

Dated: August 16, 2006.

**R. Thomas Weimer,**

*Assistant Secretary—Policy, Management  
and Budget.*

[FR Doc. 06-7096 Filed 8-22-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-RK-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Draft Candidate Conservation Agreement With Assurances and Application for an Enhancement of Survival Permit for the Lesser Prairie- Chicken in Texas

**AGENCY:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; receipt of  
application; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Texas Parks and Wildlife  
Department (TPWD) (Applicant) has  
applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
Service (Service) for an enhancement of  
survival permit pursuant to Section  
10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species  
Act (Act) of 1973, as amended. The  
permit application includes a draft 20-  
year Candidate Conservation Agreement  
with Assurances (CCAA) between the  
Service and TPWD for the Lesser  
Prairie-Chicken in 50 Texas counties.  
We request public comment.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, written  
comments must be received on or before  
October 23, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to review  
the application, draft CCAA, or other  
related documents may obtain copies by  
written or telephone request to the Field  
Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
Service, 711 Stadium Drive, Suite 252,  
Arlington, Texas 76011, or U.S. Fish  
and Wildlife Service, Southwest  
Regional Office, P.O. Box 1306, Room  
4012, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103  
(*Attn:* Luella Roberts, Endangered  
Species Permits). The application and  
related documents will be available for  
public inspection, by appointment only,  
during normal business hours (8 a.m. to  
4:30 p.m.) at the Service's Arlington  
Office. Comments concerning the  
application, draft CCAA, or other  
related documents should be submitted  
in writing to the Field Supervisor  
(address above). Please refer to permit  
number TE-132658-0 when submitting  
comments. All comments received,  
including names and addresses, will  
become a part of the official  
administrative record and may be made  
available to the public.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tom  
Cloud at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
Service Arlington office, 711 Stadium

Drive, Suite 252, Arlington, Texas 76011  
(817/277-1100), facsimile 817/277-  
1129, or by e-mail at

*Tom\_Cloud@fws.gov*; or Luella Roberts at  
the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Regional office, P.O. Box 1306, Room  
4012, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103  
(505/248-6654), facsimile 505/248-  
6788, or by e-mail at  
*Luella\_Roberts@fws.gov*.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** With the  
assistance of the Service, TPWD  
proposes to encourage the  
implementation of conservation  
measures on private lands to increase  
lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus  
pallidicinctus*) (LPC) occupied habitat  
and improve LPC population  
performance. The proposed CCAA  
would be in effect for 20 years in the  
following Texas counties: Dallam,  
Sherman, Hansford, Ochiltree,  
Lipscomb, Hartley, Moore, Hutchinson,  
Roberts, Hemphill, Oldham, Potter,  
Carson, Gray, Wheeler, Deaf Smith,  
Randall, Armstrong, Donley,  
Collingsworth, Parmer, Castro, Swisher,  
Briscoe, Hall, Childress, Bailey, Lamb,  
Hale, Floyd, Motley, Cottle, Cochran,  
Hockley, Lubbock, Crosby, Dickens,  
King, Knox, Yoakum, Terry, Lynn,  
Garza, Kent, Stonewall, Gaines, Dawson,  
Borden, Scurry, and Andrews. These  
counties constitute the Agreement's  
Planning Area, with Covered Areas  
being private lands within this Planning  
Area that provide suitable habitat for  
LPC or have the potential to provide  
suitable LPC habitat with the  
implementation of conservation  
management practices. We invite the  
public to review and comment on the  
permit application and the associated  
draft CCAA.

#### Background

The LPC is a distinct species of North  
American prairie grouse that inhabits  
rangelands dominated primarily by  
shinnery oak (*Quercus havardii*)-  
bluestem and sand sagebrush  
(*Artemisia filifolia*)-bluestem vegetation  
types. From the early to mid 1940's to  
the early 1950's, it is estimated that the  
range of the LPC in Texas encompassed  
portions of 34 counties. Researchers  
considered the occupied range at the  
mid 20th century to be a reduction from  
the historical range (ca. 1900). In 1989,  
TPWD produced an occupied range map  
that indicated LPC inhabited portions of  
12 counties. In 2005, TPWD reported  
that LPC were found in portions of a  
minimum of 16 counties. In 1995, the  
Service was petitioned to list the LPC  
under the Act. The Service ruled that  
listing of the LPC was warranted, but  
precluded because of limited funding

and higher priority species litigations.  
The LPC was designated as a candidate  
for listing in 1997.

The major factors affecting the status  
of the LPC are conversion, degradation,  
and fragmentation of habitat. The  
conversion of habitat from native sand  
sagebrush and shinnery oak rangeland  
to improved pastures and cropland has  
been documented as an important factor  
in the decline of the LPC. Although  
many acres of former cropland  
throughout its range have been enrolled  
in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's  
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in  
the northeastern and southwestern  
Texas panhandle, LPC populations have  
not exhibited a marked response to the  
available vegetation types and structure  
created by CRP. Many CRP acres have  
been planted using monocultures of  
introduced grasses, which do not meet  
food, brood-rearing, or thermal habitat  
requirements for the LPC. Mixtures of  
heavily, moderately, and lightly grazed,  
and ungrazed native rangelands are  
essential components of LPC habitat,  
and should occur in a mosaic pattern on  
a landscape scale. However, in most  
areas, an insufficient amount of lightly  
grazed or ungrazed habitat is available  
to support successful LPC nesting.  
Overutilization of rangeland by  
livestock, to a degree that leaves less  
than adequate residual cover remaining  
in the spring, is considered detrimental  
to LPC populations because grass height  
is reduced below that necessary for  
nesting cover, and desirable food plants  
are markedly reduced.

Since the petition to list the LPC  
under the Act was filed in 1995, a  
number of management and  
conservation efforts have been  
implemented by State, Federal, and  
private entities throughout Texas.  
TPWD has worked to implement  
conservation measures through its  
Private Lands and Habitat Program  
(PLHP). The PLHP includes programs  
and tools such as the development of  
written Wildlife Management Plans  
(WMP), the Technical Guidance  
Program, Landowner Incentive Program,  
Wildlife Management Tax Valuation  
assistance, information on private land  
trusts, and the Lone Star Land Steward  
Award Program. The PLHP focuses on a  
diverse array of programmatic  
responsibilities for wildlife habitat  
management and development,  
technical assistance, incentive  
programs, and conservation of private  
lands. PLHP biologists and other TPWD  
personnel provide technical assistance  
to land managers and landowners upon  
written request for assistance to develop  
plans and recommendations for  
voluntary conservation, enhancement,

and/or development of wildlife habitat. In particular, at the request of landowners, TPWD prepares written WMPs that incorporate recommendations for specific areas and address the conservation goals and objectives of each landowner. In conjunction with the development of landowner-specific WMPs, TPWD proposes to issue Certificates of Inclusion (CI) that provide coverage to individual landowners under the terms of its section 10(a)(1)(A) permit, should one be issued in the future. Each CI will be issued with Service oversight, and will be subject to revocation if the terms of the WMP are not fulfilled. TPWD and the Service feel that this process may preclude or remove any need to list the lesser prairie-chicken, if it is assumed that conservation measures were also to be implemented on other necessary properties, by encouraging private landowners to enroll in the WMP program and undertake the conservation practices prescribed in the CCAA. The proposed CCAA represents a significant milestone in the cooperative conservation efforts for the LPC and is consistent with section 2(a)(5) of the Act, which encourages creative partnerships among public, private, and government entities to conserve imperiled species and their habitats. Consistent with the Service CCAA policy, the proposed CCAA is intended to facilitate conservation actions for the LPC that will remove or reduce the threats to the species. The CCAA is also intended to provide TPWD and those private landowners receiving CIs, under the auspices of TPWD's permit, regulatory certainty related to normal agricultural practices should the LPC become federally listed as threatened or endangered in the future.

The conservation measures in the CCAA would be implemented by individual non-Federal landowners, under the auspices of a TPWD and Service-approved WMP. These measures will generally consist of prescribed grazing, prescribed burning, rangeland deferment, brush management, CRP and cropland management, range planting, other upland wildlife habitat management practices, and population management techniques. TPWD has committed to guide the implementation of these conservation measures and requests issuance of the permit in order to address the take prohibitions of Section 9 of the Act should the species become listed in the future.

We provide this notice under section 10(c) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22), and the National

Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR part 1506.6).

**Larry G. Bell,**

*Acting Regional Director, Region 2,  
Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

[FR Doc. E6-13961 Filed 8-22-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[CO-921-06-1320-EL; COC 70164]

#### Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Colorado

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Ark Land Company, COC 70164, Colorado.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 2(b) the Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920, as amended by Section 4 of the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, 90 Stat. 1083, 30 U.S.C. 201(b), and to Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, (CFR), Subpart 3410, all interested qualified parties, as provided in 43 CFR 3472.1 are hereby invited to participate with Ark Land Company on a pro rata cost sharing basis in a program for the exploration of coal deposits owned by the United States of America in the following described lands in Garfield County, Colorado.

T. 7 S., R. 101 W., 6th P.M.  
Sec. 20, S $\frac{1}{2}$ , and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 21, lot 2, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , and W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 28, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 29, all;  
Sec. 30, Tr. 44, lots 5 through 10, inclusive, and E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 31, lots 5 through 8, inclusive;  
Sec. 32, lots 1 through 4, inclusive, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , and N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 7 S., 102 W., 6th P.M.  
Sec. 23, lot 1, 4, E $\frac{1}{2}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 24, lots 1 through 4, inclusive, W $\frac{1}{2}$ , and W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 25, lots 1 through 4, inclusive, W $\frac{1}{2}$ , and W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 26, all;  
Sec. 35, all;  
Sec. 36, lots 1 through 4, inclusive, W $\frac{1}{2}$ , and W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ .

T. 8 S., R. 101 W., 6th P.M.  
Sec. 3, lots 5 through 16, inclusive, and S $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 4, lots 5 through 16, inclusive, and S $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 5, lots 5 through 20, inclusive, and S $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 6, lots 8 through 27, inclusive, and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 7, lots 5 through 8, inclusive, E $\frac{1}{2}$ , and E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ ;

Sec. 8, all;  
Sec. 9, all;  
Sec. 10, all;  
Sec. 15, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 16, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 17, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 18, lot 5, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 8 S., R. 102 W., 6th P.M.

Sec. 1, lots 5 through 20, inclusive, and N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$ .

The area described contains 13,178.47 acres.

**DATES:** Written Notice of Intent to Participate in Exploration License COC 70164 should be addressed to the attention of both parties whose addresses are provided in the **ADDRESSES** section below and must be received by them within 30 days after publication of this Notice of Invitation in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** Karen Zurek, CO-921, Solid Minerals Staff, Division of Energy, Lands and Minerals, Colorado State Office, Bureau of Land Management, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215; and Michael Lincoln, P.O. Box 460, Hanna, Wyoming 82327.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:** Karen Zurek at (303) 239-3795.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The application for coal exploration license is available for public inspection during normal business hours under serial number COC 70164 at the Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, and at the Grand Junction Field Office, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506. The proposed exploration program is fully described and will be conducted pursuant to an exploration plan to be approved by the Bureau of Land Management. The authority for this notice is 43 CFR 3410.2-1(c)(1).

Dated: July 19, 2006.

**Karen Zurek,**

*Solid Minerals Staff, Division of Energy,  
Lands and Minerals.*

[FR Doc. E6-13928 Filed 8-22-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-JB-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[ID-400-1150-CB]

#### Notice of Public Meeting, Coeur d'Alene District Resource Advisory Council Meeting; Idaho

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Public Meeting.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management