

commercial data available regarding the proposed listing and critical habitat determinations for *Polygonum hickmanii*, and the draft economic analysis and final addendum associated with the designation of critical habitat. Previously submitted written comments on the listing or critical habitat proposals need not be resubmitted. We will accept written comments and information during this reopened comment period. If you wish to comment, you may submit your comments and materials concerning this proposal by any of several methods:

You may mail or hand-deliver written comments and information to the Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, 2493 Portola Road, Suite B, Ventura, CA 93003. Hand deliveries must be made during normal business hours.

You may also send comments by electronic mail (e-mail) to fw1svppolygonum@r1.fws.gov. Please submit electronic comments in ASCII file format and avoid the use of special characters and encryption. Please include "Attn: RIN 1018-AH82" and your name and return address in your e-mail message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your e-mail message, contact us directly by calling our Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office at phone number 805/644-1766.

We solicit comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, tribes, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties concerning the proposal or the draft economic analysis. We particularly seek comments concerning:

(1) Does the analysis adequately address the indirect effects *eg*: property tax losses due to reduced home construction, losses to local business due to reduced construction activity.

(2) Does the analysis accurately define and capture opportunity costs.

Author

The primary author of this notice is Connie Rutherford (*see ADDRESSES* section).

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: November 7, 2002.

Paul Hoffman,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

RIN 1018-AI26

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Critical Habitat Designation for Four Vernal Pool Crustaceans and Eleven Vernal Pool Plants in California and Southern Oregon

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; notice of availability of draft economic analysis; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announce the availability of the draft economic analysis for the proposed designation of critical habitat for four vernal pool crustaceans and eleven vernal pool plants in California and southern Oregon. The economic analysis identifies potential costs between \$6 and \$7 million per year as a result of the designation of critical habitat, including those costs coextensive with listing. We are extending the comment period for the proposal to designate critical habitat for these species to allow all interested parties to comment simultaneously on the proposed rule and the associated draft economic analysis. Comments previously submitted need not be resubmitted as they will be incorporated into the public record as part of this extended comment period, and will be fully considered in the final rule.

DATES: We will accept comments on both the draft economic analysis and the proposed critical habitat designation until December 23, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and information should be submitted to Wayne White, Field Supervisor, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2605, Sacramento, CA 95825. Written comments may also be sent by fax to 916/414-6710 or hand-delivered to our Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office at the above address. You may also send comments by electronic mail (e-mail) to fw1_vernalpool@fws.gov.

You may view comments and materials received, as well as supporting documentation used in the preparation of this proposed rule, by appointment, during normal business hours in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office at the above address. You may obtain

copies of the proposed rule and draft economic analysis from the above address, by calling 916/414-6600, or from our Web site at <http://sacramento.fws.gov/>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Arnold Roessler, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, at the address above (telephone 916/414-6600; facsimile 916/414-6710).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On September 24, 2002, we published a proposed rule to designate critical habitat, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act) for four vernal pool crustaceans and eleven vernal pool plants (67 FR 59884). The four vernal pool crustaceans involved in this critical habitat designation are the Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) and vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*). The eleven vernal pool plant species are Butte County meadowfoam (*Limnanthes floccosa* ssp. *californica*), Contra Costa goldfields (*Lasthenia conjugens*), Hoover's spurge (*Chamaesyce hooveri*), succulent (or fleshy) owl's-clover (*Castilleja campestris* ssp. *succulenta*), Colusa grass (*Neostapfia colusana*), Greene's tuctoria (*Tuctoria greenei*), hairy Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia pilosa*), Sacramento Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia viscida*), San Joaquin Valley Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia inaequalis*), slender Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*), and Solano grass (*Tuctoria mucronata*). We proposed a total of 128 units of critical habitat for these 15 species, totaling approximately 672,920 hectares (ha) (1,662,762 acres (ac)) in 36 counties in California and one county in Oregon.

All the species listed above live in vernal pools (shallow depressions that hold water seasonally), swales (shallow drainages that carry water seasonally), and ephemeral freshwater habitats. None are known to occur in riverine waters, marine waters, or other permanent bodies of water. The vernal pool habitats of these species have a discontinuous distribution west of the Sierra Nevada that extends from southern Oregon through California into northern Baja California, Mexico. The species have all adapted to the generally mild climate and seasonal periods of inundation and drying which help make the vernal pool ecosystems of California and southern Oregon unique.

Critical habitat receives protection from destruction or adverse modification through required

consultation under section 7 of the Act with regards to actions carried out, funded, or authorized by a Federal agency. Section 4(b)(2) of the Act requires that the Secretary of the Interior shall designate or revise critical habitat based upon the best scientific and commercial data available, after taking into consideration the economic impact of specifying any particular area as critical habitat.

The public comment period for the September 24, 2002, proposal originally closed on November 25, 2002. We have prepared a draft economic analysis on the effects of the proposed critical habitat designation, and are now announcing its availability for review. The draft analysis estimates the foreseeable economic impacts of the critical habitat designation on government agencies and private businesses and individuals. The economic analysis identifies potential costs between \$6 and \$7 million per year as a result of the designation of critical habitat, including those costs coextensive with listing. At this time the Service has not identified any areas to exclude under Section 4(b)(2) or 3(5)(A) of the Act. The Service will consider excluding areas if they do not require special management or if the benefits of excluding them from the critical habitat designation outweigh the benefits of including them. The economic analysis presents the Service's tentative conclusions with respect to the economic effects of the proposed critical habitat designation. The Service will not make any final decisions about exclusions, however until it has obtained public comment on the economic analysis and produced an addendum to the economic analysis containing its final conclusions. The Service is interested in comments from the public on the economic analysis, on whether any of the areas identified in the economic analysis as having economic effects should be excluded for economic reasons, and whether those or any other areas should be excluded for other reasons. Extension of the comment period will provide the public an opportunity to evaluate and comment on both the proposed rule and the draft economic analysis. Comments already submitted on the proposed designation of critical habitat for four vernal pool crustaceans and eleven vernal pool plants do not need to be resubmitted as they will be fully considered in the final determination.

Public Comment Solicited

The final economic analysis concerning the designation of critical habitat for four vernal pool crustaceans

and eleven vernal pool plants will consider information and recommendations from all interested parties. We particularly seek comments concerning:

(1) Assumptions reflected in the economic analysis regarding land use practices and current, planned, or reasonably foreseeable activities in the subject areas, including comments or information relating to the potential effects that the designation could have on private landowners as a result of actual or foreseeable State and local government responses due to the California Environmental Quality Act;

(2) Land use practices and current, planned, or foreseeable activities in the subject areas and their possible impacts on proposed critical habitats;

(3) Any foreseeable economic or other impacts resulting from the proposed designation of these critical habitats, including impacts that may not have been addressed in the draft economic analysis and, in particular, any impacts on small entities or families;

(4) Economic and other values associated with designating critical habitat for these species; and

(5) Whether our approach to critical habitat designation could be improved or modified in any way to provide for greater public participation and understanding, or to assist us in accommodating public concern and comments.

We will accept written comments and information during this reopened comment period. If you wish to comment, you may submit your comments and materials concerning this proposal by any of several methods:

You may mail or hand-deliver written comments and information to the Field Supervisor, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, at the above address. Hand deliveries must be made during normal business hours.

You may also send comments by electronic mail (e-mail) to fw1_vernalpool@fws.gov. If you submit comments by e-mail, please submit them as an ASCII file and avoid the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include a return address in your e-mail message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your e-mail message, contact us directly by calling our Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office at telephone number 916/414-6600, during normal business hours.

Comments and materials received, as well as supporting documentation used in preparation of the proposal to designate critical habitat, will be available for inspection, by

appointment, during normal business hours at our office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section. Copies of the draft economic analysis are available on the Internet at <http://www.r1.fws.gov> or by writing or calling Arnold Roessler, at the address or telephone number listed above.

Author

The primary author of this notice is Susan Moore (see **ADDRESSES** section).

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: November 7, 2002.

Paul Hoffman,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

RIN 1018-A146

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reopening of Comment Period and Announcement of Public Hearings on Designation of Critical Habitat for the Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse (*Zapus hudsonius preblei*)

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Reopening of public comment period and announcement of public hearings.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is reopening the comment period on the Service's proposal to designate critical habitat for the Preble's meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius preblei*) (67 FR 47154, July 17, 2002). The comment period will remain open for 60 days. In addition, the Service will host two public hearings on the proposal on November 21, 2002, at the Jefferson County Courts and Administrative Building in Golden, Colorado.

DATES: The public comment period for the proposed rule is reopened for a period of 60 days, beginning November 21, 2002 and ending January 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments and information to Preble's Mouse Comments, Colorado Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 755 Parfet Street, Suite