

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Notice of Availability of the Draft Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl Recovery Plan for Review and Public Comment**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; opening of public comment period.

SUMMARY: We the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announce the availability for public review of a Draft Recovery Plan for the Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum*) (Draft Plan). The species is currently known to occur on Federal, state, tribal, and private lands in Pima and Pinal Counties in southern Arizona. We solicit review and comment from the public on this Draft Plan.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Plan must be received on or before April 9, 2003 to ensure our consideration.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the Draft Recovery Plan may obtain a copy by accessing the Service's Arizona Ecological Service Field Office internet web page at Arizonaes.fws.gov or by contacting the Field Supervisor, Arizona Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103, Phoenix, Arizona, 85021-4951 (602/242-0210) to obtain a copy via the mail or in person at the address above. Written comments and materials regarding the plan should be addressed to the Field Supervisor at the address above, faxed to 602/242-2513, or emailed to cfpo_recovery@fws.gov. Comments and materials received are available on request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scott Richardson, Arizona Ecological Services Tucson Suboffice, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 110 South Church Avenue, Suite 3450, Tucson, Arizona, 85701 (520/670-4643).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Restoring an endangered or threatened animal or plant species to the point where it is again a secure, self-sustaining member of its ecosystem is a primary goal of our endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, we are working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States.

Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of species, establish criteria for the recovery levels for downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. We will consider all information presented during the public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. We, along with other Federal agencies, will take these comments into account in the course of implementing approved recovery plans.

The Draft Plan describes the status, current management, recovery objectives and criteria, and actions needed to reclassify the pygmy-owl from endangered to threatened. The Draft Plan was developed in coordination with the Service and by an appointed Recovery Team which includes a group of scientists with expertise in the ecology of the pygmy-owl and other raptors (Technical Group) together with a team of stakeholders (the Implementation Group), which includes members of affected parties (*i.e.*, tribes, state agencies, counties, towns, developers, environmental groups, ranchers, mining, and private property rights groups). The Draft Plan has undergone peer review by scientists, conservation biologists, range experts, and others experienced in reviewing recovery plans. This Draft Plan incorporates their comments where applicable. Additional peer review will be conducted during the current public comment period.

The pygmy-owl occurs in a variety of scrub and woodland communities, including riverbottom woodlands, woody thickets, Sonoran desertscrub, and semidesert grasslands. The pygmy-owl occurs in areas with fairly dense woody thickets or woodlands with trees and/or cacti large enough to support nesting cavities. They are found below 1,200 meters (4,000 feet). We determined in 1997 that the distinct population segment in Arizona of the pygmy-owl was endangered (62 FR 10730) primarily because of habitat destruction. Factors identified included (1) present or threatened destruction of their habitat and range, (2) inadequate existing regulatory mechanisms, and (3)

other natural or manmade factors affecting their continued existence. The Draft Plan contains actions to address these factors.

Public Comments Solicited

We solicit written comments on the Draft Plan. In particular, we are soliciting specific comments on:

1. Any information on the numbers and distribution of the pygmy-owl not considered in the Draft Plan and their relation to proposed recovery actions;
2. Whether we have looked at the right biological factors and other relevant data related to the quantity and quality of available pygmy-owl habitat and what habitat is necessary to the recovery of the species;
3. Land use practices and current or planned activities within Recovery Areas and their possible impacts on proposed recovery actions.

All comments received by us on or before the date specified in the **DATES** section above will be considered prior to approval of the plan.

Authority

The authority for this action is Section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: November 15, 2002.

Geoffrey L. Haskett,

Acting Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 03-46 Filed 1-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Indian Affairs****Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Navajo Ten-Year Forest Management Plan, Navajo Nation, Arizona/New Mexico**

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of cancellation.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is canceling the notice of intent to file a final programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Navajo Nation Ten-Year Forest Management Plan that we published in the **Federal Register** on November 20, 2002 (67 FR 70090). We are withdrawing the document because it duplicates a previously issued Environmental Impact Statement for the same proposed action.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 9, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Donald Sutherland, Bureau of Indian

Affairs, Office of Trust Responsibilities, Environmental and Cultural Resources Management, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240; (202) 208-4791.

Dated: December 18, 2002.

Neal A. McCaleb,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Integrated Resource Management Plan for the Spokane Indian Reservation, Stevens County, WA

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Spokane Tribe of Indians, as co-lead agencies, intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposed update to the Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP) for the Spokane Indian Reservation. The purpose of updating the IRMP is to develop long-term resource management policies that will ensure direction and stability for needed sustained growth of reservation economics, compatible with traditional values and needs for a quality human environment. Details on the project area and the proposed action are provided in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section. This notice also announces a public scoping meeting for the content of the EIS.

DATES: Comments on the scope and content of the EIS must arrive by February 7, 2003. The public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2003, at 6 p.m.

ADDRESSES: You may mail or hand carry written comments to Rudy Peone, Spokane Tribe Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 480, Wellpinit, Washington 99040; or to Ted Hensold, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Spokane Agency, P.O. Box 389, Wellpinit, Washington 99040. You may also telefax comments to Rudy Peone at (509) 258-9600. Please include your name and mailing address with your comments so documents pertaining to this project may be sent to you.

The public meeting will be held at the Fire Management Conference Room, 6290 Ford-Wells Road, Wellpinit, Washington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rudy Peone, 509-258-9042, extension 14.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The boundaries of the Spokane Indian Reservation encompass approximately 157,000 acres, located in southern Stevens County, Washington. These include 110,500 acres of tribal trust lands, 1,400 acres of tribal fee lands, 24,800 acres of individually owned trust (allotment) lands, 14,400 acres of private fee lands, 1,100 acres of Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) lands above the Lake Roosevelt high pool line, and about 4,800 acres covered by Lake Roosevelt, under BOR administration. The lands range from dry, ponderosa pine steppe on the southern boundary of the Spokane River at 1,300 foot elevation to moist, inland coniferous forest on the northern portion of the reservation where elevation reaches about 4,000 feet.

Major land uses include timber management, livestock grazing, agriculture, hunting and fishing, recreation, and cultural practices. Timber harvesting occurs on about 108,000 acres of commercial forest lands.

The Spokane Tribe first enacted an IRMP in 1994. Its purpose was to provide a holistic framework to guide all land management of the reservation. It is now approaching its useful end. While the IRMP served an important role in managing resources during the formative stages of the Tribe's natural resource programs, human population growth and various economic activities have placed new and competing demands on reservation resources. These changes include encroachment of housing into formerly unpopulated areas; local shortages of drinking water during dry periods; increased demand for employment related to natural resource extraction and use; larger areas impacted by economic development; increased visitor and tourist traffic; increasing threats to surface and ground water resources by solid waste, sewage discharge, timber harvesting and other economic activities; and aesthetic degradation.

The proposed update of the IRMP will integrate more specific policies for land uses, natural resources, economic development and cultural resources and values on all lands within the boundaries and/or under the jurisdiction of the reservation. Services that affect natural resources and are affected by land use designations (such as housing, utilities, and roads) are also included. The proposed action includes specifically and accurately identifying

the current needs that affect the natural resources on the reservation, projecting needs over the next 10 years, and developing the range of feasible alternatives to address those needs.

In addition to no action (continued management under the current IRMP), the alternatives will include a mix of possibilities for change which relate to each specific resource. Timber harvest options may range from a diminished harvest level to allow maximum protection of soil, water, cultural and aesthetic resources to an increased harvest level to meet economic demands of the Tribe. Housing options may range from unrestricted locating of housing through various forms of restrictions to protect natural areas. Recreation options may range from commercial development of recreation opportunities to attract vacationers from around the region to creating opportunities for tribal members alone. Range management options may include terminating the open range policies versus restricting open range to limited areas or pasture leases. Water resources options may include a more flexible approach to the current fixed riparian buffers or increasing those buffers. Cultural resource management options may range from protecting only those resources which are defined in the National Historic Preservation Act to defining standards for protection of cultural properties and cultural landscapes which are uniquely important to the Spokane Tribe.

Public Comment Availability

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the mailing address shown in the **ADDRESSES** section, during regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. 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 inspection in their entirety.

Authority

This notice is published in accordance with section 1503.1 of the