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The Service finds that the petition did not present substantial scientific or commercial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted for two of the three species because it does not substantiate that the Santa Ana speckled dace and Shay Creek threespine stickleback are described subspecies or distinct vertebrate population segments as described in the Service's vertebrate population policy. Furthermore, the Service presently regards the Shay Creek threespine stickleback as a population of the unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*), a species that is already listed as endangered. Regarding the third fish species, the Service finds that substantial information exists to support a decision that listing may be warranted for the Santa Ana sucker.

**DATES:** The finding announced in this notice was made on June 28, 1996. Comments and materials may be submitted until further notice.

**ADDRESSES:** Data, information, comments, or questions concerning the finding should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Carlsbad Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2730 Loker Avenue West, Carlsbad, California 92008. The petition, finding, and supporting data are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul J. Barrett (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone (619) 431-9440.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background**

Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that the Service make a finding on whether a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted. To the maximum extent practicable, this finding is to be made within 90 days of the receipt of the petition, and the finding is to be published promptly in the Federal Register. This finding is based on information contained in the petition, supporting information submitted with the petition, and otherwise available to the Service at the time the finding is made. If the Service determines that the petitioned action may be warranted, the Service will commence a review of the status of the involved species. Status reviews will be

commenced in accordance with priorities established by the Service pursuant to the May 16, 1996, Final Listing Priority Guidance (61 Fed Reg 24722).

On September 6, 1994, the Service received a petition dated September 2, 1994, to list the Santa Ana speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus ssp.*), Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*), and the Shay Creek threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus ssp.*) as endangered species. The petition was submitted by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, Inc., on behalf of seven groups. The seven groups are the California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, The Nature School, The California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, Friends of the River, Izaak Walton League of America, California Trout, and Trout Unlimited. The letter clearly identified itself as a petition and contained the names, signatures, and addresses of the petitioners. Accompanying the petition was supporting information relating to taxonomy, ecology, and past and present distribution of all three species.

The petition, supporting documentation, and other information available in the Service files has been reviewed to determine if substantial information is available to indicate that the requested actions may be warranted. On the basis of the best scientific and commercial information available, the Service finds the petitioned action may be warranted for the Santa Ana sucker because of the threats to low population numbers, and is not warranted for the Santa Ana speckled dace based on taxonomic uncertainty. While the petitioners failed to present substantial information indicating that the Shay Creek threespine stickleback should be listed as a subspecies or distinct vertebrate population segment, the Shay Creek threespine stickleback is presently regarded as a population of the unarmored threespine stickleback and already receives the protections of the Act. A status review will be commenced in accordance with the Final Listing Priority Guidance for the Santa Ana sucker.

##### *Santa Ana Sucker*

The Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*) is a member of the sucker family (Catostomidae). The Santa Ana sucker was originally described as *Pantosteus santa-anae* by Snyder (1908, as in Moyle 1976). The genus *Pantosteus* was reduced to a subgenus of *Catostomus* and the hyphen omitted from the specific name in a subsequent revision of the nomenclature (Smith 1966). The American Fisheries Society