

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: April 6, 2018.

Dana T. Wade,

General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Housing.

[FR Doc. 2018-08578 Filed 4-23-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-67-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service**

[FWS-R8-ES-2016-N236;
FXES11130800000-189-FF08EVEN00]

Receipt of Application for Renewal of Incidental Take Permits; Interim Programmatic Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the Endangered Mount Hermon June Beetle and Ben Lomond Spineflower, Santa Cruz County and Scotts Valley, CA

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of permit renewal application; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received requests from the County of Santa Cruz and City of Scotts Valley (applicants), for renewal of two incidental take permits under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The applicants have requested a renewal that will extend permit authorization by 5 years from the date the permit is reissued. If renewed, no additional take above the

original authorized limit of 139 acres of habitat will be authorized. The permits would authorize take of the federally endangered Mount Hermon June beetle, incidental to otherwise lawful activities associated with the Interim Programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan for the Endangered Mount Hermon June beetle and Ben Lomond spineflower.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before May 24, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may obtain copies of the permit renewal applications and the habitat conservation plan (HCP) on the internet at <http://www.fws.gov/ventura/>, or by writing to the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, Attn: Permit numbers TE43708A-0 and TE44928A-0, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2493 Portola Road, Suite B, Ventura, CA 93003. In addition, we will make the permit renewal applications and HCP available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the above address. Please address written comments to Stephen P. Henry, Field Supervisor, at the address above. Comments may also be sent by facsimile to (805) 644-3958.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Chad Mitcham, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, by mail to the address in **ADDRESSES** or by phone at (805) 677-3328.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We have received requests from the County of Santa Cruz and City of Scotts Valley (applicants) for renewal of incidental take permits TE43708A-0 and TE44928A-0 under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). The applicants have requested renewals that would extend permit authorization by 5 years from the date the permit is reissued. The applicants have agreed to follow all of the existing habitat conservation plan conditions. If renewed, no additional take above the original authorized limit of 139 acres of habitat will be authorized. The permits would authorize take of the federally endangered Mount Hermon June beetle (*Polyphylla barbata*), incidental to otherwise lawful activities associated with the Interim Programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan for the Endangered Mount Hermon June Beetle and Ben Lomond Spineflower (HCP).

Background

The Mount Hermon June beetle was listed by the Service as endangered on January 24, 1997. The Ben Lomond spineflower (*Chorizanther pungens* var. *hartwegiana*) was listed by the Service as endangered on February 4, 1994. Section 9 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations

prohibit the "take" of fish or wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened. "Take" is defined under the Act to include the following activities: "[T]o harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct" (16 U.S.C. 1532); however, under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act, we may issue permits to authorize incidental take of listed wildlife species. "Incidental Take" is defined by the Act as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. The Code of Federal Regulations provides regulations governing incidental take permits for threatened and endangered species at 50 CFR 17.32 and 17.22, respectively. Under the Act, protections for federally listed plants differ from the protections afforded to federally listed animals. Take of listed plant species is not prohibited under the Act and cannot be authorized under a section 10 permit. Listed plant species may be included on an incidental take permit in recognition of the conservation benefit provided to them under an HCP. Issuance of an incidental take permit also must not jeopardize the existence of federally listed fish, wildlife, or plant species. All species included in the incidental take permit would receive assurances under our "No Surprises" regulations (50 CFR 17.22(b)(5) and 17.32(b)(5)).

The applicants have applied for renewal of their respective permits for incidental take of the endangered Mount Hermon June beetle. The potential taking would occur by activities associated with the construction of certain eligible small development projects in densely developed residential neighborhoods (as defined in the HCP) that support suitable habitat for the covered species. The 10 Project Units within the HCP boundary were identified within the communities of Ben Lomond, Felton, Mount Hermon, and Scotts Valley in Santa Cruz County, California. Incidental take permits were first issued for the HCP on October 27, 2011.

Public Comments

If you wish to comment on the permit applications, plans, and associated documents, you may submit comments by any one of the methods in **ADDRESSES**.

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 view, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: April 18, 2018.

Stephen P. Henry,

Field Supervisor, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, Ventura, California.

[FR Doc. 2018-08499 Filed 4-23-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2018-N029;
FXES11130400000EA-123-FF04EF1000]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Availability of Proposed Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the Sand Skink, Orange County, FL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an application for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Orange County Public Schools (applicant) is requesting a 3-year ITP for take of the federally listed sand skink. We request public comment on the permit application, which includes a proposed habitat conservation plan, and on our preliminary determination that the plan qualifies as low effect under the National Environmental Policy Act. To make this determination, we used our environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, which are also available for review.

DATES: To ensure consideration, please send your written comments by May 24, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments and request copies of the application, including the HCP, as well as our environmental action statement or low-effect screening form, by any one of the following methods:

Email: northflorida@fws.gov. Use "Attn: Permit number TE74732C-0" as your subject line.

Fax: Field Supervisor, (904) 731-3191, "Attn: Permit number TE74732C-0."

U.S. mail: Field Supervisor, Jacksonville Ecological Services Field

Office, Attn: Permit number TE74732C-0, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200, Jacksonville, FL 32256.

In-person: You may deliver comments during regular business hours at the office address listed above under *U.S. mail*. You may inspect the application, HCP, environmental action statement, or low-effect screening form by appointment during normal business hours at the same address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Erin M. Gawera, telephone: (904) 731-3121; email: erin_gawera@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. *et seq.*) and our implementing regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR part 17 prohibit the "take" of fish and wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened. Take of listed fish or wildlife 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. 1532(19)). However, under limited circumstances, we issue permits to authorize incidental take, *i.e.*, take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity.

Regulations governing incidental take permits for endangered and threatened species are at 50 CFR 17.22 and 17.32, respectively. The ESA's take prohibitions do not apply to federally listed plants on private lands unless such take would violate State law. In addition to meeting other criteria, the take authorized by an incidental take permit must not jeopardize the existence of federally listed fish, wildlife, or plants.

Applicant's Proposal

Orange County Public Schools is requesting an incidental take permit (ITP) to take sand skink (*Neoseps reynoldsi*) through the permanent destruction of approximately 5.3 acres (ac) of occupied foraging and sheltering habitat. The take would be incidental to the construction of a school and associated facilities in Orange County, Florida. The 26.0-ac habitat conservation plan (HCP) project site is located on Orange County Parcel No. 27232500000004, within Section 25, Township 23 South, Range 27 East. The project activities also include clearing, infrastructure building, and landscaping associated with constructing a school and associated facilities. The applicant

proposes to mitigate for the take of the species by purchasing 10.6 mitigation credits within a Service-approved sand skink conservation bank.

Our Preliminary Determination

A low-effect HCP is one involving (1) minor or negligible effects on federally listed or candidate species and their habitats, and (2) minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources. We have determined that the applicant's proposed HCP, including the proposed mitigation and minimization measures, would have minor or negligible effects on the covered species and the environment so as to be "low effect" and qualify for categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), as provided by Department of the Interior implementing regulations in part 46 of title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (43 CFR 46.205, 46.210, and 46.215).

Next Steps

We will evaluate the HCP and comments we receive to determine whether the ITP application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA. We will also conduct an intra-Service consultation to evaluate take of the sand skink in accordance with section 7 of the ESA. We will use the results of the consultation, in combination with the above findings, in our analysis of whether or not to issue the ITP. If the requirements are met, we will issue ITP number TE74732C-0 to the applicant.

Public Comments

If you wish to comment on the permit application, HCP, or associated documents, you may submit comments by any one of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**.

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.