

conservation education. The permit numbers and animals are 120067—Angel, 120068—Yama/Olga, 120069—Yali, 120070—Mikel/Ranchin, 120071—Yalu/Igor, 120072—Juanita, 120073—Koda, 120075—Champagne, and 120076—Kublai Khan. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a three-year period and the import of any potential progeny born to females while overseas.

Applicant: Memphis Zoo, Memphis, TN, PRT 125372.

The applicant requests a permit to import viable frozen semen samples from male giant pandas from the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species through scientific research and propagation. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a five year period.

Endangered Marine Mammals and Marine Mammals

The public is invited to comment on the following applications for a permit to conduct certain activities with endangered marine mammals and marine mammals. The applications were submitted to satisfy requirements of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing endangered species (50 CFR part 17) and marine mammals (50 CFR part 18). Written data, comments, or requests for copies of the complete applications or requests for a public hearing on these applications should be submitted to the Director (address above). Anyone requesting a hearing should give specific reasons why a hearing would be appropriate. The holding of such a hearing is at the discretion of the Director.

Applicant: Iskande L.V. Larkin, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, PRT-038448.

The applicant requests an amendment and an extension to her permit to take biological samples from 5 tagged female manatees in the wild and 14 captive held male and female manatees and to observe and collect fecal samples opportunistically from any number of wild and captive held manatees for the purpose of scientific research on aspects of reproductive endocrine health and behavior. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a five-year period.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, the Division of Management Authority is

forwarding copies of the above applications to the Marine Mammal Commission and the Committee of Scientific Advisors for their review.

Applicant: Evan S. Evanovich, Venetia, PA, PRT-122434.

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport hunted from the Northern Beaufort Sea polar bear population in Canada for personal, noncommercial use.

Applicant: Fred A. Pierce, Thayne, WY, PRT-122061.

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport hunted from the Lancaster Sound polar bear population in Canada for personal, noncommercial use.

Applicant: Fred A. Pierce, Thayne, WY, PRT-125919.

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport hunted from the Lancaster Sound polar bear population in Canada for personal, noncommercial use.

Dated: May 12, 2006.

Monica Farris,

Senior Permit Biologist, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.

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BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Receipt of an Application for an Incidental Take Permit for Construction of a Commercial Building in Brevard County, FL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Generation Builders (Applicant) requests an incidental take permit (ITP) pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). The Applicant anticipates taking about 0.77 acre of Florida scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*)(scrub-jay) foraging and sheltering habitat for a one-year term, incidental to lot preparation for the construction of a commercial building and supporting infrastructure in Brevard County, Florida (Project). The Applicant's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) describes the mitigation and minimization measures proposed to address the effects of the Project to the Florida scrub-jay. These measures are outlined in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

DATES: Written comments on the ITP application and HCP should be sent to

the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**) and should be received on or before July 3, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the application and HCP may obtain a copy by writing the Service's Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia. Please reference permit number TE104318-0 in such requests. Documents will also be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the Regional Office, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345 (Attn: Endangered Species Permits), or Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6620 Southpoint Drive South, Suite 310, Jacksonville, Florida 32216-0912.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Dell, Regional HCP Coordinator, (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 404/679-7313, facsimile: 404/679-7081; or Paula Sisson, General Biologist, Jacksonville Field Office, Jacksonville, Florida (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 904/232-2580, ext. 126.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: If you wish to comment, you may submit comments by any one of several methods. Please reference permit number TE104318-0 in such comments. You may mail comments to the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). You may also comment via the internet to "david_dell@fws.gov". Please also include your name and return address in your internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from us that we have received your internet message, contact us directly at either telephone number listed below (see **FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). Finally, you may hand deliver comments to either Service office listed below (see **ADDRESSES**). Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the administrative record. We will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law. There may also be other circumstances in which we would withhold from the administrative record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

The Florida scrub-jay (scrub-jay) is geographically isolated from other species of scrub-jays found in Mexico and the western United States. The scrub-jay is found exclusively in peninsular Florida and is restricted to xeric uplands (predominantly in oak-dominated scrub). Increasing urban and agricultural development have resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation which has adversely affected the distribution and numbers of scrub-jays. The total estimated population is between 7,000 and 11,000 individuals.

The decline in the number and distribution of scrub-jays in east-central Florida has been exacerbated by tremendous urban growth in the past 50 years. Much of the historic commercial and residential development has occurred on the dry soils which previously supported scrub-jay habitat. Based on existing soils data, much of the historic and current scrub-jay habitat of coastal east-central Florida occurs proximal to the current shoreline and larger river basins. Much of this area of Florida was settled early because few wetlands restricted urban and agricultural development. Due to the effects of urban and agricultural development over the past 100 years, much of the remaining scrub-jay habitat is now relatively small and isolated. What remains is largely degraded due to the exclusion of fire which is needed to maintain xeric uplands in conditions suitable for scrub-jays.

The proposed commercial construction would take place within Section 05, Township 29 South, Range 37 East, Palm Bay, Brevard County, Florida. Scrub-jays were located within the lot during a site visit in October 2004. Scrub-jays using the subject commercial lot and adjacent properties are part of a larger complex of scrub-jays located in a matrix of urban and natural settings in areas of southern Brevard and northern Indian River counties.

Construction of the Project's infrastructure and facilities would result in harm to scrub-jays, incidental to the carrying out of these otherwise lawful activities. Habitat alteration associated with the proposed commercial construction would reduce the availability of foraging and sheltering habitat for one family of scrub-jays. The lot encompasses about 0.77 acre and the footprint of the building, infrastructure, and landscaping preclude retention of scrub-jay habitat. On-site minimization may not be a biologically viable alternative due to increasing negative demographic effects caused by urbanization.

The Applicant proposes to mitigate for the loss of 0.77 acre of scrub-jay

habitat by purchasing approximately 1.5 acres of occupied scrub-jay habitat off of the project site, which will be deeded over to Brevard County Environmental Lands Program (EELS) for perpetual management and conservation. The acquisition of 1.5 acres is sufficient to replace the occupied scrub-jay habitat at a ratio of two mitigation acres per one impact acre.

The Service has determined that the Applicants' proposal, including the proposed mitigation and minimization measures, will individually and cumulatively have a minor or negligible effect on the species covered in the HCP. Therefore, the ITP is a "low-effect" project and qualifies as a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as provided by the Department of Interior Manual (516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1). This preliminary information may be revised based on our review of public comments that we receive in response to this notice. Low-effect HCPs are those involving: (1) Minor or negligible effects on federally listed or candidate species and their habitats, and (2) minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources. The Applicants' HCP qualifies for the following reasons:

1. Approval of the HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on the Florida scrub-jay population as a whole. We do not anticipate significant direct or cumulative effects to the Florida scrub-jay population as a result of the construction project.

2. Approval of the HCP would not have adverse effects on known unique geographic, historic or cultural sites, or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

3. Approval of the HCP would not result in any significant adverse effects on public health or safety.

4. The project does not require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, nor does it threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

5. Approval of the Plan would not establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

The Service will evaluate the HCP and comments submitted thereon to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). If it is determined that those requirements are met, the ITP will be issued for

incidental take of the Florida scrub-jay. The Service will also evaluate whether issuance of the section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP complies with section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. The results of this consultation, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue the ITP. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10 of the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: May 1, 2006.

Cynthia K. Dohner,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. E6-8452 Filed 5-31-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Draft Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Conservation Plan; Issuance of a Section 10(a)(1)(B) Permit for Incidental Take of the Houston Toad in Bastrop County, TX (George Stokes)

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: George Stokes (Applicant) has applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for an incidental take permit (TE-126322-0) pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended. The requested permit, which is for a period of five years, would authorize incidental take of the Houston toad (*Bufo houstonensis*). The proposed take would occur as a result of the construction and occupation of a single family residence, guest home, and associated structures on a 14.049-acre (5.68-hectare) property located on Park Road 1-C, Bastrop County, Texas. We invite the public to review and comment on the permit application and associated draft Environmental Assessment/Habitat Conservation Plan (EA/HCP).

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be received on or before July 31, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the application may obtain a copy by writing to the Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 1306, Room 4102, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103. Persons wishing to review the draft EA/HCP may obtain a copy by contacting Scott Rowin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet