

you are interested in by number (e.g., Permit No. TE-XXXXXX).

- *Email:* permitsR6ES@fws.gov.

Please refer to the respective permit number (e.g., Permit No. TE-XXXXXX) in the subject line of the message.

- *U.S. Mail:* Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 25486-DFC, Denver, CO 80225.

- *In-Person Drop-off, Viewing, or Pickup:* Call (719) 628-2670 to make an appointment during regular business hours at 134 Union Blvd., Suite 645, Lakewood, CO 80228.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathy Konishi, Recovery Permits Coordinator, Ecological Services, (719) 628-2670 (phone); permitsR6ES@fws.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) prohibits certain activities with endangered and threatened species unless authorized by a Federal permit. Along with our implementing regulations at 50 CFR 17, the Act provides for permits and requires that we invite public comment before issuing these permits.

A permit granted by us under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Act authorizes the permittees to conduct activities with U.S. endangered or threatened species for scientific purposes, enhancement of propagation or survival, or interstate commerce (the latter only in the event that it facilitates scientific purposes or enhancement of propagation or survival). Our regulations implementing section 10(a)(1)(A) for these permits are found at 50 CFR 17.22 for endangered wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.32 for threatened wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.62 for endangered plant species, and 50 CFR 17.72 for threatened plant species.

Applications Available for Review and Comment

We invite local, State, and Federal agencies and the public to comment on the following applications. Documents and other information the applicants have submitted with their applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a) and Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

Permit Application Number TE220827

Applicant: Bryce Canyon National Park, Bryce Canyon, UT.

The applicant requests a permit renewal to conduct presence/absence surveys for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) in Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah for

the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

Permit Application Number TE183430

Applicants: Headwaters Corporation, Kearney, NE.

The applicants request a permit renewal to conduct presence/absence surveys for interior least tern (*Sterna antillarum athalassos*) in Nebraska for the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

Permit Application Number TE045150

Applicant: Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

The applicant requests an amendment to a permit to conduct presence/absence surveys and propagate American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*) in Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas for the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

Permit Application Number TE220827

Applicant: Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.

The applicant requests a permit to conduct presence/absence surveys for New Mexico meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius luteus*) in Colorado for the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

Permit Application Number TE01741B

Applicant: Colorado Department of Transportation, Lakewood, CO.

The applicant requests a permit to conduct presence/absence surveys for New Mexico meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius luteus*) in Colorado for the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

Permit Application Number TE054237

Applicant: USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region, Golden, CO.

The applicant requests an amendment to conduct presence/absence surveys for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) in all national forests in Colorado for the purpose of enhancing the species' survival.

National Environmental Policy Act

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), we have made an initial determination that the proposed activities in these permits are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement (516 DM 6 Appendix 1, 1.4C(1)).

Public Availability of Comments

All comments and materials we receive in response to these requests will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may 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.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Michael G. Thabault,

Assistant Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region.

[FR Doc. 2015-07714 Filed 4-3-15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Alaska, Outer Continental Shelf, Chukchi Sea Planning Area, Oil and Gas Lease Sale 193; MMAA 104000

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision for Chukchi Sea Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 193.

SUMMARY: BOEM announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for remanded Chukchi Sea Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Lease Sale 193 (Lease Sale 193), originally held on February 6, 2008. BOEM prepared the Chukchi Sea Oil and Gas Lease Sale 193 Final Second Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to address a deficiency identified by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Court of Appeals) in its opinion of January 22, 2014. The Final Second SEIS considers the potential impacts of oil and gas activities that could result from leases issued in Lease Sale 193, including the full range of likely production if oil production were to occur (80 FR 9266, Feb. 20, 2015).

In making her decision, the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management (ASLM) considered four alternatives for Lease Sale 193, the

potential impacts for each alternative as presented in the Final Second SEIS, and all comments received throughout the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. After careful consideration, the ASLM selected BOEM's preferred alternative, to affirm Lease Sale 193 and leases previously issued. This selection meets the purpose and need for the proposed action, promotes orderly resource development with protection of the human, marine, and coastal environments, and ensures that the public receives an equitable return for these resources and that free-market competition is maintained.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For more information on the ROD, you may contact Mr. Michael Routhier, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Alaska OCS Region, 3801 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 500, Anchorage, Alaska 99503. You may also contact Mr. Routhier by telephone at 907-334-5265.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the Lease Sale 193 Final Second SEIS, BOEM evaluated four alternatives summarized below:

Alternative I—The Proposed Action: This alternative entails offering the entire Chukchi Sea Program Area for leasing. The area available for leasing under this alternative consists of approximately 34 million acres within the Chukchi Sea. Specifically excluded from this alternative was the 25 mile (40 kilometer (km)) buffer implemented by then-Secretary Kempthorne in the Final OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2007-2012.

Alternative I was not selected for the original sale in 2008. Since Lease Sale 193 has already occurred, all of the leases originally issued are contained in an area smaller than, but covered by, Alternative I. Accordingly, selecting Alternative I would result in affirming Lease Sale 193 and all of the leases issued as a result of the sale.

Alternative II—No Lease Sale: This alternative, which is the "No Action Alternative," entails offering no areas in the Chukchi Sea for leasing. The opportunity to develop oil and gas resources that could have resulted from the lease sale would be precluded or postponed. This "no action" alternative would avoid any potential environmental impacts associated with the other alternatives. Since Lease Sale 193 has already occurred, selecting Alternative II would result in not affirming the lease sale and voiding or vacating the remaining 460 leases issued in 2008 as a result of Lease Sale 193.

Alternative III—Corridor I Deferral: This alternative entails offering the entire Chukchi Sea Program Area for

leasing, minus a corridor (referred to as Corridor I) extending 60 miles (97 km) offshore along the coastward edge of the Program Area to protect important bowhead whale habitat. The area available for leasing under this alternative consists of approximately 24 million acres in the Chukchi Sea.

Five leases issued as a result of Lease Sale 193 are contained within Corridor I. Accordingly, selecting Alternative III would result in affirming the lease sale and all leases, except the Corridor I area, and those five leases, which would be vacated.

Alternative IV—Corridor II Deferral: Alternative IV was the alternative originally selected for Lease Sale 193 and BOEM's preferred alternative in the Final Second SEIS. This alternative entails offering the entire Chukchi Sea Program Area available for leasing, minus a corridor (referred to as Corridor II) along the coastward edge of the Program Area. The area covered by Corridor II is a subset of the area covered by Corridor I. The area for leasing under this Alternative consists of 29.4 million acres. Selecting Alternative IV would result in affirming Lease Sale 193 and all existing leases. Alternative IV was BOEM's preferred alternative because it represented a reasonable balance between environmental, economic, and technical considerations mandated by the OCS Lands Act.

After careful consideration, the ASLM has decided to select Alternative IV and affirm Lease Sale 193 and the leases issued as a result of the sale. As described in the ROD, the ASLM fully considered the potential impacts of this action as described in the Final Second SEIS, considered potential mitigation of potential impacts through deferral of sensitive OCS areas and implementation of lease stipulations, and articulated factors considered in selecting the agency's preferred alternative. In making her decision, the ASLM confirmed the previously adopted lease stipulations as being the most practicable means of reducing or avoiding impacts to the environment, while also noting that the OCS Lands Act provides BOEM and BSEE broad discretion to require additional mitigations on postlease activities.

In affirming Lease Sale 193 and preserving the opportunity to explore and possibly develop all the leases issued in Chukchi Sea Lease Sale 193, the ASLM's decision balances the national policies mandated by Congress to expeditiously and safely develop the natural resources of the OCS, subject to environmental safeguards, in a manner that is consistent with the maintenance

of competition and other national needs. The ASLM's selection of Alternative IV, and adoption of all practicable mitigation measures at the lease sale stage, balances the goal of orderly resource development with protection of the human, marine, and coastal environments, while also ensuring that the public receives an equitable return for these resources and that free-market competition is maintained.

Record of Decision Availability: To obtain a single printed or CD copy of the ROD for Chukchi Sea Lease Sale 193, you may contact BOEM, Alaska OCS Region, Alaska OCS Region, 3801 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 500, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 or by telephone at 1-907-334-5200. An electronic copy of the ROD is available on BOEM's Internet Web site at <http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Alaska-Region/Leasing-and-Plans/Leasing/Lease-Sales/Sale-193/Index.aspx>.

Authority: This NOA is published pursuant to the regulations (40 CFR part 1506) implementing the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*).

Dated: March 31, 2015.

Abigail Ross Hopper,
Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy
Management.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R1-ES-2015-N060;
FXES11130100000-156-FF01E00000]

Endangered Species; Recovery Permit Applications

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, invite the public to comment on the following applications for recovery permits to conduct activities with the purpose of enhancing the survival of an endangered species. The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), prohibits certain activities with endangered species unless a Federal permit allows such activity. The Act also requires that we invite public comment before issuing such permits.

DATES: To ensure consideration, please send your written comments by May 6, 2015.