

DATES: All applications must be received by August 4, 2000. Applications received after that date will be considered on a space available basis.

ADDRESSES: Applications may be submitted to Grace Wiggins, Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 3810, Washington, D.C. 20230, Tel: 202-482-6482.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Grace Wiggins, Department of Commerce Tel.: 202-482-6482; Fax (202) 482-6482.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Acting Assistant Secretary and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service Marjory Searing will lead a senior-level business development trade mission, of approximately 10-15 companies, focusing on women-owned and women-managed businesses to the countries of Egypt, Kenya and South Africa. This Business Development Mission is being organized to coincide with the Global Summit of Women 2000: Africa being held in Johannesburg, South Africa on October 5-7. While the trade mission and summit focus on women-owned and/or managed companies, participation is not limited to such businesses and all interested U.S. companies are encouraged to apply. The mission will visit Cairo, Egypt; Nairobi, Kenya; and Johannesburg, South Africa with an optional stop to Cape Town, South Africa. The overall focus of the trip will be commercial opportunities for U.S. companies, presented by the continuing market liberalization and privatization happening in these countries.

Best sectors offering opportunities for American firms include but are not limited to environmental equipment and services, Telecommunications, medical and computer equipment and software, information technology, fashion and jewelry, cosmetic/hair products and security and safety equipment.

Dated: May 8, 2000.

Sherry Lewis-Khanna,

Special Assistant, Office of Domestic Operations.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Alcoa Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay NPL Site, Point Comfort, TX: Notice of Availability and Request for Comments on a Revised Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment for Recreational Fishing Service Losses

AGENCIES: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce; United States Department of the Interior (DOI); Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD); Texas General Land Office (TGLO); and Texas Natural Resources and Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

ACTION: Notice of availability of a Revised Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for recreational fishing service losses associated with the Alcoa Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay National Priorities List (NPL) Site, and of a 30-day period for public comment on the plan beginning May 12, 2000.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 43 CFR Sections 11.32 and 11.81-.82, notice is hereby given that a document entitled, "Revised Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay NPL Site Recreational Fishing Service Losses" (Revised Draft DARP/EA) is available for public review and comment. This document describes revisions to the Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment (Draft DARP/EA), which was released for public review and comment on September 28, 1999. The Draft DARP/EA described the assessment of recreational fishing service losses attributable to hazardous substances released from the Alcoa Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay NPL Site ('Lavaca Bay Site' or 'Site') and the restoration actions preferred to compensate for those losses. As a result of the public comments received on the Draft DARP/EA, the restoration alternatives identified to compensate for such losses have been revised. The Revised Draft DARP/EA summarizes these public comments and identifies changes to the restoration plan that were determined to be necessary in light of the comments and other information received. The Revised Draft DARP/EA is being released to allow public comment on the revised restoration alternatives now proposed for inclusion in the Final DARP/EA for the recreational fishing service losses.

DATES: Comments on the Revised Draft DARP/EA must be submitted in writing on or before June 12, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the Revised Draft DARP/EA should be sent to Richard Seiler of TNRCC, MC142, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087 or Tony Penn of NOAA, 1305 East West Highway, Station 10218, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Written comments on the plan should be sent either to Richard Seiler of TNRCC or Tony Penn of NOAA at the addresses listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Alcoa Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay NPL Site is located in Point Comfort, Calhoun County, Texas and encompasses releases of hazardous substances from Alcoa's Point Comfort Operations facility. Between 1948 and the present, Alcoa constructed and operated several types of manufacturing processes at this facility, including aluminum smelting, carbon paste and briquette manufacturing, gas processing, chlor-alkali processing, and alumina refining. Past operations at the facility resulted in the release of hazardous substances into the environment, including the discharge of mercury-containing wastewater into Lavaca Bay from 1966 to 1970 and releases of mercury into the bay through groundwater. In April 1988, the Texas Department of Health (TDH) issued a "closure order" prohibiting the taking of finfish and crabs for consumption from a specific area near the facility due to elevated mercury concentrations in these resources.

The Alcoa Point Comfort/Lavaca Bay Site was added to the NPL, pursuant to Section 105 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9601, effective on March 25, 1994 (59 FR 8724; February 23, 1994). The Site was listed primarily due to the presence of mercury in several species of fish and crab in Lavaca Bay, the fishing closure imposed by TDH, and the presence of mercury and other hazardous substances in bay sediments adjacent to the facility. Alcoa, the State of Texas and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) under CERCLA in March 1994 providing for the conduct of a remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS) for the Site.

NOAA, DOI, TPWD, TGLO and TNRCC (collectively, the Trustees) are designated natural resource trustees under Section 107(f) of CERCLA, Section 311 of the Federal Water Pollution and Control Act (FWPCA), 33 U.S.C. Section 1321, and other applicable federal or state laws, including Subpart G of the National Oil

and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), 40 CFR Sections 300.600–300.615. The Trustees are authorized to act on behalf of the public under these authorities to protect and restore natural resources and resource services injured or lost as a result of discharges or releases of hazardous substances.

Paralleling the RI/FS process for the Site, the Trustees have undertaken an assessment of the natural resource injuries and service losses resulting from releases of hazardous substances attributable to the Site and of the restoration actions necessary to address those losses. This assessment process has been aided and supported by Alcoa's cooperation pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement between Alcoa and the Trustees, which was effective January 14, 1997. Both the Draft DARP/EA and the Revised Draft DARP/EA have been developed under the cooperative assessment framework outlined in the MOA.

The Draft DARP/EA was released for public review on September 28, 1999. That document described the assessment procedures used to define the recreational fishing service losses, including to scale restoration actions, and identified the restoration actions preferred to compensate for those service losses, based on the benefits of restoration to both pier/shore-mode and boat-mode anglers. None of the public comments received on the Draft DARP/EA raised any issue regarding the assessment methodology described therein or the restoration actions proposed to compensate for pier/shore-mode fishing losses. As such, these plan elements will be included in the Final DARP/EA. Significant public comments were received, however, relating to the restoration action proposed in the Draft DARP/EA to address the boat-mode fishing losses and, based upon these comments, the Trustees found it necessary to revise that portion of the plan. The Revised Draft DARP/EA summarizes the public comments received, identifies the revised, preferred restoration alternatives to address the remainder of the recreational fishing service losses, and explains the basis and rationale for that change. The Revised Draft DARP/EA is being released to allow for public review and comment on the preferred restoration alternatives now identified to restore or replace the remainder of the recreational fishing services needed to compensate the public for recreational fishing losses due to the closure.

The Revised Draft DARP/EA does not address any other natural resource

injuries or service losses that may be attributable to the Site. Other resource injuries or losses are being considered by the Trustees but will be addressed in one or more subsequent damage assessment and restoration plans.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information contact: Richard Seiler at (512) 239–2523, email: rseiler@tnrcc.state.tx.us or Tony Penn, at (301) 713–3038 x197, email: tony.penn@noaa.gov

Dated: May 3, 2000.

Captain Ted I. Lillestolen,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Docket No. [000411103–0103–01; I.D. No. 021400B]

RIN: [0648–ZA86]

Announcement of Funding Opportunity for the Southeast Bering Sea Carrying Capacity Research Project.

AGENCY: Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research (CSCOR)/Coastal Ocean Program (COP), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Solicitation of research proposals for the Southeast Bering Sea Carrying Capacity Research Project.

SUMMARY: The NOAA Coastal Ocean Program announces an opportunity for ecosystem dynamics studies on the southeastern Bering Sea shelf as part of the Southeast Bering Sea Carrying Capacity (SEBSCC) project. This announcement solicits 1-year and 2-year proposals for synthesis and limited monitoring to begin at the start of fiscal year (FY) 2001 (October 1, 2000), contingent upon the availability of funds and facilities. This Phase III announcement addresses years five and six of SEBSCC. Funding for SEBSCC will terminate at the end of Phase III (September 30, 2002).

This notice solicits applications for research projects from eligible non-Federal and Federal applicants. In an effort to maximize the use of limited resources, applications from non-Federal, non-NOAA Federal and NOAA applicants will be competed against each other. Research proposals selected for funding from non-Federal

researchers will be funded through a project grant. Research proposals selected for funding from non-NOAA Federal applicants will be funded through an interagency transfer provided legal authority exists for the federal applicant to receive funds from another agency. Research proposals selected for funding from NOAA will be funded through NOAA.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of proposals at the COP office is 3 p.m. local time on July 11, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Submit the original and 13 copies of your proposal to the COP Office (SEBSCC 2001), SSMC#3, 9th Floor, Station 9700, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. In addition, submit an electronic copy of the proposal in either WordPerfect or MSWord format at time of initial application. NOAA Standard Form Applications with instructions are accessible on the following COP Internet Site: <http://www.cop.noaa.gov> under the COP Grants Support Section, Part D, Application Forms for Initial Proposal Submission.

Further information on this program and summaries and results of all projects funded under Phases I and II of SEBSCC are available from SEBSCC's web site at <http://www.pmel.noaa.gov/sebscc> and COP's web site at <http://www.cop.noaa.gov>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Technical Information: Allen Macklin at Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, 7600 Sand Point Way, Seattle, WA, 98115-0070, 206–526-6798, Internet: Allen.Macklin@noaa.gov, or Elizabeth Turner, SEBSCC 2001 Program Manager, Coastal Ocean Program Office, 301–713–3338/ext 135, Internet: Elizabeth.Turner@noaa.gov.

Business Management Information: Leslie McDonald, COP Grants Office, 301–713–3338/ext 137; Internet: Leslie.McDonald@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Program Description

For complete program description and other requirements criteria for the Coastal Ocean Program, see COP's General Grant Administration Terms and Conditions annual notification in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 49162, September 10, 1999) and at the COP home page. It is anticipated that final selections for funding will be made in late fiscal year 2000.

The Bering Sea ecosystem experiences interannual and climate variability. Oceanographic conditions observed during Phases I and II of SEBSCC