

### Virtual Public Meeting

To provide for the wide attendance of interested parties, two virtual public meetings will be conducted. See **DATES** and **ADDRESSES** for the dates and times of the virtual public meetings. During the meetings, the Service will present information about the management strategy and MBTA take authorization and provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions about the proposed management strategy and the DEIS. The first meeting will provide additional focus on barred owl management within the northern spotted owl's range. The second meeting will provide additional focus on management within the range of California spotted owls. No opportunity for oral comments will be provided. Written comments may be submitted by the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**.

### Reasonable Accommodations

Persons needing reasonable accommodations in order to participate in the public meetings should contact the Service's Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office as soon as possible, using one of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**. In order to allow sufficient time to process requests, please make contact at least 10 days before the public meeting date. Information regarding this proposed action is available in alternative formats upon request.

### Public Availability of Comments

You may submit your comments and materials by one of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**. Before including your address, phone number, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—might 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. 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.

Comments and materials we receive, as well as references for supporting documentation we used in preparing the DEIS, will be available for public inspection online in Docket No. FWS-R1-ES-2022-0074 at <https://www.regulations.gov/> (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

### Next Steps and Decision To Be Made

After public review and comment, the Service will review any comments received and prepare a final EIS (FEIS). The Service will also complete an ESA Section 7 biological opinion before making a final decision. At least 30 days after the FEIS is published, we expect that the Service will complete a record of decision pursuant to 40 CFR 1505.2, in accordance with applicable timeframes established in 40 CFR 1506.11. The current estimate for the issuance of the record of decision is July 2024.

### Authority

We provide this notice in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1503.1 and 1506.6).

### Bridget Fahey,

Deputy Regional Director, Pacific Region.

[FR Doc. 2023-25032 Filed 11-16-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4333-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2023-0195; FXES11140400000-245-FF04EA1000]

### Receipt of Incidental Take Permit Application and Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan for the Alabama Beach Mouse, Baldwin County, AL; Categorical Exclusion

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from Christopher Johnson and Gator Wood Properties, LLC (applicants) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act. The applicants request the ITP to take the federally listed Alabama beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus ammobates*) incidental to construction of a multi-family development in Gulf Shores, Baldwin County, Alabama. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicants' proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), and the Service's preliminary determination that the proposed permitting action may be eligible for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, the Department of the Interior's (DOI) NEPA regulations, and

the DOI Departmental Manual. To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review. We invite comment from the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies.

**DATES:** We must receive your written comments on or before December 18, 2023.

### ADDRESSES:

**Obtaining Documents:** You may obtain copies of the documents online in Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2023-0195 at <https://www.regulations.gov/>.

**Submitting Comments:** If you wish to submit comments on any of the documents, you may do so in writing by any of the following methods:

- **Online:** <https://www.regulations.gov/>

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2023-0195.

- **U.S. mail:** Public Comments

Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2023-0195; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB/3W, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Erin Lentz, Project Manager, by telephone at 251-298-3853 or via email at [erin.lentz@fws.gov](mailto:erin.lentz@fws.gov). Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from Christopher Johnson and Gator Wood Properties, LLC (applicants) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The applicants request the ITP to take the federally listed Alabama beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus ammobates*) (ABM) incidental to the construction of a 29-unit multi-family development (project) in Gulf Shores, Baldwin County, Alabama. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicants' proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), and the Service's preliminary determination that this proposed ITP qualifies as low effect, and may qualify for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1501.4), the Department of the Interior's (DOI) NEPA

regulations (43 CFR 46), and the DOI's Departmental Manual (516 DM 8.5(C)(2)). To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review.

### Proposed Project

The applicants request a 50-year ITP to take ABM by converting approximately 1.24 acre (ac) of occupied ABM foraging and sheltering habitat incidental to the construction of a 29-unit multifamily development located on two parcels totaling 1.50 ac in Baldwin County, Alabama. The western parcel has already been developed (0.26 ac) and the remaining portion of the project area (1.24 ac) is ABM habitat. Even though the parcels consist of highly degraded secondary dune habitat, it is occupied by ABM. The applicants proposed to mitigate for the take of the ABM through a contribution to the City of Gulf Shores Dune Enhancement Fund at a rate of \$250 per unit (\$7,250 annually) for the life of the permit (50 years). Contributions to the Gulf Shores Dune Enhancement Fund are directed towards the maintenance of suitable dune habitat for the ABM within the Gulf Shores City jurisdiction.

### Our Preliminary Determination

The Service has made a preliminary determination that the applicants' project, including land clearing, infrastructure building, landscaping, and the proposed mitigation and minimization measures, would individually and cumulatively have a minor effect on the Alabama beach mouse and the environment. Therefore, we have preliminarily determined that the proposed ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would be a low-effect ITP that individually or cumulatively would have a minor effect on the Alabama beach mouse and may qualify for application of a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations, DOI's NEPA regulations, and the DOI Departmental Manual. A low-effect incidental take permit is one that would result in (1) minor or nonsignificant effects on species covered in the HCP; (2) nonsignificant effects on the human environment; and (3) impacts that, when added together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, would not result in significant cumulative effects to the human environment.

### 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 on the species. We will consider all of the above in determining 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 PER4215073 to Christopher Johnson and Gator Wood Properties, LLC.

### 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. While you may request that we withhold your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

### Authority

The Service provides this notice under section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.32) and the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508 and 43 CFR 46).

### William J. Pearson,

Field Supervisor, Alabama Ecological Service Field Office.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

[NPS–WASO–VRP–WS–NPS36769;  
PPWOVPADW0–244–PPMPRL1Y.LB0000]

### Evaluation and Authorization Procedures for Fixed Anchors and Fixed Equipment in National Park Service Wilderness Areas

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The National Park Service (NPS) announces the availability of a draft Wilderness Stewardship Reference Manual 41 guidance governing the management of climbing activities in wilderness areas in the National Park System. We invite comments from the public, and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies.

**DATES:** We will accept comments received or postmarked on or before 11:59 p.m. ET on January 16, 2024.

### ADDRESSES:

*Document availability:* The draft guidance is available online at: [https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RM41\\_fixed\\_anchors](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RM41_fixed_anchors).

*Comment Submission:* You may submit written comments by one of the following methods:

- *Electronically:* [https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RM41\\_fixed\\_anchors](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RM41_fixed_anchors).

- *Mail or hand deliver to:* Fixed Anchors, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, MS–2457 Washington, DC 20240.

*Instructions:* Comments will not be accepted by fax, email, or in any way other than those specified above. Comments delivered on external electronic storage devices (flash drives, compact discs, etc.) will not be accepted. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger Semler, Wilderness Stewardship Division Manager, National Park Service, (202–430–7615), [fixed\\_anchors@nps.gov](mailto:fixed_anchors@nps.gov).

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

### Background

The Wilderness Act was passed in 1964 and signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This Act established the National Wilderness Preservation System “. . . for the permanent good of the whole people.” The Wilderness Act directs Federal land management agencies, including the NPS, to manage wilderness areas and preserve wilderness character. To support the mandates of the Wilderness Act, the NPS developed specific policies to address wilderness management and stewardship. NPS Management Policies 2006, Chapter 6, and Director's Order 41 (2013) help managers understand why wilderness is important and how they can effectively manage these areas to preserve wilderness character. The Wilderness Stewardship Reference Manual 41 (RM 41) expands on policies for managing wilderness and offers comprehensive guidance to NPS employees responsible for managing and preserving wilderness character and the wilderness resource throughout the National Park System. RM41 addresses the management of recreational climbing activities in wilderness, including the evaluation and authorization process for fixed anchors and fixed equipment associated with climbing activities in NPS administered wilderness areas.