

811110 when submitting comments. Individuals wishing copies of the application or EA for review should immediately contact the office listed above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Craig Hansen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at the office listed above.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Under section 9 of the Act and its implementing regulations, "taking" of threatened and endangered species is prohibited. However, the Service, under limited circumstances, may issue permits to take threatened or endangered wildlife species if such taking is incidental to, and not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities. Regulations governing permits for threatened and endangered species are in 50 CFR 17.32 and 17.22, respectively.

The Applicant proposes to implement a HCP for the owl that will allow timber harvest on the 40-acre project area. The Applicant's proposed timber harvest may result in the take, as defined in the Act and its implementing regulations, of the owl. The permit would be in effect for one year. The terms of the HCP, which include conservation benefits for the owl, would be in effect into perpetuity.

The Applicant proposes to mitigate for potential impacts from incidental take of the owl by retaining a buffer of intact habitat, implementing a selective timber harvest, and placing a perpetual deed restriction on the property permanently prohibiting further timber harvest or tree removal. This would ensure the retention of some owl habitat and approximately 72 percent of the total number of trees after harvest. The retention of habitat and trees, and the deed restriction would ensure the availability of owl habitat in the future. The harvest method and timing would further minimize impacts to owls. If possible, all trees would be felled in winter or early spring which would minimally disturb owls and other wildlife. Harvesting while there is still snow on the ground would prevent potential ground disturbance by the felled trees. In addition, all felled trees would be removed by helicopter, thus precluding the need for road construction into the project area, and minimizing impacts to owl habitat and the ground.

The EA considers the environmental consequences of the proposed action and no-action alternatives. The proposed action alternative is the issuance of a permit under section 10(a) of the Act that would authorize

incidental take of the owl. The proposed action would require the Applicant to implement their HCP. Under the no-action alternative, the permit would not be issued, and the Applicant would avoid the take of owls by delaying harvest until: (1) the owl site center is moved such that the project area is outside the territorial circle, or (2) the owl territorial circle has been changed to historic status after 3 consecutive years of protocol owl surveys have resulted in no owl detections, or (3) regulatory release is provided, such as a 4(d) special rule under the Act providing an exemption for small landowners, or (4) forests on surrounding U.S. Forest Service or other land regenerates or develops to provide greater than 40 percent owl habitat within the 1.8 mile radius owl circle.

Dated: February 13, 1996.

(Notice: Availability of an Environmental Assessment and Receipt of an Application for a Permit Under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act by the Scofield Corporation.)

H. Dale Hall,

*Acting Deputy Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.*

[FR Doc. 96-3654 Filed 2-16-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

**Geological Survey**

**Application Notice Describing the Areas of Interest and Establishing the Closing Date for Receipt of Applications Under the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 1997**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Applications are invited for research projects under the NEHRP.

The purpose of this program is to support research in earthquake hazards prediction; to provide earth-science data and information essential to determine seismic hazards present in the United States; and information essential to mitigate earthquake damage.

Applications may be submitted by educational institutions, private firms, private foundations, individuals, and agencies of state and local governments.

The NEHRP supports research related to the following general areas of interest:

- I. Evaluating National and Regional Hazard and Risk. National and regional hazard and risk maps are critical to effective risk reduction strategies.
- II. Evaluating Urban Hazard and Risk. The strong ground shaking and resulting

catastrophic losses in the 1994 Northridge earthquake reinforced the need for the U.S. Geological Survey to concentrate its efforts where the risks are highest, that is, in the nation's urban areas.

III. Understanding Earthquake Processes. The effectiveness of risk-mitigation strategies and disaster response are limited by our meager understanding of the tectonic processes that cause earthquakes and generate the strong shaking and ground failure that devastates the built environment.

IV. Providing Real-time Hazard Assessment. Effective earthquake hazard evaluation and response to damaging events depend on timely, accurate information. Short, intermediate, and long-term earthquake forecasts in regions of high earthquake potential can all lead to mitigation activities that reduce the losses in subsequent earthquakes.

V. Providing Geologic Hazards Information Services. Computer technology has evolved rapidly in recent years to the point that new powerful tools are accessible both to the providers and the users of geologic hazards information.

**ADDRESSES:** The program announcement is expected to be available on or about March 8, 1996. You may obtain a copy of Announcement No. 00001 by writing Francine Harris, U.S. Geological Survey, Office of Acquisition and Federal Assistance—Mail Stop 205C, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 22092, or by fax (703-648-7901). Organizations that applied for an FY 1996 award, and organizations that requested to be retained on the mailing list since the last announcement will be mailed a copy of Announcement No. 00001.

**DATES:** The closing date for receipt of applications will be on or about May 10, 1996. The actual closing date will be specified in Announcement No. 00001.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** John Sims, Office of Earthquakes, Volcanoes, and Engineering—U.S. Geological Survey, Mail Stop 905, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 22092. Telephone: (703) 648-6722.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Authority for this program is contained in the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, Public Law 95-124 (42 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*).

Dated: February 13, 1996.

Timothy E. Calkins,

*Acting Chief, Office of Program Support.*

[FR Doc. 96-3716 Filed 2-16-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-31-M**

**Bureau of Land Management**

[AZ-024-1220-00]

**Notice of Availability of Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) and the Proposed White Canyon Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Assessment for the Phoenix and Safford District Resource Management Plans, Gila and Pinal Counties, Arizona****AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management in response to a land exchange proposal, has prepared a FONSI and Proposed Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Assessment (Proposed Plan) to amend the Phoenix and the Safford District Resource Management Plan (RMPs) in compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An analysis of potential environmental impacts found that impacts would not be significant leading to a FONSI. Because of the FONSI, an environmental impact statement is not required to support the Proposed Plan Amendment.

**DATES:** Protests on the Proposed Plan must be postmarked on or before March 21, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Protests must be sent to the Director (480), BLM, Resource Planning Team, Box 10, 1620 L Street (N.W.), Washington, D.C. 20036

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:** Shela McFarlin, Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix District Office, 2015 West Deer Valley Road, Phoenix, AZ 85027, or telephone (602) 780-8090.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

## Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Assessment would make 4,561 acres of federal surface and 1,188 mineral estate acres available for considering a land exchange proposal by ASARCO Incorporated. The parcels would be reclassified from retention lands to disposal by exchange. The Proposed Plan does not approve the transfer of any land; a separate environmental impact statement would analyze the proposed exchange. The Proposed Plan also changes the designation of the White Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The ACEC would retain 300 acres currently designated and delete 1,620 acres which have since been designated as part of the White Canyon Wilderness.

The ACEC would expand by 480 acres through acquiring what is now state land through appropriate mechanisms such as exchange, donation or friendly condemnation with the state of Arizona or subsequent land owners.

## Alternatives Analyzed

Four plan amendment alternatives, including the no action alternative, were analyzed. In addition to the Proposed Plan Amendment (Preferred Alternative), the Proposed Plan analyzed an alternative which would make 1,188 acres of federal estate and 4,721 acres of public land available for exchange. This alternative would also remove the White Canyon ACEC designation and permit these 160 acres to be considered in an exchange. An additional alternative analyzed would reduce the amount of public lands available for exchange by 1,280 surface acres and retain the White Canyon ACEC on 300 acres. Under the no action alternative, the White Canyon ACEC would be retained and no surface or mineral estate lands would be available for exchange. In any exchange, public access would be maintained through easements, new construction, realignments, rights of ways, deletions of parcels or other means to continue public access to public lands.

The Proposed Plan has a 30-day protest period as required by BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-2). Any person who participated in this process and has an interest that may be adversely affected by the proposed decision may submit a protest. Following the protest resolution and the Governor's consistency review, the proposed plan will be approved and implemented. A decision record which documents BLM's decision will become available.

## Public Reading Copies May Be Reviewed at the Following BLM Locations

Phoenix District Office, 2015 West Deer Valley Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85027  
Arizona State Office, Public Room, 3707 N. 7th Street, Suite 300, Phoenix, Arizona 85011.

Dated: February 12, 1996.

David J. Miller,

*Associate District Manager.*

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[NM-018-06-1610-00/G010-D6-0101]

**Amendment to Notice of Intent To Prepare a Coordinated Resource Management Plan and Amend the Taos Resource Management Plan; Taos Resource Area, New Mexico and San Luis Resource Area, Colorado****AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.**ACTION:** Amended Notice of Intent; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** In the Federal Register on Monday, November 14, 1994 (Vol. 59, No. 218, pp. 56528-29), the following "Summary" appeared:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Albuquerque District, Taos Resource Area and Canon City District, San Luis Resource Area are initiating preparation of a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) in combination with a Taos Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA). This document will enable coordinated management activities throughout the 94-mile Rio Grande corridor from La Sauses, Colorado to Velarde, New Mexico; address inadequacies of the Taos Resource Management Plan (RMP) relating to the BLM's Supplemental Program Guidance for wildlife and fire; and include an Environmental Impact Statement to meet legislative requirements for the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River extension and study areas. The plan's management strategy will center around conserving, restoring and maintaining the public lands' ecological integrity, productivity and biological diversity, while considering social, economic, cultural and ecological factors.

The public is invited to participate in each stage of the planning process, and public meetings will be held.

(Note: A schedule of meeting times and places was included in the notice. The meetings have been held as announced.)

The aforementioned Notice is amended to state that the Plan will analyze possible changes in the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) in the Taos Resource Area portion of the planning area. These ACEC modifications may include boundary changes that would increase or decrease acreage, consolidate ACECs, designate new ACECs or eliminate ACECs. The primary areas that may be modified from the decisions in the current Taos RMP are: (1) Guadalupe Mountain, where the ACEC designation may be dropped in favor of managing the area as part of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area; and (2) the portion of the planning area downstream from the community of Pilar, where several ACECs and Special Management Areas (SMAs) exist. Consolidation and/or boundary realignment may provide for more efficient and effective management of identified resources and values.