DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service


Comal County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan, Comal County, TX

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability: draft environmental impact statement, draft habitat conservation plan, and permit application; announcement of a public hearing.

SUMMARY: Comal County, Texas (Applicant), has applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for an incidental take permit (ITP–223267–0) under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended. The requested permit, which would be in effect for a period of 30 years, if granted, would authorize incidental take of the following federally listed species: Golden-cheeked warbler (Dendroica chrysoparia) and black-capped vireo (Vireo atricapilla). The proposed take would occur in Comal County, Texas, as a result of activities including, but not limited to: Public or private construction and development, utility installation and maintenance, and public infrastructure projects. Comal County has completed a draft Habitat Conservation Plan (dHCP) as part of the application package. We have issued a draft Environmental Impact Statement (dEIS) that evaluates the impacts of, and alternatives to, possible issuance of an incidental take permit (ITP).

DATES: Comment-period end: To ensure consideration, we must receive written comments by close of business (4:30 p.m. CDT) on or before September 1, 2010.

Public meetings: We will accept oral and written comments at a public hearing to be held on July 27, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Comal County Commissioners Court, 199 Main Plaza, New Braunfels, Texas 78130.

ADDRESS: For where to review documents and submit comments, and the public meeting location, see Reviewing Documents and Submitting Comments in SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Adam Zerrenner, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78758 or 512/490–0057.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.), this notice advises the public that we have gathered the information necessary to determine impacts and formulate alternatives for the EIS related to the potential issuance of an ITP to Comal County; and that the Applicant has developed an HCP which describes the measures the applicant has agreed to undertake to minimize and mitigate the effects of incidental take of federally listed species to the maximum extent practicable, under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Background

Our initial notice of intent to prepare an EIS and hold public scoping meetings published in the Federal Register on October 16, 2008 (73 FR 61433). A public scoping meeting was held on December 4, 2008, at Commissioners Court in New Braunfels, Texas. The dHCP and the conservation programs described in the plan were developed in a process involving participants and stakeholders from potentially affected or interested groups in Comal County. The groups are organized into a Citizens Advisory Committee and a Biological Advisory Team that have overseen the development of the dHCP. The Comal County Web site contains information on meetings, documents, and the status of the process.

Section 9 of the Act and its implementing regulations prohibit the “taking” of threatened and endangered species. However, under limited circumstances, we may issue permits to take listed wildlife species incidental to, and not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities.

Proposed Action

The proposed action involves the issuance of an ITP by the Service for covered activities in Comal County, under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act. The activities that would be covered by the ITP are public or private construction and development, utility installation and maintenance (including, but not limited to, power and cable stations, substations, and transmission lines; water, sewer, and natural gas pipelines; and plants and other facilities), and public infrastructure projects such as school development, road construction and maintenance, and parkland. The ITP will cover Comal County, Texas. The requested term of the permit is 30 years. To meet the issuance criteria for an ITP, the Applicant has developed and will implement the dHCP, which describes the conservation measures the Applicant has agreed to undertake to minimize the potential for and mitigate the potential effects of incidental take of golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo to the maximum extent practicable.

Alternatives

The alternatives to the proposed action we are considering as part of this process are:

1. No Action—A countywide HCP would not be implemented, and no ITP would be issued. This alternative would require individuals to seek authorization through section 7 consultation or individual section 10 permits to address incidental take resulting from their actions in Comal County or avoid taking actions that would result in incidental take.

2. Modified (Reduced Take and Mitigation) HCP—This alternative would only cover take of the golden-cheeked warbler, and the amount of authorized take and mitigation would be reduced for this species.

3. Preferred Alternative (Proposed Comal County RHCP)—This alternative would involve issuance of a 10(a)(1)(B) permit covering impacts to 5.238 acres of golden-cheeked warbler habitat and 1,000 acres of black-capped vireo habitat.

Reviewing Documents and Submitting Comments

Please refer to TE–223267–0 when requesting documents or submitting comments.

You may obtain copies of the dEIS and dHCP by going to the Comal County Web site at http://www.co.comal.tx.us/comalrhcp/default.htm. Alternatively, you may obtain compact disks with electronic copies of these documents by contacting Mr. Adam Zerrenner, Field Supervisor, by U.S. mail at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78758; or by phone at 512/490–0057; or by fax to 512/490–0974. A limited number of printed copies of the dEIS and dHCP are also available, by request, from Mr. Zerrenner. Copies of the dEIS and dHCP are also available for public inspection and review at the following locations:
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Public Meeting, Salem District Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Salem District Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) will meet as indicated below.

DATES: June 17, 2010, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Salem, OR; June 18, 2010, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Salem, OR.

ADDRESSES: Salem District Office, 1717 Fabry Road SE., Salem, OR 97306.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Program information, meeting records, and a roster of committee members may be obtained from Richard Hatfield, BLM Salem District Designated Official, 1717 Fabry Road, Salem, OR 97306—(503) 375–5682. The meeting agenda will be posted at: http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/salem/rac.

Should you require reasonable accommodation, please contact the BLM Salem District—(503) 375–5682 as soon as possible.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Resource Advisory Committee will consider proposed projects for Title II funding under Section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 110–343) that focus on maintaining or restoring water quality, land health, forest ecosystems, and infrastructure.

Aaron G. Horton, District Manager.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Notice of Lodging of Consent Decree Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act

Notice is hereby given that on May 7, 2010, a proposed consent decree in United States v. Shoshone Silver Mining Co. and Lakeview Consolidated Silver Mines, Inc., Civil Action No. 2:08–00495–EJL–CWD, was lodged with the United States District Court for the District of Idaho.

In this action the United States sought declaratory relief and response costs incurred by the United States under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act at the Idaho Lakeview Mine Site in Bonner County, Idaho. Under the proposed settlement the settling defendants have agreed to pay $50,000, as well as a share of any property sales within the next three years.

The Department of Justice will receive for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of this publication comments relating to the decree. Comments should be addressed to the Assistant Attorney General, Environmental and Natural Resources Division, and either emailed to pubcomment-ees.enrd@usdoj.gov or mailed to P.O. Box 7611, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20044–7611, and should refer to United States v. Shoshone Silver Mining Co. and Lakeview Consolidated Silver Mines, Inc., Civil Action No. 2:08–00495–EJL–CWD, DOJ Ref. 90–11–3–09618.

During the public comment period, the consent decree may be examined on the following Department of Justice Web site: http://www.justice.gov/enrd/Consent_Decrees.html. A copy of the decree may also be obtained by mail from the Consent Decree Library, P.O. Box 7611, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20044–7611 or by faxing or e-mailing a request to Tonia Fleetwood (tonia.fleetwood@usdoj.gov), fax no. (202) 514–0097, phone.