

ecological damage over many decades from the presence of invasive mice. Eradicating house mice would eliminate the last remaining invasive vertebrate species on the Refuge, thereby enhancing the recovery of this unique and sensitive ecosystem.

#### Alternatives

We analyzed three alternatives in this final EIS:

##### *Alternative A: No-Action Alternative*

Under this alternative, we would not take any action to eradicate mice from the South Farallon Islands, maintaining the status quo. Native species and wilderness would continue to be impacted by invasive mice. However, other ongoing invasive species management programs on the South Farallon Islands would continue based on previous agency decisions. Low-intensity mouse control, primarily snap-trapping, currently occurs within and around the residences and other buildings on Southeast Farallon Island. These localized control efforts would continue under the no-action alternative, but the mouse population on the rest of the South Farallon Islands would not be subject to control efforts.

Under this alternative, we would also continue management activities focused on conserving storm-petrels, native plants, and their habitat on the islands, including invasive plant control and storm-petrel nesting habitat management. The current biosecurity measures would continue under this alternative, but these measures still could leave the Farallones at risk of additional invasions by non-native animal species.

##### *Alternative B: Aerial Broadcast of Brodifacoum-25D Conservation (Preferred Alternative)*

Under this alternative, the project area would be treated with the rodent bait Brodifacoum-25D Conservation. This bait is a cereal grain-based pellet (about 1 gram each) containing the rodenticide brodifacoum (25 ppm, or 0.0025 percent). Brodifacoum is typically effective after just one feeding by a mouse. The primary delivery of the bait would be through two aerial applications, with hand baiting and bait stations as a likely secondary means of bait delivery in selected areas. Bait applications would be separated by 10 to 21 days. The applications would take place between the months of October and December, with a most likely application period of November–December. The overall operational period is expected to be about six weeks long. Mitigation measures in this

alternative consist of avoidance and minimization actions to limit adverse impacts to natural and cultural resources. For example, project timing is scheduled to occur outside seabird and marine mammal breeding seasons and when most wildlife populations are near annual minimums. We would implement a comprehensive gull hazing program in order to minimize the exposure of gulls to rodent bait. We would also capture and hold or translocate raptors present on the islands just prior to and during bait application. For precaution, a sample of Farallon arboreal salamanders (*Aneides lugubris farallonensis*) would be captured and held, then released back into the wild following bait degradation. To prevent bait drift into the marine environment, precision GPS techniques and a precision bait bucket will be utilized to keep bait application above the high tide line. Other mitigation measures include the possibility of using bait stations and hand broadcast of bait in certain high-risk areas, removing carcasses that may have been exposed to rodenticide, retrieving or crushing remaining rodent bait after it is no longer needed, minimizing wildlife disturbance during bait application, minimizing impacts to wilderness by using the minimum tools necessary for eradication, and protecting cultural resources during bait application. Monitoring of operational, mitigation, and ecosystem restoration objectives would be conducted before, during, and after the proposed mouse eradication. In addition, in order to minimize the risk of future rodent invasions, a biosecurity plan would be implemented prior to and in conjunction with the proposed eradication to prevent, detect and rapidly respond to potential future rodent incursions.

##### *Alternative C: Aerial Broadcast of Diphacinone-50 Conservation*

Under this alternative, the project area would be treated with the rodent bait Diphacinone-50 Conservation. This bait is a cereal grain-based pellet (about 1–2 grams each) containing the rodenticide diphacinone (50 ppm, or 0.0050 percent). Alternative C differs from Alternative B mainly in the type of rodenticide used for the proposed eradication, the number of applications that may be necessary, and the expected overall length of the operational period. To be effective, diphacinone requires multiple feedings by a mouse over several days. Under Alternative C, Diphacinone-50 Conservation would be broadcast primarily by helicopter, likely with some hand baiting and bait stations used in selected areas. The bait

application would take place between the months of October and December, with most likely application in the November–December period. However, under Alternative C, we would need to broadcast a portion of the total amount of bait required during three applications, each separated by approximately 7 days. The overall operational period is expected to be about 16 weeks long. Alternative C would include the same mitigation measures described under Alternative B, as well as the monitoring program and the biosecurity plan.

#### EPA's Role in the EIS Process

The EPA is charged, under section 309 of the Clean Air Act, to review all Federal agencies' EISs and to comment on the adequacy and the acceptability of the environmental impacts of proposed actions in the EISs.

EPA also serves as the repository for EISs prepared by Federal agencies and provides notice of their availability in the **Federal Register**. The Environmental Impact Statement Database provides information about EISs prepared by Federal agencies, as well as EPA's comments concerning the EISs. All EISs are filed with EPA, which publishes a notice of availability on Fridays in the **Federal Register**.

The notice of availability is the start of the 30-day "wait period" for final EISs, during which agencies are generally required to wait 30 days before making a decision on a proposed action. For more information, see <https://www.epa.gov/nepa>. You may search for EPA comments on EISs, along with EISs themselves, at <https://cdxno.dengn.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-public/action/eis/search>.

**Paul Souza,**

*Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region.*

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**BILLING CODE 4333-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

**[FWS-HQ-ES-2018-N154; MO# 300030113; OMB Control Number 1018-0165]**

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Implementing Regulations for Petitions

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

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are

proposing to renew an information collection.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before May 14, 2019.

**ADDRESSES:** Send your comments on the information collection request (ICR) by mail to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803; or by email to [Info\\_Coll@fws.gov](mailto:Info_Coll@fws.gov). Please reference OMB Control Number 1018-0165 in the subject line of your comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Madonna L. Baucum, Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, by email at [Info\\_Coll@fws.gov](mailto:Info_Coll@fws.gov), or by telephone at (703) 358-2503.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we provide the general public and other Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on new, proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are soliciting comments on the proposed ICR that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is the collection necessary to the proper functions of the Service; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Service enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Service minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. 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.

**Abstract:** The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), specifies the process by which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service (Services, we) make decisions on listing, delisting, or changing the status of a listed species, or revising critical habitat. Any interested person may submit a written petition to the Services requesting to add a species to the Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (Lists), remove a species from the Lists, change the listed status of a species, or revise the boundary of an area designated as critical habitat. The petition process is a central feature of the ESA and serves a beneficial public purpose.

#### Petitions

Information collected from petitioners used to determine whether to list a species includes:

- (1) Petitioner's name; signature; address; telephone number; and association, institution, or business affiliation;
- (2) Scientific and any common name of the species that is the subject of the petition;
- (3) Clear indication of the administrative action the petitioner seeks (*e.g.*, listing of a species or revision of critical habitat);
- (4) Detailed narrative justification for the recommended administrative action that contains an analysis of the supporting information presented;
- (5) Literature citations that are specific enough for the Services to locate the supporting information cited by the petition, including page numbers or chapters, as applicable;
- (6) Electronic or hard copies of supporting materials (*e.g.*, publications, maps, reports, letters from authorities) cited in the petition;
- (7) For petitions to list, delist, or reclassify a species:

- Information to establish whether the subject entity is a "species" as defined in the ESA;
  - Information on the current geographic range of the species, including range States or countries; and
  - Copies of notification letters to States (explained in more detail below);
- (8) Information on current population status and trends and estimates of current population sizes and distributions, both in captivity and the wild, if available;

(9) Identification of the factors under section 4(a)(1) of the ESA that may affect the species and where these factors are acting upon the species;

(10) Whether any or all of the factors alone or in combination identified in section 4(a)(1) of the ESA may cause the species to be an endangered species or threatened species (*i.e.*, place the species in danger of extinction now or in the foreseeable future), and, if so, how, including a description of the magnitude and imminence of the threats to the species and its habitat;

(11) Information on existing regulatory protections and conservation activities that States or other parties have initiated or have put in place that may protect the species or its habitat;

(12) For petitions to revise critical habitat:

- Description and map(s) of areas that the current designation (a) does not include that should be included or (b) includes that should no longer be included, and the rationale for designating or not designating these specific areas as critical habitat. Petitioners should include sufficient supporting information to substantiate the requested changes, which may include GIS data or boundary layers that relate to the request, if appropriate;

- Description of physical or biological features essential for the conservation of the species and whether they may require special management considerations or protection;

- For any areas petitioned to be added to critical habitat within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time it was listed, information indicating that the specific areas contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of the species and may require special management considerations or protection. The petitioner should also indicate which specific areas contain which features;

- For any areas petitioned for removal from currently designated critical habitat within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time it was listed, information indicating that the specific areas do not contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of the species, or that these features do not require special management consideration or protections; and

- For areas petitioned to be added to or removed from critical habitat that were outside the geographical area occupied by the species at the time it was listed, information indicating why the petitioned areas are or are not essential for the conservation of the species; and

(13) A complete, balanced representation of the relevant facts, including information that may contradict claims in the petition.

**Notification of States**

For petitions to list, delist, or change the status of a species, or for petitions to revise critical habitat, petitioners must provide notice to the State agency responsible for the management and conservation of fish, plant, or wildlife resources in each state where the species that is the subject of the petition occurs of their intention to submit a petition. This notification must be made

at least 30 days prior to submission of the petition. Copies of the notification letters must be included with the petition. States may provide to the Service whatever information they want to be considered in the listing decisions.

*Title of Collection:* Implementing Regulations for Petitions, 50 CFR 424.14.

*OMB Control Number:* 1018–0165.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Respondents/Affected Public:* Individuals, businesses, or organizations.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Required to Obtain or Retain a Benefit.

*Frequency of Collection:* On occasion.

*Total Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost:* \$1,000.00 (for materials, printing, postage, data equipment maintenance, etc.).

Requirement	Annual number of respondents	Average number of responses each	Annual number of responses	Average completion time per response (hours)	Estimated annual burden hours
<b>Petitioner—Prepare and Submit Petitions (50 CFR 424.14(c), (d), (e), and (g))</b>					
Individuals .....	10	1	10	120	1,200
Private Sector .....	40	1	40	120	4,800
<b>Petitioner—Notify States (50 CFR 424)</b>					
Individuals .....	100	1	100	1	100
Private Sector .....	400	1	400	1	400
<i>Totals:</i> .....	550	.....	550	.....	6,500

An agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The authority for this action is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

Dated: March 11, 2019.

**Madonna Baucum,**

*Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

[FWS–R4–ES–2019–N021;  
FXES11140400000–178–FF04EF2000]

**Receipt of Incidental Take Permit Application and Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan for the Sand Skink and Blue-Tailed Mole Skink, Polk County, FL; Categorical Exclusion**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comments and information.

**SUMMARY:** We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from Nucor Steel Florida, Inc. (applicant), for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act. The applicant requests the

ITP to take the federally listed sand skink and blue-tailed mole skink incidental to construction in Polk County, Florida. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant’s proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP) and the Service’s preliminary determination that this HCP qualifies as “low-effect,” categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act. To make this determination, we used our environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review.

**DATES:** We must receive your written comments on or before April 15, 2019.

**ADDRESSES:**

*Obtaining Documents:* You may obtain copies of the documents by any of the following methods:

- *Telephone:* Alfredo Begazo, 772–469–4234.
- *Email:* [alfredo\\_begazo@fws.gov](mailto:alfredo_begazo@fws.gov).
- *U.S. mail:* Alfredo Begazo, South Florida Ecological Services Office, Attn Nucor Steel Florida, Inc., Permit TE12906D, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960–3559.
- *In-person:* The documents may be reviewed by appointment during normal business hours at the above address. Please call to make an appointment.
- *Fax:* Alfredo Begazo, 772–562–4288.

*Submitting Comments:* If you wish to submit comments on any of the

documents, you may do so in writing via the above email address, U.S. mail address, or fax number, or you may hand-deliver comments to the above address during regular business hours.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Alfredo Begazo, by U.S. mail (see **ADDRESSES**) or via phone at 772–469–4234. Individuals who are hearing impaired or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 800–877–8339 for TTY assistance.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from Nucor Steel Florida, Inc. (applicant), for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The applicant requests the ITP to take the federally listed sand skink (*Neoseps reynoldsi*) and blue-tailed mole skink (*Eumeces egregius*) (skinks) incidental to the construction of a metal recycling steel plant (project) in Polk County, Florida. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant’s proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP) and the Service’s preliminary determination that this HCP qualifies as “low-effect,” categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). To make this determination, we used our environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review.