

and elk. These include: Alternative 1—No Action; Alternative 2—Minimal Management of Habitat and Populations; Support Migration; Alternative 3—Restore Habitat, Support Migration, and Phase Back Supplemental Feeding; Alternative 4—Restore Habitat, Improve Forage, and Phase Back Supplemental Feeding; Alternative 5—Restore Habitat, Improve Forage and Continue Supplemental Feeding; and Alternative 6—Restore Habitat, Adaptively Manage Populations, and Phase Out Supplemental Feeding.

Alternative 4, the proposed action, strives to balance the major issues and stakeholder perspectives, identified during prescoping and public scoping, with the purposes, missions, and management policies of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service. Assuming that the WGFD's herd objective of 11,029 had been met, and that higher numbers of elk would use the winter range, approximately 4,000–5,000 elk and up to 500 bison would winter in the National Elk Refuge, and 1,300–1,600 elk would summer in the Grand Teton National Park. The elk hunt in the National Elk Refuge, and the herd reductions in the Grand Teton National Park would continue. A bison hunt would be instituted in the National Elk Refuge. Supplemental feeding would take place only in above-average winters (estimated to occur in roughly 5 out of 10 years). The potential for disease outbreaks would be somewhat reduced, and WGFD personnel would be permitted to use Strain 19 to vaccinate elk.

After the review and comment period for this draft Plan/EIS, all comments will be analyzed and considered by the lead agencies. A final Plan/EIS will be prepared and published, and will include the substantive comments received and the lead agencies' responses to those comments. Changes made to the proposed action will also be identified in the final Plan/EIS. A ROD and final management plan will then be published.

All comments received from individuals on environmental impact statements become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6(f)), and other policies and procedures of the lead agencies and DOI.

Reviewers should provide their comments during the review period of the draft Plan/EIS. This enables the lead

agencies to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use information acquired in the preparation of the final Plan/EIS, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision making process. Comments on the draft EIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the plan, the impact statement, and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

In the final Plan/EIS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will respond to all substantive comments. Comments are considered substantive if they:

- Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of the information in the document.
- Question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of the environmental analysis.
- Present reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the EIS.
- Cause changes or revisions to the Bison and Elk Management Plan.
- Provide new or additional information relevant to the analysis.

Dated: July 13, 2005.

Ralph O. Morgenweck,

Regional Director, Region 6, Denver, CO.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

U.S. Geological Survey

Request for Public Comments on a Proposed New Information Collection To Be Submitted to OMB for Review Under the Paperwork Reduction Act

A request for a new information collection described below will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). Copies of the proposed collection may be obtained by contacting the USGS Clearance Officer at the phone number listed below. Comments on the proposal should be made within 60 days to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 807 National Center, Reston, VA 20192.

As required by OMB regulations at 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1), the USGS solicits specific public comments as to:

1. Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions on the bureaus, including whether the information will have practical utility;
2. The accuracy of the bureau's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
3. The quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

4. How to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology.

Title: Community Survey of Rappahannock River Residents

OMB Approval No: New collection

Summary: This information collection is in support of development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Rappahannock National Wildlife Refuge. Under the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, all national wildlife refuges are required to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). A CCP is a document that provides a framework for guiding refuge management decisions. This planning process ensures the opportunity for active public involvement in the preparation and revision of comprehensive conservation plans. This information collection will inform the planning process by providing information to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the attitudes and opinions of local residents regarding Rappahannock National Wildlife Refuge and its management.

Estimated Completion Time: 20 minutes.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Frequency: One time.

Estimated Annual Burden Hours: 333 hours.

Affected Public: Residents adjacent to the Rappahannock River Basin, Virginia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain copies of the survey, contact the Bureau clearance office, U.S. Geological Survey, 807 National Center, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia, 20192, telephone (703) 648-7313.

Dated: July 14, 2005.

Susan D. Haseltine,

Associate Director for Biology

[FR Doc. 05-14317 Filed 7-20-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-47-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-660-05-1220]

Notice of Extension of Emergency Closure of Public Lands to Recreational Shooting on Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The BLM Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office is extending an emergency closure order which closes portions of public lands to recreational shooting in the South Coast Planning Area, in San Diego County, California [69 FR 65448, November 12, 2004]. The extension of the emergency closure is needed to continue providing public safety from the stray and ricocheting bullets produced by recreational shooting in this area.

DATES: This extended emergency closure will be in effect immediately and remain in effect through March 31, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the extended closure notice and a map of the closed area can be obtained at the BLM, Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, 690 West Garnet Avenue, North Palm Springs, CA 92258, telephone (760) 251-4800/ BLM, California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Room W-1834, Sacramento, CA 95825, telephone (916) 978-4600. BLM will also announce the extension of the closure through local media outlets, and by posting a notice with a map of the closed area at the primary access points into the closure.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janaye Byergo, Bureau of Land Management, phone (858) 451-1767 or by e-mail at Janaye_Byergo@ca.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This order effects public lands in San Diego County, California, thus described:

San Bernardino Meridian

T. 9 S., R. 1 E.

Section 2, NW¹/₄NW¹/₄, SW¹/₄NW¹/₄, NW¹/₄SW¹/₄, NE¹/₄SW¹/₄, SE¹/₄SW¹/₄

T. 9 S., R. 1 E.

Section 11, NE¹/₄

T. 9 S., R. 1 E.

Section 12, W¹/₂NW¹/₄

Authority: This closure notice is issued under the authority of the 43 CFR 8364.1.

Violations of this closure are punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.

Persons who are administratively exempt from the closure contained in this notice include: Any Federal, State or local officer or employee acting within the scope of their duties, members of any organized rescue or fire-fighting force in the performance of an official duty, and any person holding written authorization from the BLM.

Gail Acheson,

Field Manager, Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office.

[FR Doc. 05-14315 Filed 7-20-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-40-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-027-1110-JM-H2KO; HAG-05-0096]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the North Steens Ecosystem Restoration Project

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Burns District, Andrews Resource Area, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, and the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Steens Act), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is initiating preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze and undertake the North Steens Ecosystem Restoration Project (North Steens Project).

DATES: Scoping comments will be accepted for 15 days following publication of this notice. The North Steens Project was initially proposed for a smaller geographic area; however, initial scoping with private landowners and interested publics expanded the scope to its current landscape scale. Comments received during this scoping extension will be added to those received during previous scoping (January 5 to February 22, 2005). The results of all scoping will be used as BLM prepares the Draft EIS. Public notice will be provided when the Draft EIS becomes available later this year.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact North Steens Project EIS Lead, Bureau of Land Management, Burns District Office, 28910, Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738; (541) 573-4543; fax (541) 573-4411; or e-mail (ORNSEIS@blm.gov). Documents pertinent to this project may be examined at the Burns District Office in Hines, Oregon, during regular business hours, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The North Steens Project is a landscape-level project proposing to utilize a combination of western juniper treatments (mechanical and non-mechanical methods) and wildland (prescribed and natural) fire to treat fuels and to restore habitat. Implementation of the project would reduce the increased influence of

western juniper in mountain big sagebrush, low sagebrush, quaking aspen, mountain mahogany, old growth juniper (over 120 years old), and riparian plant communities. The proposed project area lies within the Andrews Resource Area and the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA), designated October 30, 2000 by Act of Congress. The project is located in Harney County, Oregon, and affects approximately 336,000 acres of public and private land.

Section 113(c) of the Steens Act states: "The Secretary shall emphasize the restoration of the historic fire regime in the Cooperative Management and Protection Area and the resulting native vegetation communities through active management of western juniper on a landscape level. Management measures shall include the use of natural and prescribed burning."

Management actions to be analyzed will include the following: Seeding of native species, reduction of western juniper (less than 120 yrs old), fencing, and management of wildland fire. Preliminary issues and management concerns were identified by BLM personnel and through the results of initial public scoping. Major issues to be addressed in the EIS include management of woodlands, vegetation, the Steens Mountain Wilderness area, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wildlife habitat, special status species, fire/fuels, recreation, cultural resources, noxious weeds, water quality/aquatic resources/fisheries, and social and economic values. The EIS will also consider American Indian traditional practices.

An interdisciplinary approach will be used to develop the EIS in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Disciplines involved in the project will include (but not be limited to) those with expertise in management of the aforementioned resources.

Public Participation

Cooperating agencies having specific expertise or interests in the project will be invited to participate. The public and interest groups will have every opportunity to participate during formal comment periods and Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC) meetings. The SMAC is an advisory group for actions affecting the CMPA, including this project. Every SMAC meeting provides an opportunity for public comments. In addition, public meetings will be held during the public comment period for the Draft EIS. Public meetings will be held in Burns, Oregon, and at