

and enhancements on all units of the refuge—Units 1, 2, and 3. Unit 1 consists of 34,784 acres of alluvial and black water floodplain forested wetlands. Unit 2 consists of 12,046 acres, with approximately 6,362 acres of upland longleaf pine forest and tidal forested and emergent wetlands. Unit 3 consists of 2,902 acres and contains historic rice fields, many of which remain intact and are managed for wintering waterfowl. Management of migratory waterfowl and neotropical migratory birds would be the same as Alternatives A and B. Management of black bears would be more active under this alternative. Refuge acquisition and habitat restoration efforts within wetland corridors would be targeted to improve connectivity between bear populations. Management of threatened and endangered species would generally be the same as Alternative B, restoring the hydrology on Unit 1 to enhance the existing wood stork rookery. In addition, it would restore wood stork feeding areas on Unit 3 and red-cockaded woodpecker nesting and foraging habitat on Unit 2. Recreational use of the refuge would remain the same as Alternatives A and B, but would expand hunting opportunities. It would explore the potential for a youth waterfowl hunt on managed wetlands. In addition, opportunities for wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation would be expanded.

#### **Alternative D (Optimize Habitat Management and Visitor Services)—Proposed Alternative**

Under this alternative, habitat management and visitor services throughout the refuge would be optimized. Management of waterfowl and migratory birds would be the same as Alternatives B and C; however, management of black bears would be stepped up from that of the previous three alternatives. This alternative would conduct annual surveys of black bears and attempt to enlist public participation in gathering, recording, and compiling sightings. Management of threatened and endangered species would generally be the same as Alternative C—restoring the hydrology on Unit 1 to enhance the existing wood stork rookery, restoring wood stork feeding areas on Unit 3, and red-cockaded woodpecker nesting and foraging habitat on Unit 2. Recreational use of the refuge would continue. This alternative would expand on hunting opportunities for deer and hog by considering a hunt by mobility-impaired individuals. It would potentially include a youth waterfowl hunt on

refuge management lands. Over the lifetime of the CCP, this alternative would call for reducing deer herd density to improve herd health and to improve habitat quality for other species. This alternative would identify the 4,600-acre Bull Island as a proposed Wilderness Study Area. The Service would maintain its wilderness character, and within 10 years of approval of the comprehensive conservation plan, would prepare a wilderness study report and additional NEPA documentation on whether Bull Island should be formally designated by Congress as a unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The refuge would prepare and implement a Visitor Services' Plan and expand most wildlife-dependent public uses in a number of ways.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: November 30, 2007.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

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## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

**[FWS-R8-ES-2008-N0022; 80221-1113-0000-F5]**

#### **Endangered Species Recovery Permit Applications**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of permit applications; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** We invite the public to comment on the following applications to conduct certain activities with endangered species.

**DATES:** Comments on these permit applications must be received on or before March 14, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** Written data or comments should be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Program Manager, Region 8, 2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2606, Sacramento, CA, 95825 (telephone: 916-414-6464; fax: 916-414-6486). Please refer to the respective permit number for each application when submitting comments. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Daniel Marquez, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, see **ADDRESSES**, (telephone: 760-431-9440; fax: 760-431-9624).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The following applicants have applied for scientific research permits to conduct certain activities with endangered species pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“we”) solicits review and comment from local, State, and Federal agencies, and the public on the following permit requests. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

#### **Permit No. TE-815214**

*Applicant:* Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area, Arroyo Grande, California.

The applicant requests an amendment to take (salvage, replace, and transfer non-viable eggs) the California Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*) in conjunction with surveys and population monitoring in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, California, for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

#### **Permit No. TE-170381**

*Applicant:* William F. Stagnaro, San Francisco, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (harass by survey, capture, mark, and monitor) the San Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*), and the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) in conjunction with surveys and population monitoring activities throughout the range of each species in California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

#### **Permit No. TE-084606**

*Applicant:* David F. Moskovitz, Diamond Bar, California.

The applicant requests an amendment to take (capture, collect, and kill) the Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), the longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), the Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus wootoni*), the San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*), and the vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus*

*packardii*) in conjunction with surveys throughout the range of each species in California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

**Permit No. TE-170389**

*Applicant:* Travis B. Cooper, San Juan Capistrano, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (harass by survey, and nest monitor) the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and the Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) in conjunction with surveys and monitoring throughout the range of each species in California, for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

**Permit No. TE-004939**

*Applicant:* Gordon F. Pratt, Riverside, California.

The applicant requests an amendment to take (capture, release, remove from the wild, and captive breed) the El Segundo Blue butterfly (*Euphilotes battoides allyni*) in conjunction with genetic research at Vandenberg Air Force base, Santa Barbara County, California, for the purposes of enhancing its survival.

**Permit No. TE-170403**

*Applicant:* Melissa A. Amarello, Carbondale, California.

The applicant requests a permit to take (harass by survey, capture, mark, and monitor) the San Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*) in conjunction with population monitoring and research activities at the Cloverdale Ranch, San Mateo County, California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

**Permit No. TE-795930**

*Applicant:* Helm Biological Consulting, Lincoln, California.

The permittee requests an amendment to take (harass by survey, capture, handle, and release) the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) in conjunction with surveys throughout the range of the species in California, for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

**Permit No. TE-168282**

*Applicant:* Normandeau Associates, Inc., Stevenson Washington.

The permittee request a permit to take (harass by survey) the razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*) and bonytail chub (*Gila elegans*) in conjunction with surveys and backwater inventories along the lower Colorado river in Imperial County, California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

**Permit No. TE-170681**

*Applicant:* Stanley C. Spencer, Riverside, California.

The applicant requests an amendment to take (survey by pursuit) the Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) and Delhi sands flower loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*), and take (capture, collect, and kill) the Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), the longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), the Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus wootoni*), the San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*), and the vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*) in conjunction with surveys throughout the range of each species in California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

**Permit No. TE-053085**

*Applicant:* Bureau of Reclamation, Boulder City, Nevada.

The permittee request a permit to take (harass by survey, electroshock, capture, collect, mark, transport, captive rear, captive propagate, reintroduce) the razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*) and bonytail chub (*Gila elegans*) in conjunction with surveys, population monitoring, and research along the Colorado river in Clark County, Nevada, and San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial County, California, for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

We solicit public review and comment on each of these recovery permit applications. Comments and materials we receive will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

Dated: February 6, 2008.

**Michael Fris,**

*Acting Regional Director, Region 8, Sacramento, California.*

[FR Doc. E8-2586 Filed 2-12-08; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Recovery Plan for the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis californiana*)**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce the availability of the recovery plan for the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis californiana*). The Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep occurs primarily on lands managed by the U.S. Forest

Service (Inyo and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests) and the National Park Service (Yosemite National Park) in the Sierra Nevada in western Inyo and Mono Counties, California. This recovery plan describes the status, current management, recovery objectives and criteria, and specific actions needed to reclassify the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep from endangered to threatened, and to ultimately delist it.

**ADDRESSES:** You may obtain a copy of the plan by either of the following methods:

*Internet:* Download a copy at <http://endangered.fws.gov/recovery/index.html#plans>, or *U.S. mail:* Send a request to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, 2493 Portola Road, Suite B, Ventura, CA 93003. Printed copies of the recovery plan will be available for distribution in 4 to 6 weeks.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brian Croft, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above address (telephone 951-697-5365).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Recovery of endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystems is a primary goal of our endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, we are working to prepare recovery plans for most listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for downlisting or delisting listed species, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*) (Act) requires us to develop recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act requires us to provide public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment during recovery plan development. We made the draft recovery plan for the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep available for public comment from July 30, 2003, through September 29, 2003 (68 FR 44808), and again from October 9, 2003, through December 8, 2003 (68 FR 58355). We considered information we received during these public comment periods and information from peer reviewers in our preparation of this final recovery plan, and also summarized that information in Appendix J of the