

30345. All data and comments must be received by April 16, 1998.

Documents and other information submitted with this application are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345 (Attn: David Dell, Permit Biologist). Telephone: 404/679-7313; Fax: 404/679-7081.

Dated: March 6, 1998.

Sam D. Hamilton,

Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 98-6802 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Receipt of Application for Approval

The following applicant has applied for approval to conduct certain activities with birds that are protected in accordance with the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 112(4) of the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992, 50 CFR 15.26(c).

Applicant: Ronald Tokar, for the Washington Falconer's Association, Walla Walla, WA. The applicant wishes to amend the Washington Falconer's Association approved cooperative breeding program to include two subspecies of the Aplomado falcon: *Falco femoralis femoralis*; and *Falco femoralis pichincha*. The Washington Falconer's Association maintains responsibility for the oversight of the program.

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203 and must be received by the Director within 30 days of the date of this publication.

Documents and other information submitted with these applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington,

Virginia 22203. Phone: (703/358-2095); FAX: (703/358-2298).

Dated: March 11, 1998.

Margaret Tieger,

Chief, Branch of Permits, Office of Management Authority.

[FR Doc. 98-6803 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of a Habitat Conservation Plan and Receipt of an Application for an Incidental Take Permit for the Newhall Land and Farming Project on the Santa Clara River, California

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: Newhall Land and Farming Company, Incorporated (Newhall), has applied to the Fish and Wildlife Service for a 50-year incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Newhall's project involves water diversions and low water crossings on the Santa Clara River between Castaic Creek in Los Angeles County and Rancho Camulos in Ventura County, California. The Service proposes to issue an incidental take permit and provide assurances for the endangered unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*), the threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), and should they be listed, for the Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*), a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and the following unlisted species of concern: arroyo chub (*Gila orcutti*), southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*), and two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*). This notice opens the comment period on the permit application package, which includes the Habitat Conservation Plan for the Newhall Land and Farming Company's Crossings of the Santa Clara River (Newhall Plan).

The Service has determined that the Newhall Plan qualifies as a low effect plan as defined by the Service's Habitat Conservation Planning handbook (November 1996). The Service has further determined that approval of the Newhall Plan qualifies as a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act, as provided by the Department of the Interior Manual (516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1). This determination is explained in an Environmental

Action Statement, available for public review.

Comments are requested on the Newhall Plan and the Service's Environmental Action Statement. In particular, the Service requests comments on the appropriateness of the "No Surprises" assurance discussed under the "Unforeseen Events" section of the Plan. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record and may be made available to the public.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before April 16, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Diane K. Noda, Field Supervisor, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, 2493 Portola Road, Suite B, Ventura, California 93003. Written comments may also be sent by facsimile to (805) 644-3958.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kirk Waln, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above address (805-644-1766).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Availability of Documents

Individuals wishing copies of the documents should immediately contact the Service's Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office at the above referenced address, or by telephone at (805) 644-1766. Documents will also be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

Background Information

Newhall proposes to continue installation of six summertime crossings of the Santa Clara River and four temporary diversions of river water to supply irrigation needs. The crossings and diversions are an integral part of Newhall's agricultural operations; the crossings provide access to fields south of the river that are largely inaccessible by other means, and the diversions supply water for irrigation of row crops. Each year, in the spring, the crossings and diversions are installed in the same locations in the reach of the Santa Clara River from approximately Castaic Creek in Los Angeles County to Rancho Camulos in Ventura County. In the fall, the crossings and diversions are removed prior to flood events. The proposed action would result in the temporary disturbance of 14 acres of bank and river channel. The banks in the footprint of the crossings proper are devoid of vegetation due to many years of road installation and use. At the crossings and diversions, the active river channel is also largely devoid of vegetation because, in many years, the