

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****National Park Service****Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the National Coal Heritage Area, Management Action Plan**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Availability of draft environmental impact statement for the National Coal Heritage Area Management Plan.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Park Service announces the availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA) in West Virginia. The National Coal Heritage Area Act of 1996 requires the NCHA, with guidance from the National Park Service, to prepare a management plan for the heritage area. The purpose of the Management Action Plan is to (1) set forth the integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management policies and programs in order to retain, enhance, and interpret the significant values of the lands, water, and structures of the Area. (2) describe the guidelines and standards for projects that involve preservation, restoration, maintenance, operations, interpretation, and promotion of buildings, structures, facilities, and sites; and (3) set forth the responsibilities of the State of West Virginia, units of local government, nonprofit entities, in order to further historic preservation and compatible economic revitalization.

The study area, designated as the National Coal Heritage Area, includes the following eleven counties in the southern region of West Virginia Boone, Cabell, Fayette, Logan, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne, and Wyoming.

The National Park Service (NPS) maintains three park sites within the region: New River Gorge National River, The Bluestone National Scenic River and the Gauley National Recreation Area. Otherwise the majority of land is non-federal and the NPS assumes a management role only within their park units. Instead, conservation, interpretation and other activities are managed by partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and private nonprofit organizations. The national heritage area is managed by the State of West Virginia Division of Culture and History, and Division of Tourism. The National Park Service has been

authorized by Congress to provide technical and financial assistance for a limited period to the state (up to 10 years from the time of the designation in 1996).

**DATES:** The DEIS will remain on Public Review through April 30th. Public Meetings will be scheduled and notice will be made of the meeting through a broad public mailing and publication in the local newspaper.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Peter Samuel, Project Leader, Philadelphia Support Office, National Park Service, U.S. Custom House, 200 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106, [peter\\_samuel@nps.gov](mailto:peter_samuel@nps.gov), 215-597-1848.

(If you correspond using the internet, please include your name and return address in your e-mail message. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish 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.)

Dated: February 20, 2002.

**Len Emerson,**

*Assistant Regional Director, Northeast Region.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****National Park Service****Non-Native Deer Management Plan, Point Reyes National Seashore, Marin County, CA; Notice of Scoping**

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) that public scoping has been initiated for a conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process for preparing a non-native deer management plan for Point Reyes National Seashore. The purpose of the scoping process is to elicit early public comment regarding issues and concerns, a suitable range of alternatives and appropriate mitigating measures, and the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts that should be addressed.

*Background:* Point Reyes National Seashore is a unit of the National Park System. It was established by Congress on September 13, 1962 "to save and preserve, for the purpose of public recreation, benefit, and inspiration, a portion of the diminishing seashore of the United States that remains undeveloped" (Pub. L. 87-657). Fallow deer (*Dama dama*) and axis deer (*Axis axis*) from the San Francisco Zoo were introduced to Point Reyes in the mid 1940s prior to the establishment of the National Seashore. They are native to Mediterranean Europe and southern Asia, respectively. Their populations were controlled by hunting until commencement of park management operations by the National Park Service in 1971. Subsequently, national park rangers culled non-native deer in an attempt to control their populations. This culling decreased after 1995, and numbers of the non-native deer have apparently increased. The native cervid fauna at Point Reyes comprises two species, black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus columbianus*) and tule elk (*Cervus elaphus nannodes*). The latter was extirpated in the 19th Century, reintroduced to the area in 1978, and currently is the subject of a program to establish a free-ranging herd within designated wilderness area in the park.

Point Reyes National Seashore has never formulated or published a management plan for the non-native deer within its boundaries. Large population sizes of the two species of non-native deer, the ongoing management program to re-establish and favor the two native deer species, and potential adverse effect of forage competition with and disease transmission from the non-native to the native deer necessitate the development and implementation of a non-native deer management plan for Point Reyes National Seashore.

*Comment Process:* As noted, the National Park Service will undertake an environmental analysis effort to address issues and alternatives for non-native deer management at Point Reyes National Seashore. At this time, it has not been determined whether an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared; however, this scoping process will aid in the preparation of either document.

As the first step in this undertaking, a public scoping and information meeting will be held May 4, 2002 at the Dance Palace in Point Reyes Station. For those unable to attend the meeting, a scoping document will be available through the park. At this time its anticipated that the primary topics to be