

provide nesting habitat for waterfowl. Several WPAs of anywhere from a few acres to a few hundred acres are scattered throughout a several-county area. Waterfowl Production Areas within the Minnesota WMDs average about 210 acres in size.

Wetland Management Districts exemplify how partnerships can succeed in preserving habitat. From the Duck Stamp Act of 1934 to the Wetland Loan Act of 1961 to the Small Wetland Acquisition Program of 1962, the Service, and hunters, environmentalists, and communities have worked together to preserve land and wildlife. Funding for acquisition of WPAs comes in large part from funds generated through the Duck Stamp Act, making duck hunters a key partner in preserving critical habitat within the prairie pothole region.

When the Service buys land for the WMDs, it is the result of negotiation with a willing seller as well as the State of Minnesota, the local county and the township. Working with counties, the Service has established a goal for acres of acquisition in each WMD, and each county within each WMD has agreed to that goal. Prior to final acquisition approval by the State of Minnesota (through the Land Exchange Board, which is headed by the Governor), each tract is discussed and reviewed in detail with the commissioners of the county where the tract is located. (There are 28 counties within the six-district planning area.) Township boards are also informed of these proposed acquisitions and invited to attend and participate in the meeting with the county commissioners. The meetings are open to the public.

Wetland Management Districts are managed differently than national wildlife refuges. Waterfowl Production Areas are assumed to be open to the public unless closed for a specific reason. In Minnesota, WPAs are open to the Service's Big Six priority public uses: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

Big Stone WMD—The WMD was established in 1996 to acquire and manage lands under the Small Wetlands Acquisition Program within Lincoln and Lyon counties. It currently includes 11 WPAs covering 2,343 acres of fee title lands, 15 habitat and/or wetland easements covering 1,547 acres.

Detroit Lakes WMD—The 5 county WMD currently manages 41,615 fee acres on 163 WPAs and 320 easements covering 13,300 acres.

Fergus Falls WMD—The 5 county WMD currently manages 215 WPAs

totaling 43,417 acres and 1,136 easements covering 113,525 acres.

Litchfield WMD—The 7 county WMD was established in 1978 and today manages 148 WPAs covering more than 33,000 acres of fee title lands, 453 easements covering 36,154 acres.

Morris WMD—The 8 county WMD, originally established in 1964 as the Benson WMD, manages 246 WPAs totaling 51,208 acres in fee title ownership and 646 easements encompassing 23,182 acres.

Windom WMD—The 12 county WMD was established in 1990. It includes 59 WPAs covering 12,669 acres of fee title lands, 51 easements covering over 1,847 acres.

Three management alternatives were considered: (1) Acquire no additional land and maintain management on current land; (2) Increase land holdings to goal acres and maintain current management practices (current management); and (3) Increase land holdings to goal acres and expand management for waterfowl, other trust species and the public (preferred alternative).

The CCP represents the preferred alternative and describes a future in which the Service continues to acquire land to reach the goal acres agreed to by the State of Minnesota and each County within the District. The WMDs will strive to preserve and maintain diversity and increase the abundance of waterfowl and other key wildlife species in the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem. They will restore wetlands and prairie as habitat for migratory waterfowl. Our intent will be to increase the block size of WPAs from an average of 210 acres to benefit waterfowl species as well as grassland birds. Working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, we will reintroduce native species on WPAs. Coordinated, standardized, cost-effective and defensible methods will be implemented for gathering and analyzing habitat and population data. Limited continued use of food plots and feeder cribs to support resident wildlife, notably white-tailed deer and pheasants will be allowed. The WMDs will work with other WMDs in Minnesota as well as neighboring states (Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota and North Dakota) to develop more consistency in policies for habitat, public use and resource protection. It is our goal to promote a greater understanding and awareness of the WMDs' programs, goals and objectives within the public, partnerships, tribes and government agencies.

Dated: May 6, 2003.

Gerry Jackson,
Acting Regional Director.

Editorial note: This document was received at the Office of the Federal Register on November 7, 2003.

[FR Doc. 03-28430 Filed 11-12-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Wanapa Energy Center, Umatilla County, OR

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), with the cooperation of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), intends to file a draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the proposed Wanapa Energy Center, Umatilla County, Oregon, and that the DEIS is now available for public review. The purpose of the proposed project is to help provide for the economic development of the CTUIR and for the power needs of the Pacific Northwest. This notice also announces public hearings for the public to provide comments on the DEIS.

DATES: Written comments on the DEIS must arrive by December 29, 2003. Public hearings on the DEIS will be held December 3 and December 4, 2003, starting at 7 p.m.

ADDRESSES: You may hand carry written comments to the Umatilla Agency, 46807 B Street, Mission, Oregon, or mail them to Philip Sanchez, Superintendent, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Umatilla Agency, P.O. Box 520, Pendleton, OR 97801.

The December 3, 2003, public meeting will be in Pendleton, Oregon. The December 4, 2003, public meeting will be in Hermiston, Oregon. Exact addresses for the hearings will be determined at a later date. These may be obtained from the **FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** listed below.

To obtain a copy of the DEIS, please write to Jerry Lauer, Natural Resource Officer, Division of Natural Resources Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Umatilla Agency, P.O. Box 520,

Pendleton, Oregon 97801. Copies of the DEIS are available for public review at the Umatilla Agency on the CTUIR Reservation, Mission, Oregon; at the Pendleton Public Library, 500 SW Dorian, Pendleton, Oregon; and at the Hermiston Public Library, 238 E. Gladys Avenue, Hermiston, Oregon. Copies of the DEIS have also been sent to agencies and individuals who participated in the scoping process and to all others who have previously requested copies of the document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jerry Lauer, (541) 278-3790.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed action is to lease Indian trust land upon which Diamond Wanapa ILP, CTUIR, the Eugene, OR, Water and Electric Board, the City of Hermiston, and the Port of Umatilla propose to jointly build and operate the Wanapa Energy Center, an approximately 1200 megawatt (Mw), natural gas-fired electric power generation plant that would provide electrical energy to the BPA grid system. The Center's design features two similar blocks of combined cycle, each having a nominal capacity of 600 Mw. A block would consist of (1) two combustion turbines; (2) two heat recovery steam generators (HRSG) that can be fired by auxiliary duct burners; (3) 180 foot exhaust stacks; (4) one steam turbine in a 2 by 1 configuration; and (4) associated plant equipment. The proposed project also would include a switch yard, cooling towers, storage tanks, natural gas supply pipeline, water supply pipeline, electrical power transmission line, and other related facilities. The plant would be constructed in two phases, each consisting of two gas turbines, two HRSGs, two stacks, one steam turbine, one cooling tower, three generators, and supporting facilities. The maximum plant output would be approximately 1,485 Mw.

Natural gas would be the sole fuel used for the combustion turbines and duct burners. This would be provided through a new, 9.9 mile lateral pipeline that would extend from a source in the vicinity of Stanfield, Oregon, approximately 10 miles north to the proposed project site. A new 500 kV electrical transmission line would extend from the project site to the McNary Substation on the Columbia River.

Water demand for the facility is estimated to be from 3 million gallons per day (about 2,500 acre-feet per year) at 600 Mw production to 6 million gallons per day (about 5,000 acre-feet per year) at 1200 Mw production. Pre-allocated municipal water would be

obtained under the City of Hermiston's and the Port of Umatilla's allocated water supply from the Columbia River. Currently, the proposed power plant's blow-down water discharge location is the Feed Canal, approximately 5 miles south of the project site. The Feed Canal empties into Cold Springs Reservoir, approximately 1 mile downstream of the proposed discharge point. The water discharge pipeline would follow and be located with the proposed natural gas pipeline lateral to the discharge point.

In addition to the proposed action and no action, alternatives analyzed through the DEIS include routing options for the gas supply pipeline and transmission line. They are as follows:

Gas Supply Pipeline Route

Alternatives. There are two alternatives that would be approximately the same 9.9 mile length as the proposed route, but would follow a more eastern (Alternative 1-GSP) or a more western (Alternative 2-GSP) route. All three would begin at the Stanfield Compressor Station and terminate at the proposed power plant. Alternative 1-GSP is about 53,500 feet (10.13 miles) long. From the plant, the line would follow the proposed route for approximately 1.4 miles, then continue farther eastward about 2.3 miles along highway 730 before proceeding southward approximately 4.4 miles to the existing Northwest Gas Right of Way (ROW). Once co-located along this ROW, it would follow the existing line southeastward about 2 miles to the interconnect point at the Stanfield Compressor Station. This route would follow existing roads in a rural area for the majority of its length.

Alternative 2-GSP is about 53,700 feet (10.17 miles) long. From the proposed power plant, the line would follow the proposed route for approximately 1,000 feet, at which point it would proceed due west for approximately 2,000 feet. It would then proceed about 4 miles due south to the Northwest Gas ROW and follow the existing line southeastward approximately 5.6 miles to interconnect with source pipelines at the Stanfield Compressor Station.

Transmission Line Route Alternatives.

In addition to the route described in the proposed action, three alternative transmission line routes from the plant site to McNary Substation are evaluated in the DEIS. These range from 3.7 to 4.0 miles in length. Alternative 1-TLR would include 21,900 feet of single-circuit and 5,800 of double-circuit line (5.25-miles combined). The route would traverse directly south from the project site, cross Highway 730, and then enter and follow the same alignment as the

proposed route, parallel to the existing BPA ROWs west/northwest and north.

Alternative 2-TLR would be a 19,400-foot (3.67-mile) long single-circuit line. It would run northwest from the project site until it neared and paralleled the bluffs above the Columbia River, then traverse southwest into the substation. This alternative would be located in an entirely new ROW. Alternative 3-TLR would be about a 20,900-foot (3.96-mile) long single-circuit line. The route would traverse west from the project site until it passed McNary Beach Access Road, proceed north to where the Alternative 2 route turns southwest, then follow the Alternative 2 route into the substation.

Public Participation

The public has participated throughout the development of this DEIS. The Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was filed in the **Federal Register** on October 22, 2001 (66 FR 53430). Public scoping meetings were held in Pendleton, Oregon, on November 5, 2001, and in Hermiston, Oregon, on November 6, 2001, to identify issues and content for consideration in the EIS. On July 28, 2003, an open house was held in Hermiston, Oregon, to update the public on the EIS process for the proposed project. All comments presented throughout the process have been considered.

Public Comment Availability

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the mailing address shown in the **ADDRESSES** section, during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Authority: This notice is published in accordance with section 1503.1 of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508) implementing the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and the Department of the

Interior Manual (516 DM 1-6), and is in the exercise of authority delegated to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs by 209 DM 8.

Dated: November 6, 2003.

Aurene M. Martin,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 03-28394 Filed 11-12-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-W7-P

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Notice of Availability of a Record of Decision on the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the General Management Plan, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, North Carolina

AGENCY: National Park Service.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Pub. L. 91-190, 83 Stat. 852, 853, codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C), the National Park Service announces the availability of the Record of Decision for the General Management Plan, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, North Carolina. On September 19, 2003, the Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region approved the Record of Decision for the project. As soon as practicable, the National Park Service will begin to implement the Preferred Alternative contained in the Final Environmental Impact Statement issued on July 23, 2003. The following course of action will occur under the preferred alternative:

In the preferred alternative, the park serves as a national focal point for learning about Carl Sandburg. Access to more in-depth information about his life and work at Connemara would be provided through an extensive internet database and other high technology mass media formats. Visitors who come to the site in person would find extraordinary opportunities to participate in interpretive programs. The selected alternative provides high quality museum space where visitors can gain additional access to information and objects currently housed in the museum preservation facility. Providing a high quality interpretive venue is considered an essential component of the alternative. Additional interpretive venues would be created by rehabilitating one or more historic structures near the main house or barn for interpretive program areas, renovating the existing Front Lake visitor information station to improve

its interpretive and visitor services function, and creating a visitor interpretive center outside the current authorized boundary of the park. A Congressionally legislated boundary expansion of up to 110 acres would provide critical views and boundary protection. The location of the proposed 110 acre boundary expansion is illustrated in Chapter Two of the GMP/FEIS. Authorization to acquire approximately 3 to 5 acres for a 5,000 sf visitor center, parking for approximately 60 cars, and associated landscaping is also recommended. Given the unpredictable availability of funding and property, an exact location for the visitor center and parking area cannot be identified at this time; however, any selected site would be located west of Highway 25 and south of Little River Road in the Village of Flat Rock. Any property considered for acquisition by the National Park Service would be purchased under a willing seller/willing buyer arrangement, without the exercise of eminent domain.

This course of action plus three other 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 of no impairment to park resources and values, measures to minimize potential environmental consequences, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

DATES: The Record of Decision for the General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement for Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site was signed by the Acting Regional Director for the National Park Service Southeast Region on September 19, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Record of Decision are available from the Superintendent, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, 1928 Little River Road, Flat Rock, North Carolina, 28731.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Superintendent, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, 1928 Little River Road, Flat Rock, North Carolina, 28731. Telephone: 828-693-4178.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Copies of the Record of Decision may be obtained from the contact listed above or online at <http://www.nps.gov/carl>.

Dated: September 19, 2003.

Wally Hibbard,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. 03-28387 Filed 11-12-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-L6-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Notice of Intent To Prepare a General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site

AGENCY: National Park Service.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on the General Management Plan for Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site. This notice is being published in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.6. The statement will assess potential environmental impacts associated with various types and levels of visitor use and resources management within the National Historic Site. This General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared in response to the requirements of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, Pub. L. 95-625, and in accord with Director's Order Number 2, the planning directive for National Park Service units.

The National Park Service will conduct public scoping meetings in the local area to receive input from interested parties on issues, concerns, and suggestions pertinent to the management of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site. Representatives of the National Park Service will be available to discuss issues, resource concerns, and the planning process at each of the public meetings. Suggestions and ideas for managing the cultural and natural resources and visitor experiences at the park are encouraged. Anonymous comments will not be considered. 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. However, individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and addresses from the public record, and we will honor such requests to the extent allowed by law. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address, you must state that request prominently at the beginning of your comment.

DATES: Locations, dates, and times of public scoping meetings will be published in local newspapers and may