

captivity, including 5 offspring born at the holding facility. The WDFW has scheduled additional capture operations over the next 30 days in order to secure more animals for the captive breeding program. The intent is to capture additional animals from the wild that will complement the genetic profiles and potential breeding scenarios of those already in captivity. Any pygmy rabbits that are not considered essential to the captive breeding program will be left in the wild, and ongoing management to protect this portion of the population will continue.

Delay in the WDFW's planned activities due to the 30-day public comment period could jeopardize the success of the captive breeding program and, ultimately, the long-term security of the Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit. Individuals within the wild portion of this population may experience significant mortality due to increased susceptibility to predation and inclement weather with the onset of winter, and additional animals may not be available for capture later in the season. Even if this population does not undergo further decline this winter, any wild individuals will likely have weakened body conditions and be more susceptible to capture-related stress and mortality if captured later in the season. Capture operations in midwinter may also be compromised by seasonal precipitation and/or low temperatures. Finally, capturing any additional animals later in the season will give them less time to acclimate to the holding facilities, and they may be unavailable for breeding efforts planned for early spring 2002.

Dated: December 6, 2001.

Rowan W. Gould,

Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

[FR Doc. 01-31193 Filed 12-18-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Endangered and Threatened Species Permit Applications

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of application.

The following applicant has applied for a permit to conduct certain activities with endangered species. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*).

PRT-697830

Applicant: Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

The applicant requests an amendment to his permit for scientific take activities of listed species in Region 3 to add the following species for scientific purposes and the enhancement of propagation or survival of the species in the wild, in accordance with listing, recovery outlines, recovery plans and/or other Service work for the species: Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), Whooping crane (*Grus americana*), Lake Erie water snake (*Nerodia sipedon insularum*), Tumbling Creek cavesnail (*Antrobia culveri*), Scaleshell (*Leptodea leptodon*), Cave crayfish (*Cambarus aculabrum*), Short's bladderpod (*Lesquerella globosa*), Short's goldenrod (*Solidago shortii*), and Virginia sneezeweed (*Helenium virginicum*).

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056, and must be received within 30 days of the date of this publication.

Documents and other information submitted with this application are available for review by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: Mr. Peter Fasbender, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056. Telephone: (612) 713-5343; Fax: (612) 713-5292; E-mail: peter-fasbender@fws.gov.

Dated: December 7, 2001.

Lynn M. Lewis,

Acting Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

[FR Doc. 01-31194 Filed 12-18-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Endangered and Threatened Species Permit Application

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of application.

The following applicant has applied for a permit amendment to conduct certain activities with endangered species. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*).

Permit Number TE 049738

Applicant: Third Rock Consultants, LLC., Lexington, Kentucky

The applicant requests a permit to take (collect) the following species: Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), gray bat (*M. grisescens*), Virginia big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus*), Ozark big-eared bat (*C. t. ingens*), copperbelly water snake (*Nerodia erythrogaster neglecta*), blackside dace (*Phoxinus cumberlandensis*), duskytail darter (*Etheostoma percnurum*), relict darter (*E. chienense*), palezone shiner (*Notropis albizonatus*), pygmy madtom (*Noturus stanauli*), yellowfin madtom (*N. flavipinnis*), slender chub (*Erimystax cahni*), spotfin chub (*Cyprinella monacha*), Cumberland elktoe (*Alasmidonta atropurpurea*), fanshell (*Cyprogenia stegaria*), Cumberlandian combshell (*Epioblasma brevidens*), oyster mussel (*E. capsaeformis*), catspaw (*E. obliquata obliquata*), northern riffleshell (*E. torulosa rangiana*), pink mucket (*Lampsilis abrupta*), slabside pearl mussel (*Lexingtonia dolabelloides*), ring pink (*Obovaria retusa*), little-wing pearl mussel (*Pegias fabula*), orangefoot pimpleback (*Plethobasus cooperianus*), clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), Cumberland pigtoe (*P. gibberum*), rough pigtoe (*P. plenum*), fat pocketbook (*Potamilus capax*), fluted kidneyshell (*Ptychobranthus subtentum*), Cumberland monkeyface (*Quadrula intermedia*), and Cumberland bean (*Villosa trabalis*). Activities are proposed for studies to identify populations of listed species and to develop methods to minimize or avoid project related impacts to those populations. The scientific research is aimed at enhancement of survival of the species in the wild.

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Operations, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056, and must be received within 30 days of the date of this publication.

Documents and other information submitted with this application are available for review by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Operations, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056. Telephone: (612) 713-5343; Fax: (612) 713-5292.

Dated: November 29, 2001.

Charles M. Wooley,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

[FR Doc. 01-31195 Filed 12-18-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Migratory Bird Permits; Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Double-crested Cormorant Management

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meetings; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or we) invites public participation in public meetings associated with the comment period for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on double-crested cormorant management. The DEIS has been prepared under the authority of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and analyzes the potential environmental impacts of several management alternatives to address conflicts associated with double-crested cormorants. This notice describes the proposed action and the other five management alternatives analyzed in the DEIS; identifies the locations, dates, and times of public meetings; and identifies the Service official to whom comments may be directed.

DATES: Written comments regarding the DEIS should be submitted by February 28, 2002, to the address below. Dates and times for ten public meetings are listed in the table under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the DEIS should be mailed to Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Room 634, Arlington, VA 22203. Written comments on the DEIS can be sent by the following two methods:

- (1) By mail to the above address; or
- (2) By email to:

cormorant_eis@fws.gov.

Please include your name and mailing address in all comments submitted; anonymous comments will not be considered. The public meetings will be held at the locations listed in the table under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jon Andrew, Division of Migratory Bird Management, (703) 358-1714.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 8, 1999, we published a notice of intent in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 60826) to prepare an EIS and national management plan for double-crested cormorants in the contiguous United States. This notice began the public scoping period, during which we received over 1,400 written comments and held scoping meetings attended by over 700 individuals. On December 3, 2001, we notified the public of the availability of the DEIS in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 60218). In this notice, we indicated that the comment period would end on January 15, 2002. However, due to the timing of public meetings and requests from the public, we are extending the comment period to February 28, 2002. In preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement, we will consider all public comments received on or before this date.

All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the public record. The public may inspect comments during normal business hours in Room 634, Arlington Square Building, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia. Such requests will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1506.6(f)). Individual respondents may request that we withhold their name and/or home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. If a respondent wishes us to withhold his/her name and/or address, this must be stated prominently at the beginning of the document.

Alternatives

The DEIS describes and evaluates six alternatives for the purposes of reducing conflicts associated with cormorants, enhancing the flexibility of natural resource agencies to deal with

cormorant conflicts, and ensuring the health and viability of cormorant populations. Alternatives, including the proposed action, were analyzed with regard to their potential impacts on cormorant populations, fish, other birds, vegetation, federally listed threatened and endangered species, water quality and human health, economic impacts (including aquaculture and sport fishing-related economies), fish hatcheries and environmental justice, property losses, and existence and aesthetic values. We analyzed the anticipated environmental effects of the following management alternatives: (1) Continue current cormorant management practices (No Action); (2) implement only non-lethal management techniques; (3) expand current cormorant damage management practices; (4) establish a new Depredation Order to address public resource conflicts (PROPOSED ACTION); (5) reduce regional cormorant populations; and (6) establish frameworks for a cormorant hunting season.

The proposed action would establish a Public Resource Depredation Order that allows State, Federal, and Tribal land management agencies to manage cormorants that are injurious to public resources such as fisheries, vegetation, and other wildlife species. Thus, control actions could take place without a federal permit on the agency's lands and waters or nearby private lands and waters (with appropriate landowner permission). Agencies that conduct control activities under the Public Resource Depredation Order would be subject to reporting and monitoring requirements, overseen by the Service. Additionally, under the proposed action, the current Aquaculture Depredation Order would be expanded to allow control of cormorants by wildlife damage professionals at winter roost sites; and Director's Order 27, restricting the use of depredation permits at public fish cultural facilities, would be revoked.

Public Meetings

Ten public meetings will be held at the locations and times listed below:

Date	City	Location	Time
January 7, 2002	Green Bay, Wisconsin	Ramada Plaza Hotel, 2750 Ramada Way	7:00 PM
January 8, 2002	Mackinaw City, Michigan	Hamilton Inn Select, 701 S. Huron Avenue	7:00 PM
January 16, 2002	Washington, DC	Main Interior Building Auditorium, 1849 C Street, NW	10:00 AM
January 28, 2002	Jackson, Mississippi	Ramada Inn Southwest, 1525 Ellis Avenue	7:00 PM
January 29, 2002	Little Rock, Arkansas	University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 S. University Avenue.	7:00 PM