

Dated: February 10, 2000.

Wanda L. Cain,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[I.D. 120999H-1]

Extension of Comment Period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and Incidental Take Permit Application and Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan Submitted by Plum Creek Timberlands, L. P. for Lands in Montana, Idaho, and Washington

AGENCIES: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce; Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice; extension of public comment period.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the extension of the comment period announced in the **Federal Register** notice dated December 17, 1999, for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for proposed issuance of an Incidental Take Permit (Permit), pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), to Plum Creek Timberlands, L.P., (and its partners Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc., and Plum Creek Timber I.L.L.C.), Plum Creek Marketing Inc., Plum Creek Land Company, Plum Creek Northwest Lumber, Inc., Plum Creek Northwest Plywood, Inc., and Plum Creek MDF, Inc. (Plum Creek).

DATES: Written comments must be received at the appropriate address or fax number by 5:00pm Mountain Standard Time on March 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Ted Koch, Project Biologist, FWS, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, Idaho 83709 (fax: 208/387-5262); or Bob Ries, Project Biologist, NMFS, 530 S. Albury Street, Suite #2, Moscow, Idaho 83843 (fax: 208/882-4109). Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the internet.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ted Koch, 208/378-5243, fax 208/378-5262, e-mail Ted_Koch@fws.gov; or Bob Ries,

208/882-6148, fax 208/882-4109, e-mail Bob.Ries@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice extends the comment period announced in the **Federal Register** on December 17, 1999 (64 FR 70695). Issuance of the Permit is pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA. The December 17, 1999, notice informed the public that NMFS and FWS have received an application by Plum Creek for a Permit, and invited the public to comment on the proposal to issue the Permit, Habitat Conservation Plan, DEIS, and Implementing Agreement.

Dated: February 4, 2000.

Thomas J. Dwyer,

Acting Regional Director, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Dated: February 11, 2000.

Wanda L. Cain,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 020700C]

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Scoping Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of scoping meetings; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will conduct scoping meetings to receive comments on a Draft Options Paper for Amendment 10 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico (Shrimp Amendment 10).

DATES: Written comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. on March 6, 2000. The scoping meetings will be held from February 28 through March 1, 2000. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 U.S. Highway 301, North, Suite 1000, Tampa, Florida 33619; telephone: (813) 228-2815. Copies of the Draft Options Paper are also available from the Council.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Richard Leard, Senior Fishery Biologist, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 228-2815.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The scoping meetings will be convened to receive comments on the need for additional bycatch reduction requirements for the shrimp fishery in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) south and east of 85°30' W. long. Amendment 9 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico (FMP), approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on July 30, 1997, and implemented by final rule on May 14, 1998 (April 14, 1998; 63 FR 18139), required the use of a NMFS-certified bycatch reduction device (BRD) in shrimp trawls used in the EEZ from Cape San Blas, Florida (85°30' W. long.) to the Texas/Mexico border and provided for the certification of the Fisheye BRD in the 30 mesh position. The purpose of this action was to reduce the bycatch mortality of juvenile red snapper by 44 percent from the average mortality for the years 1984-89. Amendment 9 to the FMP exempted shrimp trawls fishing for royal red shrimp outside of 100 fathoms, as well as groundfish and butterfish trawls. It also excluded small try nets and no more than two ridged frame roller trawls that do not exceed 16 feet (4.9 m). Amendment 9 to the FMP did not require BRDs south and east of 85-30' West long. because few juvenile red snapper were found as bycatch in this area. Because of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act's requirement to reduce bycatch to the extent practicable, the Council is considering the need for additional measures to reduce bycatch.

Scoping meetings for the Draft Options Paper on Shrimp Amendment 10 will begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at 10:00 p.m. at all of the following locations:

1. Monday, February 28, 2000—New Orleans Airport Hilton, 901 Airline Drive, Kenner, LA 70062

2. Tuesday, February 29, 2000—Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530

3. Wednesday, March 1, 2000—Adam's Mark Hotel Mobile, 64 South Water Street, Mobile, AL 36602

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language