

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Notice of Availability of the Draft Conservation Agreement for the Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle for Review and Comment**

AGENCY: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Document Availability, Public Comment Period, and Public Hearing.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service announces the availability of a Draft Conservation Agreement for the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle (*Cicindela limbata albissima*). This species is a candidate for listing as endangered or threatened under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The Draft Conservation Agreement was developed jointly by the Utah Department of Natural Resources's Division of Parks and Recreation; the U.S. Bureau of Land Management; Kane County Commission, Utah; and the Service as a collaborative and cooperative effort. The agreement focuses on identifying, reducing and eliminating significant threats to the tiger beetle that warrant its candidate status, and on enhancing and maintaining the species population to ensure its long term conservation. The Service solicits review and comment from the public on this draft agreement.

DATES: Public hearings will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, 1996, in Kanab, Utah; from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursday, December 5, 1996, in St. George, Utah; and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, December 10, 1996 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Comments on the Draft Conservation Agreement must be received on or before January 24, 1997 to be considered by the Service during preparation of the final Conservation Agreement and prior to the Service's determination of whether or not it will be a signatory party to the agreement.

ADDRESSES: The public hearings will be held at the Holiday Inn, 800 East Highway 89, Kanab, Utah; at the Hilton Inn, 1450 South Hilton Drive, St. George, Utah; and at the Natural Resources Auditorium, Room 1060 "C", Division of Natural Resources Building, 1594 West North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. Persons wishing to review the Draft Conservation Agreement may obtain a copy by contacting the Assistant Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 145 East 1300 South, Suite 404, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115. Written

comments and materials regarding the Draft Conservation Agreement also should be directed to the same address. Comments and materials received will be available on request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Robert D. Williams, Assistant Field Supervisor (see **ADDRESSES** section) (telephone 801/524-5001).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

The Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle (*Cicindela limbata albissima*) is a terrestrial, predaceous insect in the family Cicindelidae. The beetle is known to occur only at the Coral Pink Sand Dunes. The Coral Pink Sand Dunes comprise a dune field about eight miles long and a little less than one mile wide. These dunes are located in Kane County about seven miles west of Kanab, Utah. The southern portion of the Dunes is within the State of Utah's Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park, managed by Utah Division of Parks and Recreation. The northern portion of the Dunes is located on public land managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Kanab Resource Area. The Bureau's portion of the dunes is within the Moquith Mountain Wilderness Study Area.

The Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle is currently a candidate species for listing under the provisions of the Act, in the Service's most recent Notice of Review (61 FR 7596). On April 19, 1994, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance petitioned the Service to list the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle and designate critical habitat. On September 8, 1994, the Director of the Service approved the 90-day petition finding as providing substantive information that the species' listing may be warranted (59 FR 47293).

The Service has assessed existing and potential threats facing the species based on the five criteria as required by Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA. Within each of these criteria, several factors which have contributed to the degradation of Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle habitat and its populations were identified (59 FR 47293).

The Agreement focuses on following goals: (1) Permanently protect the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle habitat in two designated conservation areas within the historical range of the species. (2) Establish a continuing management program which educates and enforces Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle conservation measures

within the Dunes. (3) Monitor the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle population to demonstrate that conservation measures taken in behalf of the species are maintaining it at viable population levels. (4) Gain additional biological and ecological information concerning the beetle and its dune habitat. (5) Form a conservation advisory committee to coordinate all conservation actions and to act as a information gathering, dissemination center. (6) Provide for both motorized and nonmotorized recreation within the Dunes consistent with the conservation of the Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service will use information received during the public comment period and at the above mentioned public hearings in its determination as to whether it should be a signatory party to the agreements. Comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested party concerning the draft documents are hereby solicited. All comments and materials received will be considered prior to the approval of any final document.

Author

The primary author of this notice is John L. England (see **ADDRESSES** section) (telephone 801/524-5001).

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: November 19, 1996.

Mary L. Gessner,

Acting Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 96-30020 Filed 11-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement on a Permit Application to Incidentally Take Threatened and Endangered Species in Association with a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan for the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway Sites in the City of Beaumont, County of Riverside, California

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has under consideration for approval a draft Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and an application for incidental take submitted by the Lockheed Martin

Corporation (Lockheed). In response to the plan, the Service intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. The Stephens' kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*) is the only species within the plan area for this Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan that is currently federally listed as threatened or endangered. However, Lockheed is also seeking coverage with respect to a number of species of plants and animals of concern that may be listed in the future. The Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan proposes a basis for the issuance of incidental take permits and other authorizations under the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act for all the covered species. This notice describes the action proposed by Lockheed and possible alternatives, identifies mechanisms for the interested public to obtain background materials, solicits written comments on the scope and preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement, and identifies the Service official to whom questions and comments concerning the proposed action and the Environmental Impact Statement may be directed. The Service is requesting comments addressing what issues and alternatives should be considered in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement.

DATES: Written comments related to the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Statement should be received on or before December 26, 1996 at the address below.

ADDRESSES: Information, comments, or questions related to preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement and the National Environmental Policy Act process should be submitted to Mr. Gail Kobetich, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2730 Loker Avenue West, Carlsbad, California 92008. Written comments also may be sent by facsimile to telephone (619) 431-9618.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Pete Sorensen, Assistant Field Supervisor, at the above Carlsbad address, telephone (619) 431-9440. Documents will also be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday) at the above Carlsbad address. Individuals interested in background materials, including Lockheed's draft Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Beaumont Gateway Specific Plan and Potrero Creek Specific Plan prepared by Lockheed and its

consultants for the City of Beaumont, should contact Hugh Hewitt, representing Lockheed, at (714) 798-0500.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service listed the Stephens' kangaroo rat as an endangered species, effective October 31, 1988 (53 FR 38485). Because of its listing as an endangered species, the Stephens' kangaroo rat is protected by the Endangered Species Act's prohibition against "take." This means no one may harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect the species, or attempt to engage in such conduct (16 U.S.C. 1538). The Service, however, may issue permits to conduct activities involving endangered species under certain circumstances, including carrying out scientific purposes, enhancing the propagation or survival of the species, or incidentally taking the species in connection with otherwise lawful activities (16 U.S.C. 1539).

Lockheed is applying to the Service for a 30-year incidental take permit to incidentally take the endangered Stephens' kangaroo rat on up to 2,016 acres of occupied and potential habitat at Potrero Creek, and 14 acres of occupied and potential habitat at Beaumont Gateway, and propose their Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan as the basis for the issuance of the requested permit. In addition, Lockheed is seeking authorization for the incidental take of seven other currently listed species not known to occupy the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway sites, and seeks incidental take assurances for 44 other species that may be listed in the future.

The Potrero Creek site supports one of the largest known contiguous populations of the Stephens' kangaroo rat, and includes a significant portion (2,000 to 2,200 acres of occupied and potential habitat, or approximately 7 percent) of the known Stephens' kangaroo rat population in Riverside County. The requested permit would allow future development of portions of the 9,117 acre Potrero Creek site, including up to 2,016 acres of occupied and potential Stephens' kangaroo rat habitat, and all of the 160 acre Beaumont Gateway site, which includes 14 acres of occupied or potential habitat, pursuant to Specific Plans approved by the city of Beaumont. The proposed developments would proceed without further mitigation for sensitive biological resources as long as the conservation program contained within the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan is being properly implemented.

The Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan proposes the establishment and management of two open space preserves totaling 9,127 acres for sustainable multiple species uses, contribution of a \$1,950 per acre fee, for a total of \$5,325,450, to the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency for acquisition, expansion and/or long-term management of the Stephens' kangaroo rat Core Reserve System, and implementation of measures designed to minimize and/or avoid adverse effects of development of the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway sites. The proposed 30-year permit will be evaluated in the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Environmental Impact Statement will consider the proposed action and a reasonable range of alternatives.

Possible alternatives include:

Alternative 1: Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway Specific Plans (proposed project by Lockheed). This alternative involves development of the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway Specific Plans, as currently approved by the City of Beaumont, in concert with implementation of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

Alternative 2: Stephens' Kangaroo Preservation Alternative No. 1. This alternative is intended to avoid take of the endangered Stephens' kangaroo rat by confining any proposed development on either the Potrero Creek or the Beaumont Gateway sites to areas that do not adversely affect known Stephens' kangaroo rat occupied habitat.

Alternative 3: Stephens' Kangaroo Preservation Alternative No. 2. This alternative involves a reduction in development areas on the Potrero Creek site to retain approximately 70 percent of the existing occupied habitat on the Potrero Creek site with no Stephens' kangaroo rat habitat preservation on the Beaumont Gateway site.

Alternative 4: Bureau of Land Management Area of Critical Ecological Concern Alternative. This alternative would result in the application of the Bureau of Land Management's proposed Area of Critical Ecological Concern designation upon the Potrero Creek site as described in the South Coast Resource Management Plan prepared by the Bureau of Land Management in 1994. Through a land exchange or other means acceptable to Lockheed and the Bureau of Land Management, the Potrero Creek site would be conserved and managed by the Bureau of Land Management while the Beaumont Gateway site would be developed pursuant to the approved land uses within the Beaumont Gateway Specific Plan.

Alternative 5: Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan Fee Area Alternative. This alternative involves development of the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway sites according to approved land uses in the respective Specific Plans. In contrast to preparing and implementing a separate Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan as proposed, the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway projects would use existing provisions in the "Habitat Conservation Plan for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat in Western Riverside County" for the authorization of incidental take. Under this alternative Lockheed would be responsible for acquiring a 1:1 ratio of occupied Stephens' kangaroo rat habitat within the plan area boundary of the "Habitat Conservation Plan for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat in Western Riverside County."

Alternative 6: Reduced Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Mitigation Fee Alternative. This alternative involves development of the Potrero Creek and Beaumont Gateway sites according to approved land uses in the respective Specific Plans, in concert with implementation of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Under this alternative the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan would propose the contribution of a \$500 per acre fee, for a total of \$1,775,150, to the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency instead of the currently proposed \$1950 per acre contribution.

Alternative 7: No Project. Under this alternative, no incidental take permit would be issued.

Environmental review of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), other appropriate regulations, and Service procedures for compliance with those regulations. This notice is being furnished in accordance with section 1501.7 of the National Environmental Policy Act to obtain suggestions and information from other agencies and the public on the scope of issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Dated: November 15, 1996.

John H. Doebl,
Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.
[FR Doc. 96-30021 Filed 11-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

Bureau of Land Management

[WO-210-1610-24 1A]

Approval of Information Collection

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Extension of comment period on request for comments.

SUMMARY: On September 25, 1996, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published a document in the Federal Register requesting comments on an information collection connected with filing protests on resource management plans and management framework plans (61 FR 50326). The regulations governing this information collection are found at 43 CFR Subpart 1610. BLM has received a request for extension of the comment period from its current November 25, 1996, ending date. By this notice, BLM is extending the comment period for an additional 30 days.

DATES: Submit comments on or before December 26, 1996.

ADDRESSES: If you wish to comment, you may:

(a) Hand-deliver comments to the Bureau of Land Management, Administrative Record, Room 401, 1620 L St., N.W., Washington, D.C.;

(b) Mail comments to the Bureau of Land Management, Administrative Record, Room 401LS, 1849 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240; or

(c) Transmit comments electronically via the Internet to Wocomment@wo.blm.gov. Please include "ATTN: 1004-PLAN" in your message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your message, contact us directly.

You will be able to review comments at the L Street address during normal business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.), Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carole Smith, Regulatory Affairs Group, (202) 452-0367.

Dated: November 19, 1996.

Annetta Cheek,

Leader, Regulatory Affairs Group.

[FR Doc. 96-30041 Filed 11-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-84-P

[CO-030-06-1610-00-1784]

Southwest Resource Advisory Council Meetings

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; Resource Advisory Council Meetings.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 USC), notice is hereby given that the Southwest Resource Advisory Council (SW RAC) will meet on Thursday, December 12, 1996, at Ridgway State Park headquarters 21 miles south of Montrose, Colorado, on US Highway 550 (Dutch Charlie exit).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, December 12, 1996. It will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: For additional information, contact Roger Alexander, Bureau of Land Management, Montrose District Office, 2465 South Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401; Telephone 970-240-5335; TDD 970-240-5366.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The December 12, 1996, meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. in the conference room at Ridgway State Park Headquarters, 21 miles south of Montrose, Colorado, on US Highway 550 (Dutch Charlie exit). The agenda will focus on public land user fees. Time will be provided for public comments.

All Resource Advisory Council meetings are open to the public. Interested persons may make oral statements to the Council, or written statements may be submitted for the Council's consideration. Depending on the number of persons wishing to make oral statements, a per-person time limit may be established by the Montrose District Manager.

Summary minutes for Council meetings are maintained in the Montrose District Office and are available for public inspection and reproduction during regular business hours within thirty (30) days following each meeting.

Dated: November 19, 1996.

Jamie E. Connell,

Associate District Manager.

[FR Doc. 96-30012 Filed 11-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-JB-P

[NM-030-1210-00]

Emergency Closure of a Vehicle Trail, Ladron Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Sierra Ladrones Wilderness Study Area (WSA), Socorro County, NM

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Interior.

ACTION: Emergency closure of vehicle trail.