

	Number of respondents	Total annual responses	Hours per response	Total hours
Semi-Annual Reports .....	25	50	6	300
Final Reports .....	25	25	8	200
Recordkeeping .....	25	25	5	125
Total .....	.....	.....	59	6025

*Status of the proposed information collection:* Pending OMB approval.

*Authority:* Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended.

Dated: February 8, 2006.

**Darlene F. Williams,**

*Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research.*

[FR Doc. 06-1358 Filed 2-13-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4210-27-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of the Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, Marion, MT

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces that a Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge is available. This CCP, prepared pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, describes how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service intends to manage this refuge for the next 15 years.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the Final CCP or Summary may be obtained by writing to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, 6295 Pleasant Valley Road, Marion, Montana 59925; or downloaded from <http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/planning>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ray Washtak, Refuge Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, 6295 Pleasant Valley Road, Marion, Montana 59925; telephone 406-858-2216; fax 406-858-2218; or e-mail: [ray\\_washtak@fws.gov](mailto:ray_washtak@fws.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), comprised of nearly 9,300 acres, is long and narrow and is nearly bisected throughout its length by the Pleasant Valley Road in Flathead County, in extreme northwestern Montana. This

breathhtakingly beautiful refuge was established in 1999 and is nestled in Montana's Pleasant Valley, within the Fisher River watershed. Lost Trail NWR can be described as a long valley crossed by Pleasant Valley Creek and encompassing the 182-acre Dahl Lake. Lost Trail NWR is comprised of wetlands, lush riparian corridors, uplands dominated by prairie and tame grasses, and temperate forests dominated by lodgepole pine and Douglas fir. Besides numerous migratory waterfowl and neotropical bird species, this refuge is home to federally listed species such as the bald eagle, black tern and Spalding's catchfly. Canada lynx and trumpeter swan occasionally use refuge habitats, and the grizzly bear, gray wolf, and bull trout occur in Pleasant Valley. Lost Trail NWR was established by Congress with the following purposes: (1) " \* \* \* for use by migratory birds, with emphasis on waterfowl and other water birds \* \* \* " (Migratory Bird Conservation Act); (2) " \* \* \* for the conservation of fish and wildlife resources \* \* \* " (Fish and Wildlife Act); (3) " \* \* \* for fish and wildlife-oriented recreation \* \* \* " (The Refuge Recreation Act); and (4) for the conservation of endangered and threatened species (Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended).

This Final CCP identifies goals, objectives, and strategies for the management of Lost Trail NWR that emphasize restoration and maintenance of Dahl Lake and other native habitats, in vigorous condition, to promote biological diversity. The CCP places high importance on the control of invasive plant species with partners and integrated pest management. It seeks to provide habitats in order to contribute to conservation, enhancement and recovery of federally listed species and possible modification of public uses to protect visitors and minimize harmful interaction between users and listed species.

The availability of the Draft CCP and Environmental Assessment (EA) for a 30-day public review and comment period was announced in the **Federal Register** on July 20, 2005 (FO FR 41786). The Draft CCP/EA evaluated four alternatives for managing Lost Trail NWR. Alternative D, the No Action

Alternative, proposed continuation of current management of the refuge. Alternative B emphasized manipulation of habitat to promote wildlife populations to provide the public with abundant quality wildlife recreation, as well as research, documentation, and interpretation of cultural resources. It also called for a contact station staffed 7 days a week. Alternative C called for restoration of habitats to historic conditions and allowance of natural processes to manage habitats. It called for increased protection of listed species, and de-emphasizing public use opportunities at the refuge (such as no fishing and hunting, except by special permit).

Based on this assessment and comments received, Alternative A, which is the proposed action, was selected because it best meets the purposes and goals of the refuge, as well as the goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The management direction of this refuge is expected to also benefit federally listed species, large ungulates, shore birds, migrating and nesting waterfowl, and neotropical migrants, as well as improve water quality from riparian habitat restoration. It identifies increased environmental education and partnerships that are likely to result in improved wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. Finally, the CCP places high importance on the protection of cultural and historical resources.

Dated: October 17, 2005.

**Sharon R. Rose,**

*Acting Deputy Regional Director, Region 6, Denver, CO.*

[FR Doc. 06-1296 Filed 2-13-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge in Carteret County, NC

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces that a Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge are available for review and comment. The National Wildlife System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the Service to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a comprehensive conservation plan is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year strategy for achieving refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, conservation, legal mandates, and Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

**DATES:** Individuals wishing to comment on the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge should do so no later than March 16, 2006. Public comments were requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process in numerous ways. Public outreach has included scoping meetings, a review of the biological program, an ecosystem planning newsletter, and **Federal Register** notices.

**ADDRESSES:** Requests for copies of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment should be addressed to Bruce Freske, Refuge Manager, Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, 38 Mattamuskeet Road, Swan Quarter, North Carolina 27885; Telephone: 252/926-4021; Fax: 252/926-1743. Comments on the draft may be submitted to the above address or via electronic mail to: [bruce\\_freske@fws.gov](mailto:bruce_freske@fws.gov). 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 addresses from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowed by law.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Service analyzed three alternatives for managing the refuge and chose

Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative.

Proposed goals for the refuge include: *Wildlife, Fish, and Plant Populations.* Conserve, protect, and maintain healthy and viable populations of migratory birds, wildlife, fish, and plants, including Federal and State threatened, endangered, and trust species.

*Habitat.* Protect and enhance diverse habitats, rare plant assemblages, and nursery areas associated with the Pamlico-Core Sounds and the mid-Atlantic coastal plain.

*Public use.* Develop programs and facilities to increase public use opportunities, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

*Resource Protection.* Protect refuge resources by limiting impacts of human development and activity on and around Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge.

*Administration.* Provide adequate funding and staffing to accomplish refuge goals and objectives.

Also available for review are compatibility determinations for recreational hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

#### Alternatives

Alternative 1 proposes to maintain the status quo. The staff would manage marshes and pine forests with prescribed burns conducted by employees from other refuges according to the Fire Management Plan. The refuge would employ a single maintenance worker stationed on the refuge to maintain the buildings and grounds, clean up dumpsites, and pick up litter. Staff from other refuges would survey waterfowl from the air on a routine basis. The refuge would conduct no other surveys of wildlife or habitats. The refuge would allow all six priority public use activities: waterfowl hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation. The staff would not conduct environmental education and interpretation programs, but would allow others to conduct programs on the refuge. The Service would manage the refuge from Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge.

Alternative 2, the preferred alternative, proposes minimum program increases. The refuge would document the presence of priority wildlife species, but would not monitor habitat. Staff would survey waterfowl from the air on a routine basis. The refuge would continue to allow the six priority public

use activities, but would have the capacity to increase the number of opportunities. The staff would conduct environmental education programs once a month. An interpretive and observation trail with a brochure and a photo blind would be established. The staff would also control dominant pest plants and animals. There would be four staff members stationed at the Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Alternative 3 proposes moderate program increases. The refuge would document the presence of priority wildlife species and mammals and monitor fire-dependent habitats. The staff would monitor vegetation in the marshes and pine forests before and after prescribed burns conducted by staff from other refuges according to the Fire Management Plan. Staff from the refuge would survey waterfowl from the air and the ground on a routine basis. The refuge would continue to allow the six priority public use activities, but would have the capacity to increase the number of opportunities. The staff would conduct environmental education and interpretation programs once a month. An interpretive trail with brochure and photo blind would be established. The staff would also monitor pest plants and animals and control them according to an integrated Pest Management Plan. There would be eight staff members stationed at the Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge.

#### Actions Common to All Alternatives

All three alternatives share the following concepts and techniques for achieving the goals of the refuge:

- Cooperating with local, State, and Federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations to administer refuge programs;
- Utilizing volunteers to execute the public use, biological, and maintenance programs on the refuge;
- Monitoring populations of waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds, and vegetation in the refuge impoundments;
- Maintaining vegetation in the marsh with prescribed fire; and
- Encouraging scientific research on the refuge.

Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge, in east-central North Carolina, consists of 14,480 acres in fee simple ownership. On the refuge, 11,000 acres are brackish marsh, 1,500 acres are longleaf pine savanna, 150 acres are brackish shrub, 125 acres are pond pine woodland, 100 acres are bay forests, 100 acres are low pocosin, and 50 acres are cypress-gum swamp. These habitats support a variety of wildlife species, including waterfowl, shorebirds, wading

birds, marsh birds, and neotropical migratory songbirds.

The refuge hosts more than thirty thousand visitors annually who participate in hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: September 7, 2005.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**  
Acting Regional Director.

**Editorial Note:** This document was received at the Office of the Federal Register on February 9, 2006.

[FR Doc. 06-1347 Filed 2-13-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Receipt of an Application and Availability of Environmental Assessment for an Incidental Take Permit for Commercial Development in Lake County, FL

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Richard E. Bosserman and Charles E. Bosserman III (Applicants) request an incidental take permit (ITP) for a 10-year term, pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). The Applicants anticipate taking sand skinks (*Neoseps reynoldsi*) and bluetail mole skinks (*Eumeces egregius*) (cumulatively referred to as skinks) resulting from land clearing and site preparation for commercial construction on about 75 acres near Clermont, Lake County, Florida.

The Applicants' HCP describes the mitigation and minimization measures proposed to address the effects commercial construction on the skinks. These measures are outlined in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. We announce the availability of the ITP application, HCP, and an Environmental Assessment (EA).

**DATES:** Written comments on the ITP application, EA, and HCP should be sent to the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**) and should be received on or before April 17, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to review the application, EA, and HCP may obtain a copy by writing the Service's Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta,

Georgia. Please reference permit number TE105732-0 in such requests.

Documents will also be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the Regional Office, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345 (Attn: Endangered Species Permits), or Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6620 Southpoint Drive South, Suite 310, Jacksonville, Florida 32216-0912.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. David Dell, Regional HCP Coordinator, (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 404/679-7313, facsimile: 404/679-7081; or Mr. Michael Jennings, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Jacksonville Field Office, Jacksonville, Florida (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: 904/232-2580, ext. 113.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** If you wish to comment, you may submit comments by any one of several methods. Please reference permit number TE105732-0 in such comments. You may mail comments to the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). You may also comment via the internet to [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov). Please submit comments over the internet as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include your name and return address in your internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from us that we have received your internet message, contact us directly at either telephone number listed below (see **FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). Finally, you may hand deliver comments to either Service office listed below (see **ADDRESSES**). 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 administrative record. We will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law. There may also be other circumstances in which we would withhold from the administrative record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will not, however, consider anonymous 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.

The blue-tailed mole skink is a small, slender lizard that occupies xeric

upland habitats in central peninsular Florida. It requires open, sandy patches interspersed with vegetation. The blue-tailed mole skink is highly adapted for life in the sand; it spends the majority of time below the surface where it moves through loose sand in search of food, shelter, and mates. Much of the blue-tailed mole skink's historic habitat has been destroyed or degraded because of fragmentation due to residential, commercial, and agricultural development. Habitat protection and management are essential for the survival of this species.

The sand skink is a small, semi-fossorial lizard that occurs on the sandy ridges of interior central Florida from Marion County south to Highlands County. The species is vulnerable because of habitat loss due to conversion to residential, commercial, and agricultural uses and from habitat degradation due to fire exclusion. The recovery of sand skinks will require restoration of habitat and possible reintroduction of individuals into successfully restored habitat.

Xeric uplands within the Lake Wales Ridge have declined in distribution and ecological quality over the past 100 years. Urban and agricultural development in this area has resulted in substantial losses of habitat; by the early 1980's habitat loss was estimated at 66 percent. Since then additional losses are attributed to increasing urban growth, particularly in the northern portions of the action area. Severe freezes during the mid-1980's also resulted in a shift in citrus production from north central Florida to south Florida which resulted in further loss of xeric uplands. Recent estimates indicate that 70 to 80 percent of the xeric uplands in Florida have been lost or degraded. Within the Lake Wales Ridge, about 85 percent of xeric uplands have been lost.

In addition to the direct destruction of xeric uplands within the Project area, increasing fragmentation has resulted in the degradation of many of the remaining parcels of habitat. These xeric communities require periodic fire to maintain their ecological and biological functions and values. Urban and agricultural uses now interspersed between xeric upland habitats do not allow the natural periodicity or magnitude of fires that once spread across this xeric landscape. In most instances, fire suppression is practiced to protect human health and the safety of property. Lacking fire, xeric uplands tend towards more mesic conditions, which include denser vegetative canopies and more heterogeneous vegetative structure. Under these conditions, many of the species that