

Affairs of the Office of the Solicitor. The Immediate Office of the Solicitor will provide legal advice to the Secretary. Therefore, ex parte communication on this matter with the Office of the Secretary or the Immediate Office of the Solicitor is prohibited. Any communication with the Office of the Secretary or the attorneys in the Immediate Office of the Solicitor regarding this review must be in writing and a copy of the communication must be served on all participants in the review as noted above.

Dated: June 19, 2000.

**John D. Leshy,**

*Solicitor.*

[FR Doc. 00-16093 Filed 6-23-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-10-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Endangered Species Permit Applications

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of permit applications.

**SUMMARY:** The following applicants have applied for a scientific research permit to conduct certain activities with endangered species pursuant to section 10 (a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

*Permit No. TE-028876*

*Applicant:* The Nature Conservancy, Portland, Oregon.

The applicant requests a permit to take (capture, handle, and release) the Lost River sucker (*Deltistes luxatus*) and shortnose sucker (*Chasmistes brevirostris*) in conjunction with restoration actions in the Williamson River and Agency Lake, Oregon, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

*Permit No. TE-026227*

*Applicant:* Joseph Silveira, Willows, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (harass by survey, collect and sacrifice) the Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*), San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*), and the Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*), and remove and reduce to possession specimens of *Cordylanthus palmatus*, *Cordylanthus mollis* ssp. *mollis*,

*Orcuttia californica*, *Orcuttia pilosa*, *Orcuttia viscida*, *Tuctorina greenei*, and *Tuctorina mucronata* in conjunction with surveys and the collection of voucher specimens throughout each species' range in California for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

*Permit No. TE-002716*

*Applicant:* Kenneth J. Halama, Riverside, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (capture and handle) the arroyo southwestern toad (*Bufo microscaphus californicus*) in conjunction with conducting natural history research throughout the species' range for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

*Permit No. TE-839213*

*Applicant:* David Philip Muth, Jr., Martinez, California.

The permittee requests an amendment to take (*harass by survey, collect and sacrifice*) the San Diego fairy shrimp (*Brachinecta sandiegonensis*) and the Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) in conjunction with surveys throughout each species' range in California for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

*Permit No. TE-839480*

*Applicant:* Richard Zembal, Laguna Hills, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (harass by survey, locate and monitor nests) the southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) and take (monitor nests, capture, mark, band, and release) the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) in conjunction with scientific research throughout each species range in California for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

*Permit No. TE-028810*

*Applicant:* Althouse and Meade, Inc., Paso Robles, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (capture and handle) the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) in conjunction with presence or absence surveys in Santa Barbara County, California for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

**DATES:** Written comments on these permit applications must be received on or before July 26, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Written data or comments should be submitted to the Chief—Endangered Species, Ecological Services, Fish and Wildlife Service, 911 NE. 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97232-4181; Fax: (503) 231-6243. Please refer to the respective permit number for each application when submitting comments. All comments received, including names and

addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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 within 20 days of the date of publication of this notice to the address above; telephone: (503) 231-2063. Please refer to the respective permit number for each application when requesting copies of documents.

Dated: June 19, 2000.

**Don Weathers,**

*Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.*

[FR Doc. 00-16033 Filed 6-23-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

**Notice of Availability of a "Lost Pines" Environmental Assessment/Habitat Conservation Plan for Assigned Permit Number TE-025997-0. For Issuance of an Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(B) Permit for the Incidental Take of the Endangered Houston Toad (*Bufo houstonensis*). During the Construction and Occupation of Single Family Residences (each on home-sites of 0.5 acres or less) in 45 subdivisions in Bastrop County, TX**

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office has prepared an Environmental Assessment/Habitat Conservation Plan for assigned permit number TE-025997-0 for issuance of an Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(B) permit for the incidental take of the Endangered Houston Toad. The Service proposes issuing endangered species permits to individual lot owners under an EA/HCP, where each permit would authorize the incidental take of the endangered Houston toad, directly or indirectly, from the construction and occupation of a single-family residence on an undeveloped lot in the 45 subdivisions covered under this EA/HCP. This alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative as it will allow for responsible development of the lots while minimizing and offsetting impacts to the Houston toad by providing for on-site and off-site conservation measures that will be used to promote the long-term survival of the species. It is also considered to provide the most simplified, expeditious, and effective

process by which landowners can comply with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act in a more efficient manner. The Service has divided the 45 subdivisions into two categories, those in low/marginal quality Houston toad habitat, and those in medium quality Houston toad habitat. The EA/HCP requires the same avoidance, minimization, and mitigation efforts from every lot owner, within their respective category. This negates the need and cost in both time and money to prepare individual HCPs and go through separate public review processes. Since this EA/HCP will have already gone out for public review and comment (through this Notice in the **Federal Register**), and been finalized, it would cover 8,476 undeveloped lots, covering a maximum of 4,238 acres of sub-optimal Houston toad habitat, as noted in the EA/HCP in the 45 listed subdivisions, and endangered species permits could be issued in a matter of days as opposed to months under the current permitting process.

The EA/HCP has been assigned permit number TE-025997-0. The requested permit issuance, which will be for a period of 5 years, would authorize the incidental take of the endangered Houston toad (*Bufo houstonensis*). The proposed take would occur as a result of the possible construction and occupation on 8,476 remaining undeveloped lots, covering a maximum of 4,238 acres of sub-optimal Houston toad habitat, in 45 subdivisions in Bastrop County, Texas.

A determination of jeopardy to the species or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will not be made until at least 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 10(c) of the Act and National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

**DATES:** Written comments on the application should be received on or before July 26, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to review the EA/HCP may obtain a copy by contacting: Austin Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, Texas 78758 (512/490-0057). Documents will be available for public inspection by written request, or by appointment only, during normal business hours (8 to 4:30) at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin, Texas. Written data or comments concerning the EA/HCP should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Austin Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at the above address. Please refer to permit

number TE-025997-0 when submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Contact the Austin Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the above address.

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

#### **Applicant**

This action will permanently disturb a maximum of 0.5 acres of Houston toad habitat within each eligible lot and result in indirect impacts within the subdivision. Each applicant will compensate for this incidental take of the Houston toad by providing mitigation funds to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the specific purpose of land acquisition, protection, and management within Houston toad habitat, as identified by the Service.

#### **Bryan Arroyo,**

*Acting Regional Director, Region 2,  
Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

[FR Doc. 00-16032 Filed 6-23-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4510-55-U**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **Geological Survey**

#### **Technology Transfer Act of 1986; Cooperative Research and Development Agreement With Rio Algom Exploration**

**AGENCY:** Geological Survey, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed cooperative research and development agreement (CRADA) negotiations.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is contemplating entering into a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with Rio Algom Exploration to conduct aerial surveys in Alaska.

**INQUIRIES:** If any other parties are interested in studying other areas with the USGS, please contact: Fredric Wilson, USGS-Alaska Section, 4200 University Dr., Anchorage, AK 99508-4667.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice is to meet the USGS requirement stipulated in the Survey Manual.

Dated: May 23, 2000.

**Linda C. Gundersen,**

*Associate Chief Geologist for Program  
Operations.*

[FR Doc. 00-15995 Filed 6-23-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-Y7-M**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **Bureau of Land Management**

[AZ-040-00-1040-AE]

#### **Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area Advisory Committee; Meeting Notice**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area Advisory Committee Meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The purpose of this notice is to announce the next meeting of the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area Advisory Committee Meeting. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to provide informed advice to the Safford Field Office Manager on Management of public lands in the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area (RNCA). The committee meets as needed, generally between two and four times a year.

The meeting will take place at the Bureau of Land Management, Safford Field Office on September 15, 2000 commencing at 9 a.m. and ending at 4 p.m. The meeting's agenda will consist of updates on livestock management, transportation system, public affairs, monitoring, and Lee Trail Headquarters relocation within the Gila Box RNCA. In addition, the meeting will include a update on the National Landscape Conservation System as it relates to the Gila Box RNCA. A public comment period will be provided from 9:45 a.m. to 10 a.m. for the public to address the committee on management of the Gila Box RNCA.

**DATES:** Meeting will be held on September 15, 2000 starting at 9 a.m.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jon Collins, Gila Box NCA Project Coordinator, Safford Field Office, 711 14th Avenue, Safford, Arizona 85546; telephone number (520) 384-4400.

Dated: June 15, 2000.

**William T. Civish,**

*Field Office Manager.*

[FR Doc. 00-15996 Filed 6-15-00; 8:45 am]

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