

ecosystem approach, (2) providing a public forum for the public to comment on the type, extent and compatibility of wildlife-dependent recreational uses within the refuge area, and (3) ensuring public involvement in refuge management decisions by providing a process for effective coordination, interaction, and cooperation with affected parties.

The CCP will address habitat and wildlife management, habitat protection and possible restoration, wildlife-dependent recreational uses, and adjacency issues that could affect the Refuge goals and management objectives that will be developed during this process. Public input into this planning process is essential. The Service will solicit comments from the public via noticed meetings, open houses, and written comments. Special mailings, newspaper articles, and announcements will inform people in the general area of the time and place of such opportunities for public input into the CCP.

Refuge Information

The South San Diego Unit of the San Diego NWR, located at the southern end of San Diego Bay, supports tens of thousands of migrating shorebirds, nesting seabirds, wintering sea ducks and other migratory waterfowl. Included within the refuge boundaries is a salt production operation that maintains about 1,050 acres of salt ponds. These ponds provide large amounts of food in the form of fish, brine shrimp and brine flies, all of which are particularly important for shorebirds and seabirds. This refuge provides nesting, feeding, and resting habitat for six endangered bird species, and feeding habitat for one listed sea turtle species.

The Sweetwater Marsh NWR, located in the southeast end of San Diego Bay, includes 316 acres of salt marsh and coastal uplands. This refuge provides habitat for two federally endangered species of bird (California Least Tern and Light-footed Clapper Rail), one federally endangered plant species (salt marsh bird's beak), the Belding's Savannah Sparrow (a State of California endangered bird species), and the Western Snowy Plover, a federally threatened species of bird. Sweetwater Marsh functions as an essential link between Multiple Species Conservation Program wildlands, the South San Diego Bay Unit, and the Tijuana Slough NWR in Imperial Beach.

Review of the CCP and associated environmental document will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et*

seq.), NEPA Regulations (40 CFR 1500–1509), other appropriate Federal laws and regulations, including the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvements Act of 1997, Executive Order 12996, and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those regulations. It is estimated that a draft CCP and NEPA document will be made available for public review in October 2001.

Dated: June 16, 2000.

Elizabeth H. Stevens,

Acting Manager, California/Nevada Operations, Sacramento, California.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Extension to Public Comment Period

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of extension to public comment period.

SUMMARY: This notice informs the public that the comment period for the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Boundary Revision—Environmental Impact Statement for Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex is extended.

DATES: The comment period has been extended to August 12, 2000. Comments will be considered during the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

ADDRESSES: Address comments and requests for more information to: Refuge Manager, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex, P.O. Box 1236, Fallon, NV 89406.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Hanson, Refuge Manager, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex (775) 423–5128.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published in the *Federal Register* of April 14, 2000 (Vol. 65, No. 73), that comments to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Boundary Revision draft Environmental Impact Statement were to be received on or before June 12, 2000. In response to public interest, the Service has granted two separate 30 day extensions to the public comment period.

Dated: June 16, 2000.

Elizabeth H. Stevens,

Acting CA/NV Operations Manager.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife: Extension of Comment Period on Draft Environmental Assessment and Application for an Incidental Take Permit of the Atlantic Coast Piping Plover in Massachusetts

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service provides notice to extend the public comment period on the draft Environmental Assessment and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife application to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for an incidental take permit pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (Act). The requested permit, which is for a period of three years, would authorize the incidental take of the threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) in Massachusetts. The proposed take would occur as a result of specific actions relating to the management of recreational use of beaches where breeding piping plovers are found. All interested parties are invited to submit comments on these proposals.

DATES: Written comments on the application and draft EA must be received no later than July 3, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the draft EA and application should be addressed to Field Supervisor, New England Field Office, 22 Bridge St., Unit 1, Concord, New Hampshire 03301–4986, telephone (603) 225–1411. Comments regarding the conservation plan will be forwarded to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for review and response.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susanna L. von Oettingen at the above address.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Atlantic Coast piping plover was listed as a threatened species on January 10, 1986. Because of its listing as threatened, the piping plover is protected by the Act's prohibitions against "take". However, the Service may issue permits to carry out otherwise prohibited activities involving endangered and threatened wildlife under certain circumstances. For threatened species, such permits are available for scientific purposes, incidental take, or special purposes consistent with the purposes of the Act.