

Islands Ecoregion at the Honolulu address given above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Rosa, Assistant Field Supervisor-Endangered Species, at the Honolulu address given above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystem is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States, its Territories and Commonwealths. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of the species, establish criteria for the recovery levels for downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that a public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service will consider all information presented during a public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. Substantive technical comments will result in changes to the plan. Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plan, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individualized responses to comments will not be provided.

The species being considered in this recovery plan is *Kokia cookei*. Known only from the island of Molokai, *Kokia cookei* has been described as the rarest plant in the world. When first discovered in the 1860s, three trees of this species were known. By the twentieth century, only a single wild tree remained. The species became extirpated from the wild in 1918. Currently, only 28 cloned individuals of *Kokia cookei* exist. These individuals were produced by grafting to root stocks of the two related *Kokia* species, *Kokia kauaiensis* and *Kokia drynarioides*. Seven individuals are in artificial

cultivation facilities on the islands of Maui and Oahu. The remaining 21 individuals are in small (10,000 square feet or less) outplanting sites on privately owned Molokai Ranch lands, at Puu Nana, about 365 meters (1200 feet) elevation.

The destruction of dryland habitats throughout the Hawaiian Islands, which began 1,500 years ago with the coming of the Polynesians to Hawaii and increased greatly with the arrival of the Europeans a little over 200 years ago, has led to the elimination of *Kokia cookei* in the wild. *Kokia cookei* was directly impacted by browsing, bark stripping, and soil trampling by domestic and feral cattle, goats, and sheep. Currently, this species is most threatened by the extremely low number of individuals remaining, the lack of naturally rooted plants, and the lack of viable seed production by the remaining individuals.

The objective of this plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of *Kokia cookei* so that its protection by the Act is no longer necessary. Recovery efforts will focus on increasing the numbers of cloned individuals while pursuing research into other methods, such as embryo culture methodology, for the production of individuals capable of setting viable seed. Suitable sites for outplanting of individuals on Molokai, Maui, and Lanai will be located and steps taken to manage these lands for the perpetuity of *Kokia cookei* and other native components of the dryland forest.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: August 8, 1997.

Thomas J. Dwyer,

Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1.

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DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Issuance of Permits for Marine Mammals

On June 5, 1997, a notice was published in the **Federal Register**, Vol.

62, No. 108, Page 30876, that an application had been filed with the Fish and Wildlife Service by Jon Ziegler, Rapid City, SD (PRT-830065) for a permit to import a sport-hunted polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) from Canada for personal use.

Notice is hereby given that on July 21, 1997, as authorized by the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) the Fish and Wildlife Service authorized the requested permit subject to certain conditions set forth therein.

Documents and other information submitted for these applications are available for review by any party who submits a written request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Rm 430, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Phone (703) 358-2104 or Fax (703) 358-2281.

Dated: August 8, 1997.

Mary Ellen Amtower,

Acting Chief, Branch of Permits, Office of Management Authority.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NM-030-7122-03-821G]

Proposed Expansion of the Santa Rita Pit and Land Exchange in Grant County, New Mexico

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and notice of scoping meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Las Cruces District Office, will be directing the preparation of an EIS to be prepared by a third party contractor. The EIS will describe the potential impacts of the Phelps Dodge Corporation-Chino Mines Company (CMC) proposed Santa Rita Pit Expansion and Land Exchange Project, located approximately 7 miles north-northeast of the town of Hurley, in Grant County, New Mexico. The proposed development would occur partially on patented CMC land and partially on Federal land administered by the BLM.

The public is invited to participate in the planning process. A public scoping meeting will be held at the following time and location: