

ACTION: Notice of receipt of permit applications; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have received applications for permits to conduct activities intended to enhance the propagation or survival of endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. We invite the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies to comment on these applications. Before issuing any of the requested permits, we will take into consideration any information that we receive during the public comment period.

DATES: We must receive your written comments on or before September 16, 2019.

ADDRESSES: *Document availability and comment submission:* Submit requests for copies of the applications and related documents, as well as any comments, by one of the following methods. All requests and comments should specify the applicant name(s)

and application number(s) (e.g., TExXXXXX):

- *Email: permitsR3ES@fws.gov.*

Please refer to the respective permit number (e.g., Application No. TExXXXXX) in the subject line of your email message.

- *U.S. Mail:* Regional Director, Attn: Carlita Payne, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990, Bloomington, MN 55437-1458.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carlita Payne, 612-713-5343 (phone); *permitsR3ES@fws.gov* (email). Individuals who are hearing or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY assistance.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), prohibits certain activities with endangered and threatened species unless authorized by a Federal permit.

The ESA and our implementing regulations in part 17 of title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) provide for the issuance of such permits and require that we invite public comment before issuing permits for activities involving endangered species.

A recovery permit issued by us under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA authorizes the permittee to conduct activities with endangered species for scientific purposes that promote recovery or for enhancement of propagation or survival of the species. Our regulations implementing section 10(a)(1)(A) for these permits are found at 50 CFR 17.22 for endangered wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.32 for threatened wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.62 for endangered plant species, and 50 CFR 17.72 for threatened plant species.

Permit Applications Available for Review and Comment

We invite local, State, and Federal agencies, Tribes, and the public to comment on the following applications.

| Application No. | Applicant | Species | Location | Activity | Type of take | Permit action |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---------------|
| TE85294C | Amy Wolf, Green Bay, WI. | Rusty patched bumble bee (<i>Bombus affinis</i>). | WI | Conduct presence/absence surveys, document habitat use, conduct population monitoring, evaluate impacts. | Add new activity—radio-tag—to existing authorized activities: Capture, handle, hold, release. | Amend. |
| TE49331D | Shane Brodnick, Barboursville, WV. | Indiana bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>), gray bat (<i>M. grisescens</i>), northern long-eared bat (<i>M. septentrionalis</i>), Ozark big-eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus towsendii ingens</i>), Virginia big-eared bat (<i>C.t. virginianus</i>). | AL, AR, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, MD, MA, MI, MS, MO, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV. | Conduct presence/absence surveys, document habitat use, conduct population monitoring, evaluate impacts. | Capture, handle, mist-net, harp trap, band, radio-tag, enter hibernacula and maternity roost caves, release. | New. |

Public Availability of Comments

Written comments we receive become part of the administrative record associated with this action. 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 request in your comment that we withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Moreover, all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Next Steps

If we decide to issue permits to any of the applicants listed in this notice, we will publish a notice in the **Federal Register**.

Authority

We publish this notice under section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Lori Nordstrom,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Midwest Region.

[FR Doc. 2019-17529 Filed 8-14-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2019-N103; FXES11140400000-190-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 comment and information.

SUMMARY: We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from Hwy 540 Land Investments, LLC (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 land preparation and 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 review.

DATES: We must receive your written comments on or before September 16, 2019.

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

- **Telephone:** Lindsay Nester, 772-469-4226.
- **Email:** lindsay_nester@fws.gov. Use "Attn: Permit number TE24579D" as your message subject line.
- **U.S. mail:** Lindsay Nester, South Florida Ecological Services Field Office, Attn: Permit number "TE24579D," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960-3559.
- **In-person review:** The documents are available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the above address. Please call to make an appointment.
- **Fax:** Lindsay Nester, 772-562-4288, Attn.: Permit number "TE24579D."

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. You also may hand-deliver comments to the above address during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lindsay Nester, by U.S. mail (see **ADDRESSES**) or via phone at 772-469-4226. 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 Hwy 540 Land Investments, LLC, for incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The applicant requests a 5-year ITP for the take of the federally listed sand skink (*Neoseps reynoldsi*) and blue-tailed mole skink (*Eumeces egregius*) (skinks) incidental to land preparation and construction (project) in Polk County, Florida. We request public comment on the application, which includes a habitat conservation plan

(HCP), and on our 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, which are also available for public review.

Project

Hwy 540 Land Investments, LLC requests a 5-year ITP to take sand skink and blue-tailed mole skink incidental to the conversion of approximately 7.46 acres of occupied foraging and sheltering habitat for construction of a housing development on a 38-acre parcel in Section 36, Township 28S, Range 25E, Polk County, Florida. The applicant proposes to mitigate for the take by purchasing and protecting 14.92 acres of occupied skink habitat at a Service-approved conservation bank prior to engaging in any land clearing activities on the parcel.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made available to the public at any time. While you may request that we withhold your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Our Preliminary Determination

The Service has made a preliminary determination that the applicant's project, including the land preparation, construction, and proposed mitigation measure, would individually and cumulatively have a minor or negligible effect on the skinks and the environment. Therefore, we have preliminarily determined that the ITP for this project would qualify for categorical exclusion, and the HCP is "low-effect" under our NEPA regulations at 43 CFR 46.205 and 46.210. A low-effect HCP is one that would result in (1) minor or negligible effects on federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and their habitats; (2) minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources; and (3) impacts that, when considered together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable similarly situated projects, would not result over time in significant cumulative effects to environmental values or resources.

Next Steps

The Service will evaluate the application and the comments received to determine whether to issue the requested permit. We will also conduct an intra-Service consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA to evaluate the effects of the proposed take. After considering the above findings, we will determine whether the permit issuance criteria of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA have been met. If met, the Service will issue ITP number TE24579D-0 to Hwy 540 Land Investments, LLC.

Authority

The Service provides this notice under section 10(c) (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) of the ESA and NEPA regulation 40 CFR 1506.6.

Roxanna Hinzman,

Field Supervisor, South Florida Ecological Services Office.

[FR Doc. 2019-17533 Filed 8-14-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2019-N102;
FXES11140400000-190-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 comment and information.

SUMMARY: We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from CG Land Services, LLC (applicant) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act. The applicant requests an 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 by September 16, 2019.