

in northwestern San Diego County. The northern boundary of the Plan study area is Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton; the Pacific Ocean forms the western boundary; and unincorporated County of San Diego borders most of the study area on the east and south. Unincorporated portions of the county, including several areas completely surrounded by incorporated cities, are excluded from the study area and will be planned by the county under the North County Subarea of the Multiple Species Conservation Plan.

The 118,852-acre Plan study area is largely developed, with approximately 30 percent consisting of vacant lands that still support natural vegetation communities. The largest blocks of natural vegetation occur in northern Escondido, and in the hilly areas of southeastern Carlsbad and southwestern San Marcos. Other relatively large blocks of habitat occur along the northern boundary of Oceanside, and in scattered areas in eastern and central Carlsbad, northern San Marcos, and southern Escondido. Otherwise, natural habitats in the Plan study area are highly fragmented and occur primarily in small, scattered patches surrounded by development or agriculture.

The goals of the Plan are to:

1. Maintain the range of natural biological communities and species native to the region, and conserve viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitats, thereby preventing local extirpation or species extinction.

2. Create greater certainty for economic and urban development by identifying where new development should and should not occur, and encourage investment by establishing a legal and procedural framework that streamlines the permitting process and provides a reliable basis for economic decision-making.

3. Protect the quality of life for local residents by maintaining the area's scenic beauty, natural biological diversity, and recreation opportunities.

The Plan proposes a new process for wildlife and habitat conservation, and for implementation of the Federal and State of California Endangered Species Acts, which relies on existing local agency land use review and approval authority. The new process places conservation responsibilities on local jurisdictions, based on their ability to implement a segment of the Plan for their jurisdiction. Implementation of the Plan will occur through individual subarea conservation plans prepared for each of the seven participating jurisdictions. In exchange for these coordinated conservation plans, local

jurisdictions will receive from the Service permits for the taking of federally-listed species, and unlisted species should they become listed, based on their subarea plans and implementing agreements. A list of covered animal and plant species that would receive take authorization is incorporated in the Plan, including species that are federally or state-listed, proposed for listing, candidates for listing, or sensitive within the region.

The lands identified for open space and habitat preservation are located within the Focused Planning Area. The Focused Planning Area was cooperatively designed by the Association of Governments and the seven participating jurisdictions in the Plan study area, in consultation with the Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Plan Advisory Committee based on biological, ownership, and land use criteria. These participants have spent several months developing "hard line" preserves, indicating lands that will be conserved and managed for biological resources, and "soft line" planning areas, within which preserve areas will ultimately be delineated based on further data and planning.

Several objectives were incorporated into the process of designing the Focused Planning Area: (1) conserve as much of the biologically most important habitat lands remaining in the subregion as possible, in a system that minimizes preserve fragmentation and maximizes conservation of covered species; (2) maximize the inclusion of public lands within the preserve; (3) maximize the inclusion of lands already conserved as open space, where appropriate; and (4) maintain individual property rights and economic viability for the subregion.

Although the Association of Governments will prepare the draft Statement, the Service will be responsible for its content and scope. In addition, the Association of Governments will act as the lead agency for the preparation of the Report.

Environmental documentation will be included in the joint Statement/Report for amendments to a variety of planning documents for the seven participating jurisdictions. The proposed amendments would incorporate the preserve boundaries of the Plan into adopted land use plans as described in the individual subarea plans and implementing agreements. Actions proposed by these seven cities that will be addressed in the joint Statement/Report include, but are not limited to, amendments to general plans, local coastal programs, and zoning ordinances.

The Statement/Report will consider the proposed action (issuance of a Section 10(a)(1)(B) Endangered Species Act permit for the Plan) and a reasonable range of alternatives. Potential alternatives may be derived from preserve design scenarios being considered and include a Minimal Acquisition Scenario, Enhanced Conservation/Acquisition Scenario, Additional Core Gnatcatcher Conservation Scenario, Biological Core and Linkage Area Scenario, and No Project (No Preserve) Scenario.

Environmental review of the 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 joint Statement/Report.

Comments and participation in the scoping process are solicited. The primary purpose of the scoping process is to identify rather than to debate the significant issues related to the proposed action. Interested persons are encouraged to attend the public scoping meeting to identify and discuss issues and alternatives that should be addressed in the joint Statement/Report. The proposed agenda for this facilitated meeting includes a summary of the proposed action; status of and threats to subject species; and tentative issues, concerns, opportunities, and alternatives. Additional public meetings will be conducted on later dates to provide more opportunities to comment on the draft Statement/Report.

Dated: April 6, 1999.

Elizabeth H. Stevens,
Deputy Manager, California/Nevada
Operations Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-030-1220-00; Closure Notice No. NV-030-99-002]

Temporary Closure and Restrictions on Public Lands; Silver Saddle Ranch; Carson City, Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: The Manager, Carson City Field Office, announces a temporary closure and restrictions on acquired lands in Carson City, Nevada, known as the Silver Saddle Ranch. This action is taken to protect ranch buildings, facilities and sensitive meadow and riparian resources from vandalism and damage.

SUMMARY: In 1997, the Bureau of Land Management completed a land exchange resulting in the transfer of the Silver Saddle Ranch in Carson City from private to public ownership. The ranch includes residential buildings, barns, fences and sensitive river and meadow lands. In cooperation with the municipality of Carson City, development of a long-term management plan is underway which will provide for adequate on site management and protection of these features. Until this plan can be completed, certain interim restrictions and closures are necessary. Acquired lands on the west side of the Carson River are temporarily closed to public use. Lands on the east side of the Carson River are open to public use with restrictions on vehicle use, shooting and overnight camping.

EFFECTIVE DATES: These restrictions go into effect immediately and will remain in effect until the management plan is completed and implemented, or until the authorized officer determines these restrictions no longer are needed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chris Miller, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Carson City Field Office, 5665 Morgan Mill Road, Carson City, Nevada 89706. Telephone (775) 885-6148.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The public lands affected by these restrictions are described as follows:

Mt. Diablo Meridian

T. 15 N., R 20 E.,
Sec. 22: SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
Sec. 26: SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
Sec. 27: NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
Sec. 35: NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM that portion on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 26 as conveyed to Carson City, and all that portion lying below the natural ordinary High water line of the Carson River.

Lands on the west side of the Carson River are closed to public use and entry. The exceptions to this closure include emergency, utility or law enforcement personnel, Carson City and BLM officials conducting business, participants in tours or events sponsored by the BLM or Carson City, and others authorized in writing by the Authorized Officer of the BLM. The

restrictions do not apply to Carson City public roads.

Lands on the east side of the Carson River are open to public recreation uses with the following exceptions: (1) Motorized vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails; (2) lands are closed to shooting and open to day use only, consistent with previous orders for use on public lands administered by the Carson City Field Office.

The authorities for these restrictions are 43 CFR 8341.2 and 8364.1. Any person failing to comply with the closure or restrictions may be subject to imprisonment for not more than 12 months, or a fine in accordance with the applicable provisions of 18 USC 3571, or both.

Dated: April 8, 1999.

Karl Kipping,

Associate Manager,

Carson City Field Office.

[FR Doc. 99-9415 Filed 4-14-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ID-933-1330-01; IDI -030-98-035]

Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for the Caribou National Forest Phosphate Leasing Proposal (FEIS 98-0087; Idaho)

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: The Dairy Syncline Tract and Manning Creek Tract are two separate Federal phosphate tracts proposed for competitive leasing. They are located within the Caribou National Forest in Caribou County in southeast Idaho. The Manning Creek Tract is located in Township 9 South, Range 45 East, Boise Meridian, about 10 air miles southwest of Afton, Wyoming. The Dairy Syncline Tract is located in Township 9 and 10, Range 44 East, about 12 air miles southeast of Soda Springs, Idaho. The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service jointly prepared the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Final Environmental Impact Statement related to this leasing proposal. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was released July 18, 1997. The Notice of Availability appeared in the **Federal Register** on August 1, 1997. No new issues or viable alternatives were identified during the review period so revisions to the Draft were not required. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the

proposed leasing of Federal phosphate reserves in the Dairy Syncline and Manning Creek Tracts was released on February 23, 1998. The Final consists of a selenium update, Chapter 10 of the Final Environmental Impact Statement which describes the public comments and responses, and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement which was released in July, 1997. The Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement was published in the **Federal Register** on March 27, 1998. In accordance with 43 CFR 1502.2, a Record of Decision was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management and signed on March 15, 1999. BLM has recommended leasing only portions of each of the two tracts. With this decision, 2,342.27 acres of the 3,259 acre Dairy Syncline Tract and 880 acres of the 1,120 acre Manning Creek Tract will be available for leasing. The reduced Manning Creek Tract provides for a natural, undisturbed corridor for wildlife to move through the area. This decision is consistent with the Caribou National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and with the Bureau of Land Management Pocatello Resource Management Plan. Mining will not be permitted on these two tracts until NEPA requirements have been met, site-specific Best Management Plans have been developed, and the phosphate lessee can demonstrate that mining can be conducted without releasing harmful quantities of hazardous material into the environment. Proposed Best Management Practices must be acceptable to BLM and the surface managing agencies prior to approval of any mine plan. The "Stipulations for Lands of the National Forest System under Jurisdiction of Department of Agriculture" and the Forest Service "Notice to Phosphate Lessees" shall be part of each lease offered and apply to the lessee or its legal successors. Copies of the Record of Decision have been mailed to interested parties. Public reading copies will be available for review at the BLM Pocatello Resource Area Office, 1111 N. 8th Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83201-5789.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Oberlindacher, BLM Idaho State Office, 1387 South Vinnell Way, Boise, Idaho 83709, telephone No. (208) 373-3884.

DATES: The Record of Decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. If an appeal is taken, the notice of appeal must be filed with the Bureau of Land Management, Idaho State Office, 1387 S.