

Dated: February 23, 1998.

Alan R. Pierson,

State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AZ-010-01-1210-04]

Notice of Intent To Amend the Arizona Strip Resource Management Plan, Arizona

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

The proposed decision is to implement the Proposed Action as described in Environmental Assessment AZ-010-95-01, with additional terms and conditions from USFWS biological opinion 2-21-96-F-132. The Proposed Action is designed to address tortoise recovery goals and objectives while reducing impacts on local communities and human activities that occur in the Mojave Desert.

BLM is proposing to designate three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) encompassing 169,300 acres (264.5 sq. miles) to be managed primarily for recovery of desert tortoises, and modify the prescriptions for the Virgin River ACEC (8,100 acres).

Beaver Dam Slope ACEC: This would expand the existing ACEC to include tortoise habitat on public lands in Arizona north of I-15 and the Virgin River but outside the Beaver Dam Wilderness Area, as categorized in the RMP. This area would complement management in Nevada and Utah and contain approximately 51,400 acres (80.3 sq. miles) in Arizona.

Virgin Slope ACEC: This area would include most tortoise habitat on public lands in Arizona between the Virgin River (or I-15) and the Virgin Mountains, as categorized in the RMP. A small portion of the Mesquite Community Allotment in Nevada would be managed consistent with the ACEC. This ACEC would contain approximately 41,375 acres (64.6 sq. miles) in Arizona.

Pakoon ACEC: This would include tortoise habitat on public lands in the Pakoon Basin. This area would contain approximately 76,525 acres (119.6 sq. miles). Activities administered by the Arizona Strip on Lake Mead NRA and on public lands in Nevada would be managed in accordance with ACEC prescriptions.

Virgin River ACEC: There would be no change in the boundary of this ACEC (8,100 ac), although prescriptions would be modified to be consistent with the tortoise ACECs. BLM proposes to manage the following resources to reduce impacts on listed species and their habitats: mineral exploration and development, fire suppression, livestock grazing, vegetation harvest, lands and realty, transportation and access, off-highway vehicles, recreation, wild, free-roaming burros, wildlife management, and other surface-disturbing activities (such as military maneuvers and airports). Outside of the four ACECs there would be no change to decisions in the RMP, except that grazing would be managed in accordance with the grazing decisions issued August 11, 1995.

SUMMARY: The above decisions apply only to areas within the Arizona Strip that are either: within desert tortoise habitat as categorized by the Bureau; within critical habitat as designated by USFWS; within one of the four ACECs; pastures of livestock grazing allotments containing tortoise habitat (including portions of Nevada and Lake Mead NRA that are administered by the Arizona Strip BLM).

DATES: BLM proposes to implement the proposed action on April 2, 1998. Closure of the Pakoon ACEC would occur following a two-year notification period.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Protest procedures described in 43 CFR 1610.5-2 give the public an opportunity to initiate administrative review of perceived oversights or inadequacies in a proposed plan. Any proposed decision in a resource management plan amendment may be protested. The protest may only raise issues that were submitted for the record while the plan amendment was being prepared. Any party who has participated in the planning process may file a letter of protest. For proposed decisions in an EA-level plan amendment, a letter of protest to the Director must be filed within 30 days of this Notice of Availability. Letters of protest must be complete and respond to the content requirements established in 43 CFR 1610.5-2(a)(2). The protest may cover only those issues and concerns raised during the planning process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tim Duck, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, BLM Arizona Strip, 345

East Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah 84790, (435) 688-3200.

Roger G. Taylor,

Field Manager.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Boundary Revision: Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of boundary revision.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the National Park Service is revising the boundary of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park to include one additional tract of land.

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 28, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph A. Cook, Chief, Land Resources Program Center, National Capital Region, National Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, DC 20242, (202) 619-7025; and Donald W. Campbell, Superintendent, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425, (304) 535-6224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Act of June 30, 1944, c. 328, 58 Stat. 645 (codified as amended and supplemented, 16 U.S.C. 450bb-450bb-6), which established Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, provides the Secretary of the Interior with authority to make minor revisions in the boundary of the Park. Such boundary revisions may be made, when necessary, after advising the appropriate Congressional committees, and following publication of a revised boundary map, drawing or other boundary description in the **Federal Register**.

In order to properly interpret and preserve the historic character of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, it is necessary to revise the existing boundary to include one additional tract of land comprising approximately 56 acres. The inclusion of this tract within the boundary will bring Park acreage to approximately 2,350 acres. The existing acreage ceiling for the Park is 2,505 acres as set forth by Pub. L. 101-109 approved October 6, 1989. The property is being acquired by donation.

Notice is hereby given that the exterior boundary of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is revised to include the following tract of land described in two (2) parcels: