

DATES: Written comments must be received by April 22, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Mr. Bruce Halstead, Project Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1655 Heindon Road, Arcata, California, 95521; facsimile (707) 822-8411. (See Public Review and Comments section below.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Ken Hoffman at the above address or telephone (707) 822-7201.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under a Safe Harbor Agreement, participating property owners voluntarily undertake management activities on their property to enhance, restore, or maintain habitat benefitting species listed under the Act. Safe Harbor Agreements encourage private and other non-Federal property owners to implement conservation efforts for listed species by assuring property owners they will not be subject to increased property use restrictions if their efforts attract listed species to their property or increase the numbers or distribution of listed species already on their property. Application requirements and issuance criteria for enhancement of survival permits through Safe Harbor Agreements are found in 50 CFR 17.22(c).

We have worked with Forster-Gill, Inc., to develop a Safe Harbor Agreement for the creation and enhancement of habitat for the northern spotted owl on the Forster-Gill, Inc., properties in Blue Lake, California. There are two baseline conditions that will be maintained under this Agreement: (1) Protection of an 11.2-acre no-harvest area that will buffer the most recent active northern spotted owl nest site, but will also be maintained in the absence of a nest site; and (2) maintenance of 216 acres on the property such that the trees will always average 12 to 24 inch diameter at breast height with a canopy closure of 60 to 100 percent. The property is currently at the lower end of the diameter and canopy closure ranges. By the end of the Agreement, the property will be at the upper end of the diameter and canopy closure ranges. Under this Agreement, Forster-Gill, Inc., will: (1) Annually survey and monitor for the species location and reproductive status; (2) protect all active nest sites (locations where nesting behavior is observed during any of the previous 3 years) with a no-harvest area that buffers the nest site by no less than 300 feet and limits timber harvest operations, within 1,000 feet of an active nest site during the

breeding season, to the use of existing haul roads; and (3) manage the second growth redwood timber on the property in a manner that maintains suitable northern spotted owl habitat while creating over time the multi-layered canopy structure with an older, larger tree component associated with high quality spotted owl habitat.

We anticipate that this Agreement will provide, maintain, and enhance for the 80-year life of the Agreement over 200 acres of suitable northern spotted owl habitat within a matrix of private timberland.

Consistent with Safe Harbor policy, we propose to issue a permit to Forster-Gill, Inc., authorizing incidental take of northern spotted owls which may move on to the enrolled lands, and their progeny, as a result of lawful activities on the Forster-Gill, Inc., Blue Lake Properties, so long as baseline conditions are maintained and terms of the Agreement are implemented. These activities include unintentional take of northern spotted owls from long-term timber management and related activities including the felling, skidding and transport of timber and other related forest products. As the long-term timber management and related activities proposed under this Agreement will not result in the elimination of any currently suitable spotted owl habitat, it is unlikely that take would occur in this manner. However, in the event that an owl pair moves on to, or within 300 feet of the enrolled property, the application of uneven aged timber management using single tree selection silviculture between 300 and 500 feet from an active nest site, may result in incidental take through degradation of the habitat, e.g. alteration of the microclimate within the proximity of the nest site. The development and maintenance of high quality habitat in a matrix of private timberland subject to even aged management regimes will provide a relatively stable habitat condition that we believe will provide high productivity for multiple generations of spotted owls. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the Agreement and the activities it covers, which are facilitated by the allowable incidental take, is expected to provide a net benefit to the northern spotted owl.

We provide this notice pursuant to section 10(c) of the Act and pursuant to implementing regulations for NEPA (40 CFR 1506.6). We will evaluate the permit application, associated documents, and comments submitted therein to determine whether the permit application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the Act and NEPA

regulations. If, upon completion of the 30-day comment period, we determine that the requirements are met, we will sign the Agreement and issue an enhancement of survival permit under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Act to Forster-Gill, Inc., for take of northern spotted owls incidental to otherwise lawful activities in accordance with the terms of the Agreement.

Public Review and Comments

Individuals wishing copies of the permit application, the Environmental Action Statement, or copies of the full text of the Agreement, including a map of the proposed permit area, references, and legal descriptions of the proposed permit area, should contact the office and personnel listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above.

If you wish to comment on the permit application, Environmental Action Statement, or the Agreement, you may submit your comments to the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this document. Comments and materials received, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review, by appointment, during normal business hours at the address in the **ADDRESSES** section above and will become part of the public record, pursuant to section 10(c) of the Act.

Dated: March 15, 2002.

John Engbring,

Deputy Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office., Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Submission of Paperwork Reduction Act Request to Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces that the Information Collection Request for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Form-4432, Verification of Indian Preference for Employment in the BIA and the Indian Health Service (IHS) has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The BIA is soliciting public comments on the subject proposal.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before April 22, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent directly to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503. Send a copy of your comments to Duane Bird Bear, Chief, Division of Tribal Government Services, Office of Tribal Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street, NW., MS-4660-MIB, Washington, DC 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Newman, 202-208-2473.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A 60-day notice for public comments was published in the *Federal Register* on November 21, 2001 (66 FR 58514). No comments were received on the workload burden or the form itself (OMB Control No. 1076-0160) during this public comment period. Comments were received on January 28, 2002, but they concerned substantive requirements for descendants of members of federally recognized Indian tribes but who were not themselves enrolled members of the tribe. This issue will be addressed during rule revision.

I. Abstract

The purpose of the Indian Preference Form is to encourage qualified Indians to seek preference in employment with the BIA and the IHS. BIA collects information under the proposed regulations to ensure compliance with Indian preference hiring requirements. The information collection relates only to individuals applying for employment with the BIA and the IHS. The tribe's involvement is limited to verifying membership information submitted by the applicant. The collection of information allows certain persons who are of Indian descent to receive preference when appointments are made to vacancies in positions with the BIA and IHS as well as in any unit that has been transferred intact from the BIA to a Bureau or office within the Department of the Interior, or the Department of Health and Human Services and that continues to perform the functions formerly performed as part of the BIA or the IHS. You are eligible for preference if (a) you are a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe; (b) you are a descendant of a member and you were residing within the present boundaries of any Indian reservation on June 1, 1934; (c) you are an Alaska Native; or (d) you possess one-half degree Indian blood derived

from tribes that are indigenous to the United States. The information is submitted in order to obtain or retain a benefit, namely, preference in employment with the BIA and the IHS.

II. Request for Comments

The Department of the Interior invites comments on:

(a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(b) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including the hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumption used;

(c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The Office of Management and Budget has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the information collection but may respond after 30 days; therefore, comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted to OMB within 30 days in order to assure their maximum consideration. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. If you wish us to withhold any information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will honor your request to the extent allowable by law. Please note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless a currently valid OMB control number is displayed. You may request copies of the information collection forms and our submission to OMB from the person listed in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

III. Data

Title: Verification of Indian Preference for Employment in the BIA and the IHS, BIA Form 4432.

OMB approval number: 1076-0160.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Description of respondents: Qualified Indians who are seeking preference in employment with the BIA and IHS. Approximately a total of 5,000 applications for preference in

employment are received annually by the BIA field offices.

Frequency: On occasion as needed.

Estimated completion time: The average burden of submitting an Indian Preference Form is 30 minutes including time for reviewing instructions, searching data sources and assembling the information needed.

Total annual burden: 5,000 × ½ hour = 2500 hours.

Estimated cost: There are no costs to consider, except postage and the cost of duplicating the original verification form, because verification of the information is already available for other reasons. The form will be used by an applicant to seek documentation of Indian descent or membership from either a tribal official or the BIA.

Dated: March 4, 2002.

Neal A. McCaleb,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Availability of a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area and Associated Draft Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (DRAMP) for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) and associated Draft Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

SUMMARY: The DRAMP and Draft Amendment to the CDCA Plan provide direction and guidance for the management of public lands and resources of the ISDRA, including goals and management objectives, management prescriptions in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, management direction specific to discrete areas within the ISDRA, and monitoring and evaluation requirements. The DEIS evaluates the DRAMP and alternatives to the DRAMP, including necessary amendments to the CDCA Plan.

DATES: Written comments on the DRAMP, Draft Amendment to the CDCA Plan and DEIS will be accepted until