

This notice also advises the public that the Service has made a preliminary determination that issuance of the ESP will not result in significant environmental, economic, social, historical or cultural impacts and is, therefore, categorically excluded from review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), pursuant to 516 Departmental Manual 2, Appendix 1 and 516 Departmental Manual 6, Appendix 1. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10 of the Act and our CCAA Policy (**Federal Register** Vol. 64, No. 116, June 17, 1999, pp. 32726–32736). The Service specifically requests information, views, and opinions from the public via this notice. Further, the Service is specifically soliciting information regarding the adequacy of the CCAA as measured against the Service's CCAA Policy.

Dated: October 22, 2001.

H. Dale Hall,

Acting Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 01–27213 Filed 10–29–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Preparation of an Environmental Assessment for Shell Offshore Inc.'s Proposed Deepwater Development Plan Offshore Alabama (NaKika Project)

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service, Interior.

ACTION: Preparation of an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: The Minerals Management Service (MMS) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for a proposed deepwater development plan to develop and produce hydrocarbon reserves 115–118 miles offshore Alabama in Mississippi Canyon Blocks 474 and 520.

This EA implements the tiering process outlined in 40 CFR 1502.20, which encourages agencies to tier environmental documents, eliminating repetitive discussions of the same issue. By use of tiering from the most recent Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Gulf of Mexico Central Planning Area for Lease Sales 169, 172, 175, 178, and 182 and by referencing related environmental documents, this EA concentrates on environmental issues specific to the proposed action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood

Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123–2394, Mr. Clay Pilié', telephone (504) 736–2443.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The MMS GOM Region received an Initial Development Operations Coordination Document (DOCD) from Shell Offshore Inc. (Shell) that proposes to develop and produce hydrocarbon reserves using facilities located in Mississippi Canyon Blocks 474 and 520. The DOCD was assigned a plan control number of N–7166 and the project is referred to as the NaKika Project. Shell proposes to complete the previously drilled Mississippi Canyon Block 520 No. 1 Well (Herschel) and install the centrally-located floating semisubmersible-shaped host facility (NaKika) in Mississippi Canyon Block 474. The NaKika host facility will support the facilities, equipment, flowline risers, and export pipelines necessary to develop the reserves from 10 satellite subsea wells located in five independent fields—Kepler (Mississippi Canyon Block 383), Ariel (Mississippi Canyon 429 Unit), Fourier (Mississippi Canyon 522 Unit), Herschel (Mississippi Canyon 522 Unit), and East Anstey (Mississippi Canyon 607 Unit).

The NaKika host facility will be permanently moored by a 16-point, semi-taut wire rope, chain, and suction pile mooring system. The hull portion of the NaKika host facility is comprised of four square steel columns, 56 feet wide and 142 feet high, and four rectangular steel pontoons, 41 feet wide and 35 feet high, which connect the bottoms of the four columns. Topside facilities are comprised of four modules—quarters, process, east receiving, and west receiving. The quarters module will house up to 60 people.

The water depth at the NaKika host facility is approximately 6,340 feet. The project will use existing onshore support bases in Venice (air transportation) and Port Fourchon (marine transportation), Louisiana, to support the proposed activities.

Oil and gas produced at the NaKika project will be transported by right-of-way pipelines. These pipelines will connect with existing offshore infrastructure for final transport to shore.

The proposed action analyzed in the EA will be the development plan as proposed by Shell. Alternatives will include the proposed action with additional mitigations and no action (i.e., disapproval of the plan). The analyses in the EA will examine the potential environmental effects of the proposal and alternatives.

Public Comments: The MMS requests interested parties to submit comments

regarding issues that should be addressed in the EA to the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Office of Leasing and Environment, Attention: Regional Supervisor (MS 5410), 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70123–2394. Comments must be submitted no later than 30 days from the publication of this notice.

Dated: October 9, 2001.

Chris C. Oynes,

Regional Director, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region.

[FR Doc. 01–27253 Filed 10–29–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Park Service

Federal Aviation Administration

Membership in the National Parks Overflights Advisory Group

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior, and Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service (NPS) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in accordance with the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000; established the National Parks Overflights Advisory Group (NPOAG). The NPOAG was formed to provide continuing advice and counsel with respect to commercial air tour operations over and near national parks. This notice informs the public of the addition of three new members to the NPOAG.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Howard Nesbitt, Flight Standards Service, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591, telephone: (202) 493–4981, or Marvin Jensen, Soundscapes Office, National Park Service, 1201 Oak Ridge Drive, Suite 200, Ft. Collins, Colorado, 80525, telephone: (970) 225–3563.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 (the Act) was enacted on April 5, 2000, as Public Law 106–181. The Act required the establishment of the advisory group within 1 year after its enactment. The advisory group is comprised of a balanced group of representatives of general aviation, commercial air tour operations, environmental concerns, and Native American tribes.

The advisory group provides "advice, information, and recommendations to the Administrator and the Director—

(1) On the implementation of this title [the Act] and the amendments made by this title;

(2) On commonly accepted quiet aircraft technology for use in commercial air tour operations over a national park or tribal lands, which will receive preferential treatment in a given air tour management plan;

(3) On other measures that might be taken to accommodate the interests of visitors to national parks; and

(4) At the request of the Administrator and the Director, safety, environmental, and other issues related to commercial air tour operations over a national park or tribal lands."

Members of the advisory group may be allowed certain travel expenses as authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, for intermittent Government service.

An initial assignment was made to the group of seven members representing aviation, environmental and Native American cultural interests: Chip Dennerlein and Charles Maynard (environmental), Andy Cebula and Joe Corrao (aviation) and Germaine White (Native American). (See 66 FR 32974; June 19, 2001.) At the first meeting of the NPOAG, on August 28, 2001, the group decided that the addition of three new members would achieve a better balance of interests representing the group. The additional members would represent fixed wing air tour operators, environmental interests and Native American cultural interests.

By **Federal Register** notice of September 25, 2001, the FAA and NPS invited members of the public from the desired areas and interested in serving on the advisory group, to contact either the FAA or NPS contact person. Five persons expressed an interest in serving on the NPOAG in addition to the original names submitted earlier when the group was formed. The FAA and NPS have selected three persons to serve as additional members of the NPOAG: Alan Stephens will represent aviation interests, in particular those of fixed-wing operators; Richard Deertrack will represent Native American interests; and Susan Gunn will represent environmental interests. There are now a total of 10 members of the NPOAG.

The next meeting of the NPOAG is being planned for late 2001.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October 24, 2001.

Louis C. Cusimano,

Acting Director, Flight Standards Service.

[FR Doc. 01-27294 Filed 10-29-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Lower Santa Ynez River Fish Management Plan and Cachuma Project Biological Opinion, Santa Barbara County, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/report (EIS/R).

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB) will prepare a joint EIS/R on the management actions and projects included in the: (1) Lower Santa Ynez River Fish Management Plan (FMP) prepared by Reclamation and other agencies and parties involved in the Cachuma Project; and (2) the Biological Opinion (BO) prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the Cachuma Project relative to the endangered southern steelhead population that resides in the Santa Ynez River. Management actions in the FMP and BO are designed to improve habitat for the steelhead along the river downstream of Lake Cachuma through mandated flow, habitat, and passage improvements.

DATES: Reclamation and COMB will hold a scoping meeting at 7 p.m. on November 19, 2001, in Solvang, California to seek public input on alternatives, possible impacts, and issues to be addressed in the EIS/R. Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered should be sent to the address below by December 3, 2001.

ADDRESSES: The scoping meeting will be at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 1745 Mission Drive in Solvang. Written comments on the scope of the EIS/R should be sent to Mr. David Young, Bureau of Reclamation, South-Central California Area Office, 1243 N Street, Fresno, CA 93721, or by phone at 559-487-5127, or by fax to 559-487-5130.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Young at the above address, telephone: (559) 487-5127.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In June 1994, the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in

Research and Fish Maintenance (Fish MOU) was executed among various parties with interests along the Santa Ynez River, and is currently being continued through the 2001 Fish MOU. The MOU provides water for fish studies and fish habitat and passage. Since 1993, the Santa Ynez River Technical Advisory Committee (SYRTAC), comprised of various biologists and resource agency personnel, has directed the studies and releases. Signatories to the 1994 MOU include Reclamation, the Santa Barbara County Water Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Santa Ynez Water River Conservation District—Improvement District #1 (SYRWCD ID#1), Cachuma Conservation Release Board (CCRB), City of Lompoc, and Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District.

One of the primary objectives of the Fish MOU is to identify management actions to improve conditions for native fish and other aquatic resources, including southern steelhead. A draft FMP was prepared by the SYRTAC and issued for public comment in 2000. A final FMP was issued in October 2000. It incorporated the requirements in the BO for the Cachuma Project independently issued by NMFS in September 2000, which includes mandatory terms and conditions that require Reclamation to implement 15 specific reasonable and prudent measures to minimize take of the southern steelhead. Reclamation is currently implementing these measures in coordination with COMB. The 2001 Fish MOU supports the implementation of the BO and the FMP.

The FMP and BO management actions have been designed to benefit steelhead and other aquatic species directly and indirectly by: (1) Creating new habitat and improving existing habitat in the lower river and tributaries; (2) improving access to spawning and rearing habitats in the lower river and tributaries; and (3) increasing public awareness and support for beneficial actions on private lands. Many management actions can be implemented independent of others and as such, can be considered individual "projects."

The FMP management actions or projects would be implemented by one or more agencies, depending upon funding sources, location of a project on federal versus non-federal land, and whether the project is also a mandatory requirement of the steelhead BO. Agencies that may implement projects separately or jointly include