

Service proposes to enter into an agreement with the New Dungeness Light Station Association to continue their management and maintenance of the light station facilities.

#### *Alternative A: No Action*

Under Alternative A, the refuge would continue with current management, which focuses on protecting and maintaining habitats in their current condition. Fire suppression techniques would continue to be used to prevent catastrophic wildfire. Wetland and forested habitats would continue to be monitored for invasive species, and treated with Integrated Pest Management techniques as funding allows. The water delivery system on the Dawley Unit would be maintained to deliver water to the impoundment. Access on roads within the Dawley Unit would be maintained. Partnerships would continue to be cultivated for oil spill response and to address water quality issues within Dungeness Bay and Harbor. Limited data would be collected on birds, vegetation, invasive species, and marine debris, with no specific effectiveness monitoring conducted for habitats or wildlife. Research would continue under Special Use Permits. Areas that are open for public use year-round, areas that are open only seasonally depending on the needs of refuge wildlife, and areas that are closed to visitors year-round for the benefit of wildlife would remain the same. Public-use activities on the refuge would include fishing (saltwater), shell-fishing (clams and crabs), wildlife observation, wildlife photography, hiking, boating (no wake allowed), jogging, horseback riding, beach use (wading, beachcombing, other recreational beach uses), environmental education, and environmental interpretation.

#### *Alternative B: Preferred Alternative*

The Service's Preferred Alternative would continue many of the activities in Alternative A, but would also expand the level of active habitat management and enhancement that the Service would conduct. A forest assessment would be conducted within the Dawley Unit and a step-down forest management plan would be completed by 2018. Active forest management techniques would be employed within a core 40-acre area to promote the development of old-growth forest. A road inventory and condition assessment for the Dawley Unit would be completed by 2016. The slope along the main road would be stabilized, but the overall amount of road maintained would decrease and unneeded logging

spur roads outside of the core area would be rehabilitated. A wetland inventory and hydrological assessment would be conducted by 2015. The impoundment at the Dawley Unit would be managed for optimum water levels and benthic layer characteristics for amphibians. In addition to existing status monitoring and research, data would be collected on a greater variety of flora and fauna. Environmental factors that are stressors, climate-change related or otherwise, would be monitored. Effectiveness monitoring of CCP and other step-down plan objectives would occur. Public-use changes would include new limits on boat landing hours. Additional wildlife viewing, interpretive, and environmental education programs would be offered. Staff and volunteer time devoted to making visitor contacts would be increased. New orientation, guidance, and regulatory signage and materials would be developed. The existing uses of jogging and horseback riding were evaluated and our draft analysis has found that jogging is not appropriate due to wildlife disturbance and therefore would no longer be allowed. We also have preliminarily determined that horseback riding should no longer be allowed due to safety concerns and user conflicts.

#### *Alternative C*

All additional habitat monitoring and management activities included in Alternative B are also included in this alternative, as are effectiveness monitoring and research identification, and pursuit of partnerships to accomplish these activities. However, forest management within the Dawley Unit would be further expanded to include minimal management activities (e.g., planting berry-producing shrubs) within an additional 30–40 acres outside of the core area. Unneeded logging spur roads within this area would also be rehabilitated. Public use opportunities and programs under Alternative C are similar to Alternative B but smaller and more restricted in some cases. Limits on boat landing hours under Alternative C are the same as under Alternative B. Wildlife viewing, interpretive, and environmental education programs would be slightly more frequent under Alternative C compared to Alternative A but slightly less frequent compared to Alternative B. Similar to Alternative B, jogging is found to be not appropriate due to wildlife disturbance and therefore would no longer be allowed. Horseback riding would not be allowed due to safety concerns and user conflicts.

#### **Public Availability of Documents**

In addition to any methods in **ADDRESSES**, you can view or obtain documents in the following ways: by calling the refuge complex at 360–457–8451 or visiting our Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning/main/docs/wa/docsdungeness.htm>. Printed copies will be available for review at the following libraries:

- North Olympic Public Library—Sequim Branch, 630 N. Sequim Ave., Sequim, WA 98382
- North Olympic Public Library—Port Angeles Branch, 2210 South Peabody St., Port Angeles, WA 98362
- Port Townsend Public Library, 1220 Lawrence Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368
- Jefferson County Central Library, 620 Cedar Ave., Port Hadlock, WA 98339

#### **Submitting Comments/Issues for Comment**

Public comments are requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process. Public participation is vital to this planning effort. Comments on the draft CCP/EA will be analyzed by the Service and addressed in the final planning documents.

#### **Public Availability of Comments**

Before including your address, phone number, email 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.

Dated: August 6, 2012.

#### **Robyn Thorson**

*Regional Director, Pacific Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

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#### **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

#### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

[Docket No. FWS–R9–IA–2011–0087; 96300–1671–0000 FY12 R4]

#### **Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Sixteenth Regular Meeting; Public Meeting**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting date change.

**SUMMARY:** The United States, as a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), will attend the sixteenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP16) in Bangkok, Thailand, during March 3 to 15, 2013. Currently, the United States is developing its negotiating positions on proposed resolutions, decisions, and amendments to the CITES Appendices (species proposals), as well as other agenda items that have been submitted by other Party countries, the permanent CITES committees, and the CITES Secretariat for consideration at CoP16. In a notice published on November 9, 2012, we announced a public meeting to be held on December 5, 2012, to discuss the items on the provisional agenda for CoP16. This notice revises the previously announced date of the public meeting.

**DATES:** The public meeting will be held on December 13, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The public meeting will be held in the Sidney Yates Auditorium at the Main Interior Building at 18th and C Streets NW., Washington, DC. Directions to the building can be obtained by contacting the Division of Management Authority (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). For more information about the meeting, see "Announcement of Public Meeting" under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robert R. Gabel, Chief, Division of Management Authority; telephone 703-358-2095; facsimile 703-358-2298.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, hereinafter referred to as CITES or the Convention, is an international treaty designed to control and regulate international trade in certain animal and plant species that are now or potentially may become threatened with extinction. These species are listed in Appendices to CITES, which are available on the CITES Secretariat's Web site at <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/index.php>. Currently, 176 countries, including the United States, are Parties to CITES. The Convention calls for regular biennial meetings of the Conference of the Parties, unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise. At these meetings, the Parties review the implementation of CITES, make provisions enabling the CITES

Secretariat in Switzerland to carry out its functions, consider amendments to the lists of species in Appendices I and II, consider reports presented by the Secretariat and the permanent CITES committees (Standing, Animals, and Plants Committees), and make recommendations for the improved effectiveness of CITES. Any country that is a Party to CITES may propose amendments to Appendices I and II, resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for consideration by all the Parties at the meetings.

On November 9, 2012, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 67390) that announced the provisional agenda for CoP16, solicited comments on the items on the provisional agenda, and announced a public meeting to discuss the items on the provisional agenda. In that notice, we announced that the public meeting would be held on December 5, 2012, in the Sidney Yates Auditorium at the Main Interior Building at 18th and C Streets NW., Washington, DC. The date of that public meeting has now been changed. The public meeting will be held on the date specified in the **DATES** section and at the address specified in the **ADDRESSES** section. You can obtain directions to the building by contacting the Division of Management Authority (see the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above). Please note that the Sidney Yates Auditorium is accessible to the handicapped, and all persons planning to attend the meeting will be required to present photo identification when entering the building. Persons who plan to attend the meeting and who require interpretation for the hearing impaired must notify the Division of Management Authority by December 5, 2012. For those who cannot attend the public meeting but are interested in watching via live stream, please go to our Web site <http://www.fws.gov/international/cites/cop16/>, and look for the link to the live feed.

**Future Actions**

Through an additional notice and Web site posting in advance of CoP16, we will inform you about tentative U.S. negotiating positions on species proposals, proposed resolutions, proposed decisions, and agenda items that were submitted by other Party countries, the permanent CITES committees, and the CITES Secretariat for consideration at CoP16.

**Author**

The primary author of this notice is Mark Albert, Division of Management Authority.

**Authority**

This action is authorized by the U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: November 26, 2012.

**Susan L. Wilkinson,**

*Alternate Federal Register Liaison.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

[FWS-R8-ES-2013-N252: FF08ENV000-FXES1113080000-134]

**Proposed Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the Spring Mountain Raceway Expansion Project, Pahrump, Nye County, Nevada**

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

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

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an application from Spring Mountain Raceway, LLC (applicant), for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The requested 4-year permit would authorize the incidental take of the threatened Mojave desert tortoise on 120 acres of habitat associated with the construction of a raceway expansion project in Pahrump, Nye County, Nevada. The applicant would implement conservation measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate effects of the proposed project's covered activities, as described in the applicant's low-effect habitat conservation plan (HCP).

We request comments on the permit application, including the HCP, and our preliminary determination that the plan qualifies as a "low-effect" habitat conservation plan, eligible for a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA). We explain the basis for this determination in our environmental action statement (EAS), which is also available for public review.

**DATES:** We must receive written comments on or before December 27, 2012.

**ADDRESSES:** You may download a copy of the HCP, low-effect screening form and EAS, and related documents on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/nevada>, or you may request copies of the documents by U.S. mail or phone (see