

Mortgagee name	Mortgagee branch address	HUD office jurisdictions	Termination effective date	Home ownership centers
Transland Financial Service, Inc.	311 Germantown Bend Cove, Cordova, TN 38018.	Memphis, TN .....	9/18/2003	Atlanta.
Trust America Mortgage, Inc.	2503 Del Prado Blvd., Ste 505, Cape Coral, FL 33904.	Coral Gables, FL .....	9/18/2003	Atlanta.
Union Planters Bank, NA.	5201 California Ave., #370, Bakersfield, CA 93309.	Fresno, CA .....	9/18/2003	Santa Ana.
United Mortgage Investors, Inc.	4290 Memorial Dr., Ste C, Decatur, GA 30032	Atlanta, GA .....	9/18/2003	Atlanta.

Dated: December 21, 2003.

**Margaret Young,**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance and Budget.*

[FR Doc. 04-509 Filed 1-9-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-27-P

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuges**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Big Branch Marsh Wildlife Refuge, located in St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana.

**SUMMARY:** The Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations. The Service is furnishing this notice in compliance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*), to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document.

Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media announcements will be used to inform the public and state and local government agencies of the opportunities for input throughout the planning process. Open house style meetings and focus group meetings also will be held throughout the scoping phase of the comprehensive conservation plan development process. In addition, the Service will be inviting comments on archaeological, historic, and traditional cultural sites in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, we must receive written comments on or before February 26, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Address comments, questions, and requests for more information to Barbara Boyle, Deputy Project Leader, Southeast Louisiana Refuges, 61389 Highway 434, Lacombe, Louisiana 70445. Additional information concerning this refuge may be found on the Fish and Wildlife Services's Internet site at <http://www.fws.gov>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** By Federal law, all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System are to be managed in accordance with an approved comprehensive conservation plan. This plan guides management decisions and identifies the goals, long-range objectives, and strategies for achieving refuge purposes. The planning process will consider many elements, including wildlife and habitat management, habitat protection and acquisition, wilderness preservation, public recreational activities, industrial use, and cultural resource preservation. Public input into this planning process is essential.

Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1994, is one of seven refuges administered by the Southeast Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, and is managed primarily to provide habitat for a natural diversity of wildlife associated with Big Branch Marsh. Refuge objectives are to provide wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl; habitat for non-game migratory birds; habitat for threatened and endangered species; nesting habitat for wood ducks; and, to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, and environmental education and interpretation—whenever compatible with the purposes of the refuge.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Deputy Project Leader, Southeast Louisiana Refuges, telephone: 985/882-2000; fax: 985/882-9133; e-mail: [barbara\\_boyle@fws.gov](mailto:barbara_boyle@fws.gov); or mail (write to

the Deputy Project Leader at address in **ADDRESSES** section).

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

Dated: December 5, 2003.

**J. Mitch King,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

[FR Doc. 04-544 Filed 1-9-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Change in Administrative Jurisdiction of Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice clarifies that jurisdiction and control of submerged lands and marine waters at and surrounding Midway Atoll, located in the Pacific Ocean, are the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service based on an agreement with the Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** A. Eric Alvarez, Chief, Division of Realty, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Telephone (703) 358-1713.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This gives public notice of the transfer of jurisdiction and control of marine waters at and surrounding Midway Atoll from the Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs (both within the Department of the Interior) transferred the management of submerged lands and waters associated with Midway Atoll to the Fish and Wildlife Service on March 26, 2003. Upon execution of the MOU, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service assumed

jurisdiction and control of the submerged lands and waters within the 12-nautical mile territorial sea in order to manage the natural resources (i.e., fish, wildlife, plants, and other associated resources) associated with this area as part of the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

The Service will continue to administer and manage this area under the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee, as amended); the general regulations governing the National Wildlife Refuge System published in Title 50, Subchapter C, Code of Federal Regulations; and in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, and rules.

The refuge consists of all of the islands and submerged lands of Midway Atoll together with the surrounding territorial sea, which currently extends outward to 12 nautical miles. Executive Order 13022 transferred the authority over the Midway Islands from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Interior on October 31, 1996. The MOU clarifies that the authority over submerged lands and waters of Midway Atoll has been delegated to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by the Secretary of the Interior through the Office of Insular Affairs. We took this action in furtherance of United States sovereignty over Midway Atoll and to protect the unique ecosystem of Midway Atoll, including the adjacent coral reefs and marine waters.

The Service, which has been managing the refuge pursuant to the Executive order, will continue to manage it under all applicable laws, policies, and regulations that govern the National Wildlife Refuge System. In carrying out those responsibilities, and consistent with those authorities, we shall ensure that the service will manage the unique ecosystem of the refuge to preserve its character in support of the protection and conservation of the fish and wildlife in the refuge.

Dated: December 8, 2003.

**Matt Hogan,**

*Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 04-536 Filed 1-9-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### **Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Thirteenth Regular Meeting; Proposed Resolutions, Decisions, and Agenda Items Being Considered; Taxa Being Considered for Amendments to the CITES Appendices; Public Meeting; Observer Information**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The United States, as a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), may submit proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The United States may also propose amendments to the CITES Appendices for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The thirteenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP13) will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, October 2-14, 2004.

With this notice, we: list proposed resolutions, proposed decisions, and agenda items that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at COP13; list proposed amendments to the CITES Appendices (species proposals) that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at COP13; invite your comments and information on these potential proposals; announce a public meeting to discuss these potential proposals; and provide information on how non-governmental organizations based in the United States can attend COP13 as observers. We have posted an extended version of this notice on our Web site at <http://international.fws.gov>, with text describing each of these issues and explaining the rationale for the tentative U.S. position on each issue.

**DATES:** The public meeting will be held on February 5, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. We will consider written information and comments you submit concerning potential species proposals, proposed resolutions, proposed decisions, and agenda items that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at COP13, and other items relating to COP13, if we receive them by March 12, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** *Public Meeting:* The public meeting will be held in the Rachel Carson Room, in the Department of the

Interior at 18th and C Streets, NW., Washington, DC. Directions to the building can be obtained by contacting the Division of Management Authority (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, below).

Please note that the Rachel Carson Room is accessible to the handicapped and all persons planning to attend the meeting will be required to present photo identification when entering the building. Persons who plan to attend the meeting and who require interpretation for the hearing impaired should notify the Division of Management Authority as soon as possible.

*Comment Submission:* Comments pertaining to proposed resolutions, proposed decisions, and/or agenda items should be sent to the Division of Management Authority; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 North Fairfax Drive; Room 700; Arlington, VA 22203; or via E-mail at: [citescop13@fws.gov](mailto:citescop13@fws.gov); or via fax at: 703-358-2298. Comments pertaining to species proposals should be sent to the Division of Scientific Authority; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 North Fairfax Drive; Room 750; Arlington, VA 22203; or via E-mail at: [scientificauthority@fws.gov](mailto:scientificauthority@fws.gov); or via fax at: 703-358-2276. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at either the Division of Management Authority or the Division of Scientific Authority.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information pertaining to resolutions, decisions, and agenda items: Peter O. Thomas, Chief, Division of Management Authority; phone: 703-358-2095; fax: 703-358-2298; E-mail: [citescop13@fws.gov](mailto:citescop13@fws.gov). For information pertaining to species proposals: Robert R. Gabel, Chief, Division of Scientific Authority; phone 703-358-1708; fax 703-358-2276; E-mail: [scientificauthority@fws.gov](mailto:scientificauthority@fws.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, hereinafter referred to as CITES or the Convention, is an international treaty designed to control and regulate international trade in certain animal and plant species that are now or potentially may be threatened with extinction. These species are listed in Appendices to CITES, which are available on the CITES Secretariat's Web site at <http://www.cites.org/eng/append/index.shtml>. Currently, 164 countries, including the United States, are Parties to CITES. The Convention calls for