

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Restoring an endangered or threatened animal or plant to the point where it is a secure, self-sustaining member of its ecosystem, is a primary goal of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service prepares recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of the species, establish criteria for the recovery levels for reclassifying them from endangered to threatened status or removing them from the list, and estimate the time and cost for implementing the needed recovery measures.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) 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 public notice and 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. The Service and other Federal agencies will take these comments into account in the course of implementing approved recovery plans.

The star cactus was listed as an endangered species on November 17, 1993. The primary objective of this recovery plan is to maintain sufficient star cactus populations in natural habitats to ensure that the species is safe from extinction. This species is threatened by habitat destruction and modification through conversion of native habitat to agricultural land uses and urban development; collection of wild plants for the cactus trade; competition with exotic grasses introduced for cattle forage and erosion control; and genetic vulnerability due to low population numbers. The Recovery Plan is the product of considerable biological and historical data developed by a team of scientists, agency personnel, stakeholders from the management community, conservation organizations, and the general public. It provides scientific information about the species and establishes management plans for the protection of native populations, and the development of new populations to enhance its range and abundance to the extent that no natural or man-caused disturbance will result in irrevocable losses.

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 the plan.

Authority

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

Dated: January 30, 1998.

Ren Loehefner,

Acting Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2.

[FR Doc. 98-3232 Filed 2-9-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Application for Approval of Tin Shot as Nontoxic for Waterfowl Hunting**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of application.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces that the International Tin Research Institute, Ltd. (ITRI), of Uxbridge, Middlesex, United Kingdom, has applied for approval of tin shot as nontoxic for waterfowl hunting in the United States. The Service has initiated review of the Tier 1 application.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul R. Schmidt, Chief, or Carol Anderson, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Migratory Bird Management (MBMO), (703) 358-1714.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Since the mid-1970s, the Service has sought to identify shot that, when spent, does not pose a significant toxic hazard to migratory birds and other wildlife. Currently, only bismuth-tin and steel shot are approved by the Service as nontoxic. Tungsten-iron shot received temporary conditional approval for the 1997-98 hunting season. The Service believes approval for other suitable candidate shot materials as nontoxic is feasible.

On November 5, 1997, ITRI submitted their Tier 1 application for approval of pure tin shot as nontoxic pursuant to 50 CFR 20.134 (recently amended—see 62 FR 63608, December 1, 1997). The Service has determined that the application is complete, and has initiated a comprehensive review of the Tier 1 information to be concluded within April 13, 1998. After this review, the Service will either 1) publish a *Notice of Review* to inform the public

that the Tier 1 test results are inconclusive or 2) publish a proposed rule for approval of the candidate shot. The *Notice of Review* will indicate whether Tier 2, Tier 3, or both tests will be required before nontoxic approval of the tin shot is granted. If the Tier 1 data results in a preliminary determination that the candidate material does not impose a significant danger to migratory birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, the Service will propose to approve this shot based on the toxicological report and toxicity studies.

ITRI's candidate shot is made from commercially pure tin; no alloying or other alterations are intentionally made to the chemical composition of the shot. This shot has a density of approximately 7.29 g/cm³. The shot is 99.97 percent tin, with a low level of iron pickup due to the steel production equipment.

The application includes a statement of proposed use, a description of the new shot, a statement of expected variability of shot during production, an estimate of yearly production, and a 5-pound sample of shot. It also includes a discussion on the toxicity of elemental tin to wildlife and man and the fate of discharged tin shot in the environment (Tier 1). ITRI's discussion incorporates the following toxicity information: a synopsis of toxicity data for wild mammals (including man) and birds; secondary toxicosis of avian predators; potential dissolution and absorption of ingested tin shot; effect of one shot absorbed in 24 hours; toxicity to fish, amphibians, and reptiles; effects of firing tin shot; chemical transformation of tin shot in the environment; and information on environmental fate and transport.

References available upon request.**Authorship**

The primary author of this notice of application is Carol Anderson, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Migratory Bird Management.

Dated: January 30, 1998.

Jamie Rappaport Clark,

Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Geological Survey****Technology Transfer Act of 1986**

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Interior.