

and conservation measures so as to preserve their historical integrity. Broader interpretive themes highlighting the more complex role of Fort Davis in the history of the American West would complement existing interpretive programs. The interior of the post hospital will be partially restored and refurnished to more fully tell the story of Fort Davis and therefore provide the visitors with a more comprehensive learning experience. This restoration and refurbishing project would be dependent on partnerships resulting in private sector funding. The park will continue to encourage adjacent landowners to use their land in ways that complement park values, thereby promoting the natural and scenic character of the landscape.

This course of action and four alternatives were analyzed in the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements. The full range of foreseeable environmental consequences was assessed, and appropriate mitigating measures were identified.

The Record of Decision includes a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, a finding on impairment of park resources and values, a listing of measures to minimize environmental harm, an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process, and a Statement of Findings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jerry Yarbrough, Fort Davis NHS, 1379, Lieutenant Flipper Dr., Fort Davis, TX 79734; 915-426-3225 (P), Jerry_Yarbrough@nps.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Copies of the Record of Decision may be obtained from the contact listed above or online at <http://planning.nps.gov/parkweb/what.cfm?RecordID=56>.

Dated: November 5, 2002.

Michael Snyder,
Deputy Director, Intermountain Region,
National Park Service.

[FR Doc. 03-996 Filed 1-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement, Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve, Colorado

AGENCY: National Park Service,
Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the general management plan, Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Park Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement for the general management plan for Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve. The Environmental Impact Statement will be approved by the Director, Intermountain Region.

Great Sand Dunes National Monument was established by President Herbert Hoover in 1932 "for the preservation of the great sand dunes and additional features of scenic, scientific, and educational interest." The Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act of 2000 enlarged Great Sand Dunes National Monument from 39,000 acres to almost 150,000 acres to protect the entire Great Sand Dunes natural system. The name will change to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve when sufficient lands are acquired within the new boundary. The legislation expanding the park identifies a variety additional features for long term protection, including "geological, hydrological, paleontological, scenic, scientific, educational, wildlife, and recreational resources of the area." Land in and adjacent to the Great Sand Dunes is recognized for the "culturally diverse nature of the historic settlement of the area, offering natural ecological, wildlife, cultural, scenic, paleontological, wilderness, and recreational resources." The law further notes that the "preservation of this diversity of resources would ensure the perpetuation of the entire ecosystem for the enjoyment of future generations." The legislation directs establishment of the "Great Sand Dunes National Park Advisory Council" to "advise the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the preparation and implementation of a management plan for the national park and preserve."

The general management plan will prescribe the resource conditions and visitor experiences that are to be achieved and maintained in the monument over time. The clarification of what must be achieved according to law and policy will be based on review of the park's purpose, significance, special mandates, and the body of laws and policies directing park management. Management decisions to be made where law, policy, or regulations do not provide clear guidance or limits will be based on the

purposes of the monument, the range of public expectations and concerns, resource analysis, an evaluation of the natural, cultural, and social impacts of alternative courses of action, and consideration of long-term economic costs. Based on determinations of desired conditions, the general management plan will outline the kinds of resource management activities, visitor activities, and development that would be appropriate in the monument in the future. Alternatives will be developed through this planning process and will include, at a minimum, no-action and the preferred alternative. Major issues include protection of natural and cultural resources; the adequacy of interpretive programs; wilderness suitability; potential partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and local interests; and land status within the new boundary.

DATES: The Park Service will accept comments from the public through April 16, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Information will be available for public review and comment in the office of the Superintendent, Steve Chaney, Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve, 11500 Hwy. 150, Mosca, CO 81146-9798; Tel: (719) 378-2312; (719) 378-2594; e-mail: steve_chaney@nps.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Superintendent Steve Chaney, Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve; Tel: (719) 378-2312; (719) 378-2594.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Park Service is planning to begin public scoping in January 2003 via a newsletter to state and federal agencies; associated American Indian tribes; neighboring communities; county commissioners; local organizations, researchers and institutions; the Congressional Delegation; and visitors who signed up to be on the mailing list. In addition, the National Park Service will hold public scoping meetings regarding the general management plan, beginning in January 2003. Specific dates, times, and locations will be announced in the local media and will also be available by contacting the Superintendent of Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve. There will also be opportunities for input at Advisory Council meetings. There will be a web site for the general management plan. The purpose of the newsletter, public meetings, and web site is to explain the planning process and to obtain comments concerning appropriate resource management; desired visitor experience and use, and

facilities; as well as any other issues that need to be addressed. In addition to attending the scoping meetings, people wishing to provide input to this initial phase of developing the general management plan may address comments to the superintendent.

Dated: November 26, 2002.

Michael Snyder,

Deputy Director, Intermountain Region.

[FR Doc. 03-1004 Filed 1-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plans, and Final Environmental Impact Statements, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, Arizona

AGENCY: National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plans for Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Park Service announces the availability of Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plans (FEIS/GMP) for both Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, Arizona.

DATES: The FEIS/GMPs were on public review from November 6, 2001 through January 7, 2002. Responses to public comment are addressed in the documents. A 30-day no-action period will follow the Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability of the FEIS/GMPs.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the FEIS/GMPs are available from Sam R. Henderson, Superintendent, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, 6400 N. Highway 89, Flagstaff, Arizona, 86004. Public reading copies of the FEIS/GMPs will be available for review at the following locations:

Office of the Superintendent, 6400 N. Highway 89, Flagstaff, Arizona, 86004, Telephone: 928-526-1157.

Planning and Environmental Quality, Intermountain Support Office—Denver (room 20), National Park Service, 12795 W. Alameda Parkway, Lakewood, CO 80228, Telephone: (303) 969-2377.

Office of Public Affairs, National Park Service, Department of Interior, 18th and C Streets NW., Washington, DC 20240, Telephone: (202) 208-6843.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sam R. Henderson, Superintendent, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, at the above address and telephone number.

Dated: December 12, 2002.

Michael Snyder,

Deputy Director, Intermountain Region, National Park Service.

[FR Doc. 03-998 Filed 1-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Mountain Lake Fisheries Management Plan North Cascades National Park Service Complex Whatcom, Skagit and Chelan Counties, WA; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: In accord with § 102(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.4321, et seq.), the National Park Service is undertaking a conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process for mountain lake fisheries management in North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Washington. An Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared to provide a framework for a comprehensive Mountain Lake Fisheries Management Plan (MLFMP). The MLFMP will govern all future fisheries management actions, including stocking, for all natural lakes in North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, and Ross Lake National Recreation Area.

Background: The National Park Service (NPS) manages North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, and Ross Lake National Recreation Area collectively as the North Cascades National Park Service Complex (North Cascades). The rugged North Cascades landscape contains 240 natural mountain lakes, most of which were naturally fishless due to impassable topographic barriers. Far from barren, these lakes contained a rich array of native aquatic life including plankton, aquatic insects, frogs and salamanders.

Settlers began stocking Cascade lakes in the late 1800's with various species of exotic trout. By the 20th century, stocking was a routine management practice for the U.S. Forest Service and various counties. Upon its inception in 1933, the Washington Department of Game (WDG; now "WDFW") assumed responsibility for stocking mountain lakes throughout the state to create and maintain a recreational fishery. The

State's involvement grew largely out of the need to prevent haphazard stocking by individuals without biological expertise. With particular emphasis on systematic assessment of fish species and stocking rates, the WDG conducted the first high lakes fisheries research and developed many principles central to fisheries management today.

After North Cascades was established in 1968, a conflict over fish stocking gradually emerged between the NPS and WDFW. The conflict was driven by fundamental policy differences: NPS policies prohibited stocking to protect native ecosystems; WDFW policies encouraged stocking to enhance recreation. To reconcile the conflict and foster cooperative management, the NPS and WDFW entered into a Fisheries Management Agreement in 1988 with the purpose of establishing a mutually agreed to list of lakes within the boundaries of North Cascades National Park which the department [would] stock with fish as part of its fish management program." The agreement defined 40 specific lakes for stocking and specified that research results [would] be considered in future decisions'.

Shortly thereafter, the NPS initiated a long-term research effort through Oregon State University to evaluate the effects of fish stocking on native biota in mountain lakes. An independent peer review panel of subject matter experts was established to evaluate research results and to ensure objectivity and scientific merit. The final phase of this research effort was completed in July, 2002. With respect to the subject proposal, key conclusions include: (1) Lakes with reproducing trout populations had significantly fewer salamanders and zooplankton than fishless lakes; (2) There was no significant difference in salamander or zooplankton abundance between fishless lakes and lakes with non reproducing (i.e. stocked) fish; (3) Native biota (e.g. salamanders, zooplankton) appeared to be at greatest risk in lakes with (a) relatively high nitrogen concentrations, (b) relatively warm water and (c) reproducing trout populations (indicative of relatively high fish densities). These criteria were found in six of the 83 lakes studied. A complete account of the research and results can be viewed on the EIS Web site www.nps.gov/noca/highlakes.htm.

Preliminary Information: As noted, the purpose of the EIS effort is to develop a new management plan for natural mountain lakes that conserves native biological integrity and provides a spectrum of recreational opportunities and visitor experiences, including sport