

upland wildlife habitats, through outreach activities and technical assistance. The Refuge would not acquire any properties outside the existing Approved Refuge Boundary.

Alternative 3. Recreation With Aquatic and Biodiversity Stewardship (Proposed Action)

Under this alternative, the Environmental Education program would be expanded, with greater numbers of students both on and off Refuge offered the opportunity to learn about the wildlife and ecology of the Channeled Scablands and Turnbull Refuge. Additional classroom space would be added, allowing the Refuge to accommodate two classes at the same time. The trail network would be expanded by approximately four miles and two additional viewpoints would be added. A small visitor contact point would be established inside new office space. Using the old highway roadbed, a designated bike trail would be established along Cheney-Plaza Road to link the Columbia Plateau Trail with the Public Use Area. Contingent upon approval of a Hunting Plan and publishing rules in the **Federal Register**, the Refuge would offer an annual elk hunting program and youth waterfowl hunt. The hunt would occur during the State's special season for youths, now occurring in mid-September. The new waterfowl hunting program would emphasize education, possibly requiring a waterfowl identification or natural history class for youths participating in the hunt. The Refuge would consider expanding the waterfowl hunt in the future once more fall waterfowl habitat has been restored in the vicinity of the Refuge. The Service would actively encourage conservation within a Stewardship Area, as described under Alternative 2. In addition, the Service would seek protection within the National Wildlife Refuge System of up to 12,000 acres by fee, easement, or agreement from willing sellers on priority lands within the Stewardship Area. Priority lands include adjoining lands that are most critical for protection of Refuge water quality and quantity; have the highest quality steppe, pine, and wetland habitat; and provide the best opportunities for wetlands restoration or protection.

Alternative 4. High Conservation and High Recreation Opportunities

Under Alternative 4, the Environmental Education program would be expanded, with greater numbers of students both on and off Refuge offered the opportunity to learn about the wildlife and ecology of the

Channeled Scablands and Turnbull Refuge. Trails would be expanded as under Alternative 3. Six additional viewpoints would be added. A new moderately sized visitor and interpretive center would be built or leased, designed in concert with a new expanded environmental education facility. With partner's assistance, a designated loop bike trail would be established through the Refuge to link the Columbia Plateau Trail with the Public Use Area. Contingent upon approval of a Hunting Plan and publishing rules in the **Federal Register**, the Refuge would offer an elk hunting program and a waterfowl hunting program during the State's general duck season. Turkey hunting may also be considered during the next 15 years, depending on turkey population trends. The Service would actively encourage conservation within a Stewardship Area, as described under Alternative 2. In addition, the Service would seek protection of up to 25,000 acres within the National Wildlife Refuge System by fee, easement, or agreement from willing sellers on priority lands within the Stewardship Area.

Under all alternatives, habitat and fire management practices on the Refuge would continue as described under the Habitat Management Plan and the Fire Management Plan.

Public Comments

Public comments are requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process. A previous notice was published in the **Federal Register** concerning this Draft CCP/EA on March 2, 2000. After the review and comment period ends for this Draft CCP/EA, comments will be analyzed by the Service and addressed in revised planning documents. All comments received from individuals, including names and addresses, become part of the official public record and may be released. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations [40 CFR 1506.6(f)], and Service and Departmental policies and procedures.

Dated: June 22, 2005.

Carolyn A. Bohan,

Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ES-020-1320-EL]

Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for the Gray Mountain Coal Lease Land Use Analysis and Final Environmental Impact Statement, Coal Lease By Application KYES-51002, KT

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Gray Mountain Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), Coal Lease By Application (LBA) KYES-51002.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the document are available for public inspection at the following BLM office locations: Bureau of Land Management-Eastern States, 7450 Boston Boulevard, Springfield, Virginia 22153. Bureau of Land Management-Eastern States, Jackson Field Office, 411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404, Jackson, Mississippi 39206.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Steve Gobat, Deputy State Director for Natural Resources, BLM-Eastern States at (703) 440-1727; or Mr. Stuart Grange, Mining Engineer, Jackson Field Office at (601) 977-5400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM is issuing a ROD for leasing the Federal coal tracts that were considered for leasing in the Gray Mountain FEIS. The ROD covered by this NOA is for coal LBA KYES-51002 and addresses leasing an estimated 5.66 million tons of in-place Federal coal administered by the BLM-Eastern States, underlying approximately 1210.4 acres of Federal surface in the Daniel Boone National Forest, Leslie County, Kentucky.

Because the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Lands and Minerals Management, has concurred in this decision it is not subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as provided in 43 CFR part 4. This decision is the final action of the Department of the Interior.

Michael D. Nedd,

State Director, Eastern States.

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