

- Agency representatives.
- highest priority chemicals identified based on production volume, evidence of reproductive or developmental toxicity, human exposure, public concern.
- candidate chemicals transmitted to Associate Director, NTP
- Center staff prepares dossiers on candidate chemicals
- First Solicitation of Public Comment
 - notice of candidate chemicals and request for public comment published in **Federal Register**, NTP Newsletter and listserver, and CERHR website
 - public comments are compiled by Center staff for review by the Core Committee
- CERHR Core Committee Review
 - reviews dossiers and material submitted in public comments
 - recommends list of prioritized chemicals to Associate Director, NTP, for final selection.
- Second Solicitation of Public Comment
 - Federal Register** notice announces selected chemical(s) and solicits public comment, new data, information on exposure, and nominations of individuals qualified to serve on the Expert Panel.
- Expert Panel Meeting
 - the Panel meets in public session to discuss their review of the literature and to prepare the Panel report.
 - meeting includes time for presentation of public comments.
- Final Solicitation of Public Comment
 - Federal Register** notice announces availability of Expert Panel report and requests public comment.
- Expert Panel Report is submitted for publication in Environmental Health Perspectives, monograph section
- NTP Center Report Transmitted and Published
 - NTP staff prepares an NTP Center Report on the chemical(s) evaluated (intended for a readership of non-scientists). This report integrates background information on the chemical evaluated, the findings in the Expert Panel Report, a summary of the public comments, and a discussion of any recent relevant study findings.
 - the Center Report is distributed to Federal and state agencies, interested stakeholders, and the public, and is published in EHP, monthly section.

Further information about the NTP Center for the Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction can be obtained

through the Center's web site: <http://cerhr.niehs.nih.gov> or by contacting: Michael D. Shelby, Ph.D., Director, CERHR, NIEHS/NTP B3-09, P.O. Box 12233, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, telephone 919-541-3455, facsimile 919-541-4634 or John A. Moore, D.V.M., Principal Investigator, CERHR, 1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 500, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-838-9440, 703-684-2223.

Dated: January 10, 2000.

Kenneth Olden,

Director, NIEHS.

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BILLING CODE 4140-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Diamond Fork System Proposed Action Modifications

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary—Water and Science, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability of the draft Environmental Assessment for the Diamond Fork System Proposed Action Modifications.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Central Utah Water Conservancy District (CUWCD), Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (Mitigation Commission), and the Department of the Interior (Interior) announces the availability of the draft Environmental Assessment for the Diamond Fork System Proposed Action Modifications (EA). The draft EA is now available to the public for review and comment.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before April 27, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the draft EA should be addressed to: Harold Sersland, Environmental Program Manager, Central Utah Water Conservancy District, 355 West University Parkway, Orem, Utah 84058-7303, (801) 226-7110.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Draft Environmental Assessment—*The draft EA addresses modifications to the Proposed Action as a result of value engineering studies on the Proposed Action of the Diamond Fork System 1999 Final Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FSFEIS) that was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency July 1, 1999. A Record of Decision (1999 ROD) documenting the selection of the Proposed Action Alternative as

presented in the FSFEIS was signed by the Assistant Secretary—Water and Science on September 29, 1999. The 1999 ROD required value engineering studies, pursuant to public law 104-106, to be conducted on the Proposed Action to determine whether the design could be improved to further reduce environmental impacts or project construction costs. Based on value engineering studies the following modifications to the Proposed Action are addressed in the draft EA: (1) replacing a series of tunnels and pipelines with one tunnel and one pipeline; (2) relocating flow control facilities; and (3) adjusting the alignment of the Diamond Fork System. The proposed modifications would reduce environmental impacts and reduce project construction costs while not changing the Proposed Action's purposes or needs as described in the FSFEIS and 1999 ROD.

Background

The Diamond Fork System is one of six systems of the Bonneville Unit of the Central Utah Project that would develop central Utah's water resources for irrigation, municipal and industrial supply, fish and wildlife, and recreation. It was first identified in the Bonneville Unit Final EIS in 1973 and described in detail in the: Diamond Fork Power System Final EIS in 1984; Diamond Fork System Final Supplement to the Final EIS in 1990, and the Diamond Fork System Final Supplement to the Final EIS in 1999. The Diamond Fork System has been modified over the years and has been partially constructed.

Proposed Action Modifications

The Proposed Action Modifications would: (1) Maintain the statutorily mandated minimum flows in Diamond Fork Creek and Sixth Water Creek; (2) implement Interior's environmental commitments from the 1995 and 1999 Records of Decision; (3) meet the CUWCD's Municipal and Industrial water contractual commitments to Salt Lake, Utah and Wasatch Counties; and (4) provide the Mitigation Commission the opportunity and flexibility for future restoration of aquatic and riparian habitat in Sixth Water and Diamond Fork creeks to protect water quality and threatened species in Diamond Fork Creek.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Copies of the draft EA or information on matters related to this notice can be obtained on request from: Ms. Nancy Hardman, Central Utah Water Conservancy District, 355 West University Parkway,

Orem, Utah 84058, Telephone: (801) 226-7187, Fax: (801) 226-7150.

Copies are also available for inspection at:

Central Utah Water Conservancy District, 355 West University Parkway, Orem, Utah 84058

Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, 102 West 500 South, Suite 315, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

Department of the Interior, Natural Resource Library, Serials Branch, 18th and C Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240

Department of the Interior, Central Utah Project Completion Act Office, 302 East 1860 South, Provo, Utah 84606

Dated: March 14, 2000.

Ronald Johnston,

CUP Program Director, Department of the Interior.

[FR Doc. 00-6794 Filed 3-17-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-RK-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Availability

SUMMARY: The Peregrine Fund (J. Peter Jenny; applicant) has requested an amendment to its incidental take permit pursuant to Section 10(a) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) on December 16, 1996, under permit number PRT-814839. The amendment requests that 42 additional counties, including Andrews, Brewster, Cochran, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Dawson, Dimmit, Duval, Ector, Edwards, El Paso, Frio, Gaines, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Jim Hogg, Kinney, La Salle, Loving, Martin, Maverick, McMullen, Medina, Midland, Pecos, Presidio, Real, Reeves, Starr, Sutton, Terrel, Terry, Upton, Uvalde, Val Verde, Ward, Webb, Yoakum, Winkler, Zapata and Zavala Counties be added to the 15 county area in Texas where The Peregrine Fund already has a permit for incidental take in association with their aplomado falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*) reintroduction program.

DATES: Written comments on the amendment should be received on or before April 19, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the amendment may obtain a copy by writing to the Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 500 Gold Avenue, S.W., P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103. In addition, the amendment will be available for public inspection by

written request, by appointment only, during normal business hours (8:00 to 4:30) at the Service's Clear Lake Ecological Services Field Office, 17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211, Houston, Texas 77058. Written comments concerning the application should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Clear Lake Ecological Services Field Office, 17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211, Houston, Texas 77058. Please refer to the amendment to PRT-814839 when submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Edith A. Erling, Clear Lake Ecological Services Field Office, 17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211, Houston, Texas 77058; (281) 286-8282.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 9 of the Act prohibits the "taking" of endangered species such as the aplomado falcon. However, the Service, under limited circumstances, may issue permits to take endangered wildlife species when such taking is incidental to, and not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities. Regulations governing permits for endangered species are at 50 CFR 17.22.

To facilitate the reintroduction of the aplomado falcon, The Peregrine Fund is currently authorized to take aplomado falcons, incidental to lawful land-use activities, on specific lands enrolled in The Peregrine Fund's "Safe Harbor" program. To date, eight landowners have enrolled a total of 1.26 million acres in The Peregrine Fund's "Safe Harbor" program. A total of 466 captive-bred aplomado falcons have been released. At least 19 pairs have become established and have successfully fledged at least 19 young. As aplomado falcon pairs become established they fiercely defend their territory and behave aggressively towards other falcons. This behavior, while normal, effectively reduces areas available for future releases. Therefore, additional habitat is needed to achieve the goal of a self-sustaining population of aplomado falcons.

APPLICANT: This amendment to permit PRT-814839 would authorize incidental take on an additional 48,994,295 acres, again, only on land that is enrolled in the "safe harbor" program for that purpose. To facilitate the reintroduction of the aplomado falcon, The Peregrine Fund is currently authorized to take aplomado falcons, incidental to lawful land-use activities,

on specific lands enrolled in The Peregrine Fund's "safe harbor" program.

Geoffrey L. Haskett,

Regional Director, Region 2, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

[FR Doc. 00-6803 Filed 3-17-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Availability; Recommended Guidance for Private Landowners Concerning the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl; and the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl Survey Protocol

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability; Private Landowner Guidance and Survey Protocol for the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announces the availability of its recommended private landowner guidance for the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum*) (pygmy-owl). These recommendations will assist private landowners in minimizing their risk of inadvertently "taking" (harming, harassing or killing) a pygmy-owl. In addition, the Service in cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), announces the availability of a revised survey protocol for the pygmy-owl. This survey protocol should be used by landowners and managers in determining presence/absence of the endangered pygmy-owl.

On March 10, 1997, the Service published a final rule adding the Arizona population of the pygmy-owl to the federal list of endangered species (62 FR 10730). The principle cause for the decline in population and reduction in current known range for the once "common" and "fairly numerous" species is the loss of habitat.

In December 1997, the Service provided interim guidance describing the habitat relied upon by the pygmy-owl and suggested that landowners with such habitat have surveys conducted on their land to determine whether the habitat is occupied by an owl prior to disturbing the habitat. The intent of the Service was to furnish landowners and agencies with enough information to determine the level of stewardship their development planning should require in order to avoid harming, harassing, or killing (taking) a pygmy-owl. On August 13, 1998 the Service published two