

representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

The responsible official for this Environmental Impact Statement is William W. Schenk, Regional Director, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 100 Alabama Street SW., 1924 Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

Dated: April 18, 2003.

Charlie Powell,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. 03-13334 Filed 5-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-26-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement, Montezuma Castle National Monument and Tuzigoot National Monument, Arizona

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the general management plan, Montezuma Castle National Monument and Tuzigoot National Monument, Arizona.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service is preparing an environmental impact statement for the general management plan for Montezuma Castle National Monument and Tuzigoot National Monument, Arizona. The environmental impact statement will be approved by the Director, Intermountain Region.

Montezuma Castle National Monument and Tuzigoot National Monument are located in Yavapai County, Arizona. Montezuma Castle was established in 1906 under the authority of the Antiquities Act. The proclamation states it “* * * is of the greatest ethnological value and scientific interest * * *” (Presidential Proclamation No. 696, December 8, 1906, 34 Stat. 3265). Montezuma Well was added in 1943 as a detached unit of the monument with an act of Congress (October 19, 1943, 57 Stat. 572).

Tuzigoot National Monument was established by presidential proclamation on July 25, 1939. The proclamation states that “certain Government-owned lands in the State of Arizona have situated there on historic and prehistoric structures and other historic objects of historic or scientific interest, and * * * it would be in the public interest to reserve such lands as a national monument to be known as Tuzigoot National Monument.” Public

Law 95-625 (March 1978) expanded the boundary by approximately 791 acres.

The general management plan will prescribe the resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved and maintained in the monuments over the next 15 to 20 years. The clarification of what must be achieved according to law and policy will be based on review of the monuments’ purpose, significance, special mandates, and the body of laws and policies directing management of the monuments. Management decisions to be made where law, policy, or regulations do not provide clear guidance or limits will be based on the purpose of the monuments, the range of public expectations and concerns, resource analysis, an evaluation of the natural, cultural, and social impacts of alternative courses of action, and consideration of long-term economic costs. Based on determinations of desired conditions, the general management plan will outline the kinds of resource management activities, visitor activities, and development that would be appropriate in the monuments in the future. Alternatives will be developed through this planning process and will include, at a minimum, the no-action and preferred alternative.

Major issues include protection of natural and cultural resources, providing for visitor enjoyment and understanding, and evaluating potential boundary expansions. Potential partnerships will be explored with other agencies, organizations, and local interests.

DATES: The National Park Service will conduct public scoping for 60-days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. Open houses regarding the general management plan will be held during the public scoping period. Specific dates, times, and locations will be announced in the local media and will also be available by contacting the superintendent of Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments.

ADDRESSES: Throughout the scoping and planning process, information will be available for public review and comment in the office of the superintendent (Kathy M. Davis, Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments, PO Box 219, Camp Verde, AZ 86322-0219).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Superintendent Kathy M. Davis, Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments, PO Box 219, Camp Verde, AZ 86322-0219; TEL (928) 567-5276; FAX: (928) 567-3597; e-mail: kathy_m_davis@nps.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: If you wish to comment on the general management planning process for Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments, or on any issues associated with the plan, you may submit your comments by any one of several methods. You may mail comments to Superintendent Kathy M. Davis, Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments, PO Box 219, Camp Verde, AZ 86322-0219. You may also e-mail comments to kathy_m_davis@nps.gov. You may also hand-deliver comments to the Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments visitor centers. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent’s identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: May 1, 2003.

Karen P. Wade,

Director, Intermountain Region.

[FR Doc. 03-13339 Filed 5-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312-EJ-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Elk and Vegetation Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan, Rocky Mountain National Park.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C 4332(C), the National Park Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement for the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan for Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. This effort will result in a plan for adaptively managing elk and vegetation that addresses important environmental and social

issues in the Rocky Mountain National Park area. Rocky Mountain National Park is the lead agency and the final decision will be made by the Regional Director, Intermountain Region. Because of the regional nature of issues concerning management of the migratory elk herd, the park has joined with the following agencies to create an interagency planning team: Town of Estes Park, Estes Valley Recreation and Parks District, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Town of Grand Lake, Grand County, and Larimer County. Consultations are ongoing with the Northern Arapaho and Northern Ute Tribes.

The appropriate population size and associated effects of elk in Rocky Mountain National Park and the Town of Estes Park have been intensely debated since the 1930s. The current elk population size is about 3,000 animals. Recent research results indicate that the elk population size, distribution, and migratory patterns are outside the range of variability that would be expected under natural conditions. This has resulted largely because the influence of any significant predation (including hunting) is missing from the system. All major, natural predators of elk were gone from the area by the early 1900s; and hunting on adjacent U.S. Forest Service and private lands has become largely ineffective due to extensive land development in and around Estes Park and elk habituation to residential areas.

The increase in the size and concentration of the elk population is resulting in a number of adverse effects in the area.

To date, the planning team has done some preliminary work to identify the purpose and need of an Elk and Vegetation Management Plan, as well as management tools that the agencies could potentially use to address specific needs. The planning team has not yet created alternatives and will draw heavily on the public input to both modify work to date and begin to build alternatives. The "need for action" summarizes the existing problems; *e.g.*, it explains why the agencies are taking action at all:

The National Park Service is obliged by law and policy to maintain and restore, to the extent possible, natural conditions and processes in park units. The elk herd in the vicinity of Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park is larger, less migratory, and more concentrated than it would be under natural conditions. As a result, aspen and willow communities, which support high levels of biodiversity, are declining on the winter range, and grasslands are grazed at extremely high levels. The herd concentrates

in safe areas of the Park and Estes Park in the winter, where elk strip vegetation, cause property damage, and pose an increasing threat to tourists and residents as the numbers of encounters between elk and humans increase. Additional impacts include the drain on agency resources, as staff is called in to help manage human/elk conflicts.

Purpose is an overarching statement of what the plan must do to be considered a success. The team has identified the following as the purpose of the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan:

Reduce the impacts of elk on vegetation, as well as human/elk conflicts, and restore, to the extent possible, the natural range of variability in both the elk population and affected plant communities, while providing for elk viewing opportunities, associated recreational opportunities, and economic benefits.

Some of the specific issues that the plan is likely to address include: the size and distribution of the elk population; disrupted migration patterns; aspen and willow declines on the core winter range; locally high levels of herbivory; impacts on biodiversity; the risk of elk to human safety; damage to private property; lack of major natural predators; limited access to areas outside the Park that are open to hunting; traffic congestion and motor vehicle accidents; the importance of elk viewing to park visitors and local residents; maintaining recreational opportunities associated with elk (*e.g.*, viewing, hunting); the significance of the elk herd to tourism and local economies; and the need for consistency with interagency objectives for managing chronic wasting disease. Additional issues will be identified by the public during the scoping process.

The planning team is committed to involving the interested and affected public in working through preliminary work to date, as well as future components of the planning process. This includes framing an appropriate range of alternatives. Although the team has not created alternatives, it has identified some management tools that may be useful in resolving the problems and planning issues identified above. These tools include the use of barriers (*e.g.*, fences, rock/log piles), hazing (*e.g.*, cracker shells or other noisemaking devices, rubber bullets) or herding (*e.g.*, herding dogs, riders on horseback, people in golf carts, or people on foot with elk sticks), chemical repellents, habitat improvement in strategic locations, vegetation manipulation (*e.g.*, cutting, planting, prescribed fire), water manipulations (*e.g.*, reestablishing beaver, creating artificial dams),

predator reintroduction, fertility control, hunting, and agency culling. Some of these tools would be more effective than others, and some would have more serious environmental consequences than others. Analysis of both effectiveness and impacts will be part of the Environmental Impact Statement.

As noted above, the agencies consider public participation and input to be key in the planning and environmental impact analysis process guiding preparation of the Draft Elk and Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Therefore, the planning team will offer several opportunities for education and involvement as part of scoping. A scoping brochure and webpage linked to the Rocky Mountain National Park Internet site (<http://www.nps.gov/romo/>) will be available by summer 2003. The scoping brochure and webpage will provide background information, describe the planning process, and identify opportunities for public involvement. The scoping brochure will be distributed to all parties on the project mailing list as well as other potentially interested stakeholders that are identified. The planning team will also conduct public scoping meetings, which at this time are anticipated in the summer of 2003. Specific dates, times, and locations will be announced in the local and regional news media and on the webpage and will be available by contacting Vaughn Baker, Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park.

DATES: The Park Service will accept comments from the public through August 27, 2003.

ADDRESSES: All interested parties are encouraged to provide written comments that identify concerns and issues associated with the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan or provide other relevant information. Comments may be mailed or hand-delivered to Vaughn Baker, Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, 1000 U.S. Highway 36, Estes Park, Colorado 80517-8397. Comments may also be faxed to (970) 586-1397, or e-mailed to ROMO_Superintendent@nps.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO BE ADDED TO THE PROJECT MAILING LIST

CONTACT: Therese Johnson, Management Biologist, Rocky Mountain National Park, 1000 U.S. Highway 36, Estes Park, Colorado 80517-8397, (970) 586-1262, Fax (970) 586-1359, or e-mail Therese_Johnson@nps.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All comments that are submitted will become part of the public record. Please submit Internet comments as an ASCII

file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include "ATTN: Elk" and your name and return address in your Internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we received your Internet message, contact Therese Johnson (970) 586-1262. The National Park Service will make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that their home address be withheld from the record, which will be honored to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which the National Park Service would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If a respondent wishes the National Park Service to withhold their address, they must state this prominently at the beginning of the comment. The National Park Service will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: April 30, 2003.

Karen Wade,

Director, Intermountain Region, National Park Service.

[FR Doc. 03-13338 Filed 5-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312-CP-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Intent To Prepare a General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Park Service announces its intent to prepare a General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS) for the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New Jersey and New York. The park comprises Liberty Island (12.5 acres), site of the "Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World", and Ellis Island (27.5 acres), containing the Immigration Museum and other historic structures that formed the immigration station. Prepared by planners in the NPS Northeast Region, with assistance from advisors and consultants, the GMP/EIS will propose a long-term approach to managing the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island. Consistent with the monument's mission, NPS policy, and other laws and regulations,

alternatives will be developed to guide the management of the monument over the next 15 to 20 years. The alternatives will incorporate various zoning and management prescriptions to ensure resource preservation and public enjoyment of the monument. The environmental consequences that could result from implementing the various alternative will be evaluated in the plan. Impact topics will include cultural and natural resources, visitor experience, park operations, the socioeconomic environment, impairment, and sustainability. The public will be invited to express concerns about the management of the monument early in the process through public meetings and other media; and will have an opportunity to review and comment on a draft GMP/EIS. Following public review processes outlined under NEPA, the final plan will become official, authorizing implementation of a preferred alternative. The target date for the Record of decision is March 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Superintendent, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, New York, (212) 363-3206.

Dated: April 21, 2003.

Cynthia Garrett,

Acting Superintendent, Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island.

[FR Doc. 03-13330 Filed 5-28-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) that the Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council will meet on Wednesday, September 3, 2003. The meeting will convene at 6 p.m. at the New England Aquarium Conference Center, Central Wharf, Boston, MA.

The Advisory Council was appointed by the Director of National Park Service pursuant to Public Law 104-333. The 28 members represent business, educational/cultural, community and environmental entities; municipalities surrounding Boston Harbor; Boston Harbor advocates; and Native American interests. The purpose of the Council is to advise and make recommendations to the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership with respect to the development and implementation of a management plan and the operations of the Boston Harbor Islands national park area.

The Agenda for this meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order, Introductions of Advisory Council members present
2. Review and approval of minutes of the June meeting
3. Outreach program
4. Review or summer operations
5. Report from the NPS
6. Public Comment
7. Next Meetings
8. Adjourn

The meeting is open to the public. Further information concerning Council meetings may be obtained from the Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands. Interested persons may make oral/written presentations to the Council or file written statements. Such requests should be made at least seven days prior to the meeting to: Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands NRA, 408 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, MA 02110, telephone (617) 223-8667.

Dated: April 30, 2003.

George E. Price, Jr.,

Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands NRA.

[FR Doc. 03-13326 Filed 5-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312-52-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) that the Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council will meet on Wednesday, June 4, 2003. The meeting will convene at 4 pm at the New England Aquarium Conference Center, Central Wharf, Boston, MA.

The Advisory Council was appointed by the Director of National Park Service pursuant to Public Law 104-333. The 28 members represent business, educational/cultural, community and environmental entities; municipalities surrounding Boston Harbor; Boston Harbor advocates; and Native American interests. The purpose of the Council is to advise and make recommendations to the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership with respect to the development and implementation of a management plan and the operations of the Boston Harbor Islands national park area.

The Agenda for this meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order, Introductions of Advisory Council members present
2. Review and approval of minutes of the March meeting
3. Update on outreach program