

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

The Buena Vista Lake shrew is found in marshes and sloughs within a site formerly known as the Kern Lake Preserve, Kern County, California. This subspecies may also occur in the Tulare Basin and at Kern National Wildlife Refuge, but the status and identity of animals at these other sites is unknown. No more than 38 individuals have been observed at Kern Lake Preserve since 1986. The only known extant Buena Vista Lake shrew population is threatened primarily by agricultural activities and potential impacts to local hydrology, uncertainty of water delivery, possible toxic effects from selenium poisoning, and random naturally occurring events.

We intend that any final action resulting from this proposal will be as accurate and as effective as possible. Therefore, comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested party concerning this proposed rule are sought. Comments are sought particularly regarding:

(1) Biological, commercial, or other relevant data concerning any threat (or lack thereof) to the Buena Vista Lake shrew;

(2) The location of any additional populations of this subspecies and habitat association (including specific vegetation and soil type), and the reasons why any habitat should or should not be determined to be critical habitat as provided by section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*);

(3) Additional information concerning the range, distribution, and population size and genetics of this subspecies;

(4) Current or planned activities in the subject area and their possible impacts on this subspecies; and

(5) Additional relevant information concerning the life-history, habits, and dispersal of this subspecies.

We published a proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (65 FR 35033) on June 1, 2000 to list the Buena Vista Lake shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*) as endangered. The original comment period closed on July 31, 2000. We are reopening the comment period in order to provide the public an additional opportunity to provide written or oral comment on the proposal.

Our practice is to make comments available for public review during regular business hours, including names and home addresses of respondents. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the rulemaking record, which we will

honor to the extent allowable by law. In some circumstances, we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish for us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Author: The primary author of this notice is Dwight Harvey (see **ADDRESSES** section).

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: August 4, 2000.

Elizabeth H. Stevens,
Manager-California/Nevada Operations
Office.

[FR Doc. 00-20605 Filed 8-11-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-U

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****50 CFR Part 17**

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants: Announcement of Public Informational Meetings and Public Hearings for the Proposal to Reclassify and Remove the Gray Wolf From the List of Endangered and Threatened Species and To Establish Special Regulations for Threatened Gray Wolves

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Announcement of public informational meetings and public hearings.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the locations and times of public informational meetings that have been scheduled to provide information on the proposal to reclassify and delist the gray wolf and establish special regulations for threatened gray wolves. We also are announcing the locations and times of public hearings scheduled to receive verbal public comments on the proposal.

DATES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

ADDRESSES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct all comments, questions or requests for additional information to us

by using the Gray Wolf phone line: 612-713-7337, facsimile: 612-713-5292, electronic mail: graywolfmail@fws.gov, website: <http://midwest.fws.gov/wolf>, or write to Gray Wolf Questions, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Building, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We will hold public informational meetings at the following locations. All meetings will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m. and will use an open house format, including a slide presentation that will run approximately every half hour.

Denver, Colorado, on August 15, 2000, at the Holiday Inn at Hampden, 7390 W. Hampden Avenue, (Lakewood).

Grand Junction, Colorado, on August 16, 2000, at the Holiday Inn, 755 Horizon Drive.

Salt Lake City, Utah, on August 17, 2000, at the Hilton Salt Lake City Center, 255 South West Temple.

Helena, Montana, on August 31, 2000, at Cavanaugh's Colonial Hotel-Best Western, 2301 Colonial Drive.

Kalispell, Montana, on September 6, 2000, at the West Coast Inn, 20 North Main Street.

Missoula, Montana, on September 7, 2000, at the Best Western Grant Creek Inn, 5280 Grant Creek Road.

Casper, Wyoming, on September 12, 2000, at the Casper Events Center, #1 Events Drive.

Bozeman, Montana, on September 14, 2000, at the Wingate Inn, 2305 Catron Street.

We will hold public hearings at the following locations. All hearings will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m.

Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 12, 2000, at the Hilton Salt Lake City Center, 255 South West Temple.

Helena, Montana, on October 18, 2000, at Cavanaugh's Colonial Inn—Best Western, 2301 Colonial Drive.

Denver, Colorado, on October 26, 2000, at the Holiday Inn at Hampden, 7390 W. Hampden Avenue, (Lakewood).

Background

On July 13, 2000, we published a proposed regulation (65 FR 43450) to reclassify and remove the gray wolf from the list of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. The proposal also includes three special regulations for those distinct populations segments of gray wolves that would become classified as threatened. This proposal would affect all the conterminous 48 States except Minnesota. Due to the complexity and

wide geographic scope of the proposal, we are scheduling public informational meetings and public hearings at a number of locations. The locations and times of public informational meetings and public hearings in the Midwest, Northwest, and Northeast, were published on July 26, 2000 (65 FR 45956). We will publicize the locations and times of any additional public informational meetings or public hearings in subsequent notices.

The purpose of the public informational meetings is to provide additional opportunities for the public

to gain information and ask questions about the proposal. These informational sessions should assist interested parties in preparing substantive comments on the proposal.

The public hearings will be the only method for comments and data to be presented verbally for entry into the public record of this rulemaking and for our consideration during our final decision. Comments and data also can be submitted in writing or electronically, as described in the July 13, 2000, proposal and in the **FOR**

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section above.

Author

The author of this notice is Patricia Worthing, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, Colorado.

Authority: The authority for this notice is the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531) *et seq.*

Dated: August 8, 2000.

Susan E. Baker,

Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 00-20501 Filed 8-11-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P