

Average Hours per Response: 83.
Total Estimated Burdens: 24,485.

B. Solicitation of Public Comment

This notice is soliciting comments from members of the public and affected parties concerning the collection of information described in Section A on the following:

(1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information;

(3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond; including through the use of appropriate automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of responses. HUD encourages interested parties to submit comment in response to these questions.

Authority: Section 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35.

Dated: *January 13, 2016.*

Colette Pollard,

Department Reports Management Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016-01151 Filed 1-20-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-67-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R5-ES-2015-0182;
FXES11120500000-167-FF05E00000]

Draft Environmental Assessment, Habitat Conservation Plan, and Application for an Incidental Take Permit for Piping Plover, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability, receipt of application.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or USFWS), have received an application from the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MADFW) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). We are considering issuing a 25-year permit to the applicant that would authorize take of the federally threatened piping plover incidental to

otherwise lawful activities, specifically recreational activities and beach operations on piping plover breeding beaches in Massachusetts. Pursuant to the ESA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we announce the availability of the MADFW's ITP application and draft habitat conservation plan (HCP), as well as the Service's draft environmental assessment (EA), for public review and comment. We provide this notice to seek comments from the public and Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments.

DATES: We will accept comments received or postmarked on or before February 22, 2016. Comments submitted electronically using the Federal eRulemaking Portal (see **ADDRESSES** section, below) must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the closing date.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by one of the following methods:

Electronically: Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal Web site at <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS-R5-ES-2015-0182, which is the docket number for this notice. Click on the appropriate link to locate this document and submit a comment.

By hard copy: Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-R5-ES-2015-0182, Division of Policy, Performance and Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 5275 Leesburg Pike, ABHC-PPM; Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

We request that you send comments by only one of the methods described above. We will post all information received on the Web site at: <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see the Public Comments section below for more information).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas Chapman, by mail at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New England Field Office, 70 Commercial Street, Suite 300, Concord, NH 03301; or by phone at (603) 223-2541.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

We received an application from the MADFW for an ITP to take the federally threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) over a 25-year period. The ITP would authorize take resulting from recreational activities and beach operations that deviate from State and Federal guidelines for avoiding take (*Guidelines for Managing Recreational Use of Beaches to Protect Piping Plovers, Terns and Their Habitats in*

Massachusetts (MADFW 1993; <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/czm/stormsmart/beaches/barrier-beach-guidelines.pdf>, accessed December 21, 2015); *Guidelines For Managing Recreational Activities In Piping Plover Breeding Habitat On The U.S. Atlantic Coast To Avoid Take Under Section 9 Of The Endangered Species Act* (USFWS 1994; <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/pipingplover/pdf/recguide.pdf>, accessed December 21, 2015)). A conservation program to minimize and mitigate for the impacts of the incidental take would be implemented by the MADFW as described in the draft Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Plan for Piping Plover.

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) (NEPA), we prepared an EA that describes the proposed action, issuance of an ITP to the MADFW, and possible alternatives and analyzes the effects of the proposed action and alternatives on the human environment. We will evaluate whether the EA's analysis is adequate to support a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Availability of Documents

You may obtain copies of the proposed HCP and draft EA on the internet at the New England Field Office's Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/newengland/> or at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket Number FWS-R5-ES-2015-0182. Copies of the proposed HCP and draft EA will also be available for public review during regular business hours at the New England Field Office, 70 Commercial Street, Suite 300, Concord, NH 03301. Those who do not have access to the internet or cannot visit our office can request copies by telephone at (603) 223-2541, or by letter to the New England Field Office.

Background

Section 9 of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations prohibit the "take" of animal species listed as endangered or threatened. Take is defined under the ESA as to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct" (16 U.S.C. 1538). However, under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA, we may issue permits to authorize incidental take of listed species. "Incidental take" is defined by the ESA as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity. Section 10(a)(2)(A) of the ESA requires an ITP

applicant to submit an HCP that specifies the steps the applicant will take to minimize and mitigate the impacts of the taking. Regulations governing ITPs for threatened and endangered species, respectively, are found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 50 CFR 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.32.

The MADFW is seeking a permit for the incidental take of the piping plover for a term of 25 years. Incidental take of this species may occur as a result of recreational activities and beach operations that deviate from State and Federal guidelines for managing piping plovers. The proposed covered activities include: (1) The use of roads and parking lots in the vicinity of unfledged piping plover chicks; (2) recreational activities and beach operations associated with reduced symbolic fencing around nests (temporary stake and twine or rope with signage erected around piping plover nests and habitat to delineate no entry areas for over-sand vehicles (OSVs) and pedestrians); (3) recreational activities and beach operations associated with reduced proactive symbolic fencing of piping plover habitat; (4) the moving of piping plover nests for recreational access and beach operations; and (5) OSV use in the vicinity of unfledged piping plover chicks. The proposed conservation strategy in the applicant's proposed HCP is designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of covered activities on the piping plover. The HCP's stated purpose is to advance piping plover conservation and recovery in Massachusetts while maintaining and improving recreational beach access and beach operations.

To achieve plover conservation and limited flexibility for recreational activities and beach operations, the HCP identified broad program goals, including: (1) A framework to maintain a "viable and robust" piping plover population in Massachusetts; (2) community support for piping plover conservation; and (3) streamlining the State and Federal permitting processes for site-level management flexibility. The MADFW intends to extend its take authorization to issue Certificates of Inclusion (COIs) to approved landowners and beach managers (referred to as Plan participants) who: (1) Engage in the covered activities described in the HCP; (2) meet the COI eligibility and application requirements described in the HCP; and (3) agree to implement the HCP, required ITP conditions, and the MADFW conservation and management permit (required for State-listed species, including the piping plover). Plan

participants are required to develop implementation avoidance and minimization plans (IAMPs) that are based on conservation measures outlined in the HCP and to implement mitigation to offset the take of piping plover adults, chicks, and nests. The HCP conservation strategy's primary avenue for mitigation is selective predator management that would be implemented on site or off site. Additional education, outreach, and law enforcement efforts could be implemented by Plan participants, but because the impacts of these measures are not quantifiable, these measures are not considered to offset the anticipated take.

The HCP outlines a sliding scale for estimating the annual allowable take of broods, nests, or territories based on the 3-year running statewide population average. The scale ranges from 0 take if the statewide population is below 500 breeding pairs to a maximum take exposure of 7 percent of the statewide population if the statewide population is at or exceeds 655 breeding pairs. Therefore, the annual amount of take over the 25-year permit duration could range from a low of no nests, broods, or territories exposed to take to a high of 7 percent of the statewide population's nests, broods, or territories exposed to take. The Service has estimated the potential take to be the highest level of annual take, 70 broods per year, based on a statewide population estimate of 1,000 breeding pairs. This estimate is based on the estimated Massachusetts carrying capacity of 1,100 breeding pairs and the assumption that carrying capacity is unlikely to be reached during the permit term.

The proposed action is the issuance of an ITP and implementation of the proposed HCP. The MADFW considered two alternatives to the proposed action in its HCP: A reduced take alternative under which expanded OSV use in the presence of unfledged plover chicks would not be included, thereby reducing the amount of take allocated under the HCP, and an activity-by-activity alternative whereby the MADFW and beach landowners or managers of recreational beaches would apply to the Service for individual ITPs for take associated with recreational activities and beach operations.

National Environmental Policy Act

In compliance with NEPA, we analyzed the impacts of the proposed project, issuance of an ITP and implementation of the HCP, and a reasonable range of alternatives. Based on this analysis and any new information resulting from public

comment, we will determine if there are any significant impacts caused by the proposed action. We have prepared a draft EA on the proposed action and have made it available for public inspection online or in person at the New England Field Office (see Availability of Documents).

NEPA requires that a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action be described. The draft EA analyzes three alternatives: A no action alternative, the proposed action, and a shorter permit term alternative.

Next Steps

We will evaluate the plan and comments we receive to determine whether the permit application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). We will also evaluate whether issuance of a section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would comply with section 7 of the ESA by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. We will use the results of this consultation, in combination with the above findings, in our final analysis to determine whether to issue a permit. If the requirements are met, we will issue the permit to the applicant.

Public Comments

The Service invites the public to comment on the proposed HCP and draft EA during a 30-day public comment period (see **DATES**). You may submit comments by one of the methods shown under **ADDRESSES**.

Public Availability of Comments

We will post all public comments and information received electronically or via hard copy on our Web site at: <http://regulations.gov>. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record and will be available to the public. Before including your address, phone number, electronic mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—will be publicly available. If you submit a hard copy comment that includes personal identifying information, you may request at the top of your document that we withhold this information from public review. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: January 13, 2016.

Paul Phifer,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Northeast Region.

[FR Doc. 2016-01111 Filed 1-20-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS-HQ-IA-2015-0149; FXIA1671090000-156-FF09A30000]

Endangered Species; Receipt of Application for Permit

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of application for permit; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, invite the public to comment on the following application to conduct certain activities with endangered species. With some exceptions, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) prohibits activities with listed species unless Federal authorization is acquired that allows such activities.

DATES: We must receive comments or requests for documents on or before February 22, 2016.

ADDRESSES: *Submitting Comments:* You may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-HQ-IA-2015-0149.
- *U.S. mail or hand-delivery:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-HQ-IA-2015-0149; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters, MS: BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

When submitting comments, please indicate the name of the applicant and the PRT# you are commenting on. We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see the Public Comments section below for more information). *Viewing Comments:* Comments and materials we receive will be available for public inspection on <http://www.regulations.gov>, or by appointment, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803; telephone 703-358-2095.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brenda Tapia, (703) 358-2104

(telephone); (703) 358-2281 (fax); DMAFR@fws.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Comment Procedures

A. How do I request copies of applications or comment on submitted applications?

Send your request for copies of applications or comments and materials concerning any of the applications to the contact listed under **ADDRESSES**. Please include the **Federal Register** notice publication date, the PRT-number, and the name of the applicant in your request or submission. We will not consider requests or comments sent to an email or address not listed under **ADDRESSES**. If you provide an email address in your request for copies of applications, we will attempt to respond to your request electronically.

Please make your requests or comments as specific as possible. Please confine your comments to issues for which we seek comments in this notice, and explain the basis for your comments. Include sufficient information with your comments to allow us to authenticate any scientific or commercial data you include.

The comments and recommendations that will be most useful and likely to influence agency decisions are: (1) Those supported by quantitative information or studies; and (2) Those that include citations to, and analyses of, the applicable laws and regulations. We will not consider or include in our administrative record comments we receive after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or comments delivered to an address other than those listed above (see **ADDRESSES**).

B. May I review comments submitted by others?

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the street address listed under **ADDRESSES**. The public may review documents and other information applicants have sent in support of the application unless our allowing viewing would violate the Privacy Act or Freedom of Information Act. 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.

II. Background

To help us carry out our conservation responsibilities for affected species, and in consideration of section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), along with Executive Order 13576, “Delivering an Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government,” and the President’s Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies of January 21, 2009—Transparency and Open Government (74 FR 4685; January 26, 2009), which call on all Federal agencies to promote openness and transparency in Government by disclosing information to the public, we invite public comment on these permit applications before final action is taken.

III. Permit Application

Endangered Species

Applicant: Yerkes National Primate Research Center, Atlanta, GA; PRT-69024B

On October 15, 2015, we published a **Federal Register** notice inviting the public to comment on an application for a permit to conduct a certain activity with endangered species (80 FR 62089). We are now reopening the comment period to allow the public the opportunity to review additional information submitted for the issuance of a permit to export two male and six female captive-bred chimpanzees (*pan troglodytes*) to Wingham Wildlife Park, Wingham, United Kingdom, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Brenda Tapia,

Program Analyst/Data Administrator, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.

[FR Doc. 2016-01095 Filed 1-20-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[GX16EN05ESB0500]

Reopening of Nomination Period for State Government Members of the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: On October 19, 2015, the U.S. Department of the Interior published a notice inviting nominations for non-Federal members of the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and