

therefore require National Environmental Policy Act analysis and public review.

Draft Environmental Assessment

This draft EA identifies and evaluates three alternatives for managing mountain lion predation on desert bighorn sheep on the Refuge.

Alternative A: Under this alternative, the Refuge would continue to be managed as it has been in the past. We currently have no plan to guide the management of mountain lions. Current management efforts, described in the Refuge's general management plan, focus on maintaining critical wildlife water sources for bighorn sheep, and, in coordination with the AZGFD, monitoring desert bighorn sheep numbers, and considering desert bighorn sheep transplants to augment populations elsewhere. Research on wildlife and wildlife water sources would continue. We would not take action to prevent mountain lion predation on desert bighorn sheep within the Refuge boundaries under this alternative.

Alternative B: This is the our proposed action, which would allow the option of removing specific, individually identified offending mountain lions, through translocation or lethal removal, from the Refuge under certain circumstances, in order to recover and maintain an optimal population of desert bighorn sheep. The proposed action has several components. We would trap mountain lions and fit them with tracking devices to monitor their activities. When the Refuge bighorn sheep population estimate is below 600 animals, active mountain lion removal would occur. Active mountain lion control is the removal of mountain lions found to kill two or more bighorn sheep within a 6-month period. The Service, or its agents, would carry out the lethal removal or translocation. However, when the Refuge bighorn sheep population estimate is between 600 and 800 animals, active mountain lion control may or may not be employed based on the totality of the circumstances at the time. In order to meet the bighorn sheep population objectives while minimizing the necessary impacts to mountain lions, some flexibility is desired. Decisions regarding whether active mountain lion control is necessary will be based on an adaptive management approach and based on the following factors: The current sheep population estimate; the current sheep population trend; bighorn sheep lamb survival and recruitment; the estimate of the number of mountain lions currently using the

Refuge; current and forecasted habitat conditions; and available funding and manpower. When the Refuge bighorn sheep population estimate is at or above 800 animals, active mountain lion control would not occur, although mountain lions on the Refuge would continue to be captured and fitted with tracking devices to aid in continuing research.

Alternative C: Under this alternative, there would be no attempts to radio collar and distinguish which mountain lions are preying on bighorn sheep. Mountain lions would be lethally removed or translocated at a rate of approximately 2 mountain lions per year from the area until the sheep population reaches an estimated 800 animals and has exhibited an increasing trend based on at least 3 sheep population surveys. Mountain lion removals would resume if the Refuge bighorn sheep population was found to again go below 800 animals.

Additional Refuge Information

Additional information on the history of the Refuge and its purpose, goals, objectives, and management strategies can be found in the *Kofa National Wildlife Refuge & Wilderness and New Water Mountains Wilderness Interagency Management Plan and Environmental Assessment: EA-AZ-055-95-105, October 1996*. Pertinent information can also be found in the April 2007 report titled *Investigative Report and Recommendations for the Kofa Bighorn Sheep Herd*, prepared jointly by the Service and the AZGFD. Both documents, along with other detailed information, are available at the following Web site: <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/arizona/kofa>.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail 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.

Authorities

The Environmental Review of this project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); NEPA Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508); other appropriate Federal laws and regulations; Executive Order

12996; the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997; and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those laws and regulations.

Dated: April 3, 2009.

Benjamin N. Tuggle,

Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS–R8–R–2008–N0292; 80230–1265–0000–S3]

Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, Klamath County, OR

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments: draft comprehensive conservation plan/environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce the availability of a Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan/Environmental Assessment (CCP/EA) for the Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge for public review and comment. The CCP/EA, prepared pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, describes how the Service will manage the Refuge for the next 15 years. Draft compatibility determinations for several existing and proposed public uses are also available for review and public comment with the Draft CCP/EA. **DATES:** Written comments must be received at the address below on or before Friday, September 18, 2009. **ADDRESSES:** For more information on obtaining documents and submitting comments, see “Review and Comment” under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**. For public meeting location see “Public Meetings.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark Pelz, Chief, Refuge Planning, 2800 Cottage Way, W–1832, Sacramento, CA 95825, phone (916) 414–6500.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd–668ee), which amended the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, requires us to develop a CCP for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a CCP is to provide refuge

managers with a 15-year plan 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 our policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, CCPs identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation.

We initiated the CCP/EA for the Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge in February 2007. At that time and throughout the process, we requested, considered, and incorporated public scoping comments in numerous ways. Our public outreach has included a **Federal Register** notice of intent published on January 29, 2007, agency and Tribal scoping meetings, two public workshops, planning updates, and a CCP Web page. We received over 180 scoping comments during the 60-day public comment period.

Background

Klamath Marsh was established in 1958 and is located in south central Oregon on the east slope of the Cascade Mountain Range along the Williamson River. The Service owns approximately 40,960 acres within the 49,583-acre acquisition boundary. The Refuge protects one of the largest remaining natural freshwater marshes on the west coast. Other important habitats on the refuge include sedge meadow, grassland, riverine, riparian scrub, and ponderosa pine forest. The refuge protects habitat for a variety of unique species including greater sandhill cranes, yellow rails, Oregon spotted frogs, red-naped sapsuckers, pygmy nuthatches, bald eagles, beaver, and red band trout. The entire Refuge is located within the former reservation of the Klamath Tribes.

Alternatives

The Draft CCP/EA identifies and evaluates three alternatives for managing Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge for the next 15 years. The alternative that appears to best meet the Refuge purposes is identified as the preferred alternative. The preferred alternative is identified based on the analysis presented in the Draft CCP/EA, which may be modified following the completion of the public comment period based on comments received from other agencies, Tribal

governments, non-governmental organizations, or individuals.

Under Alternative A, the no action alternative, we would continue to manage the Refuge as we have in the recent past. No major changes in habitat management would occur. The existing wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation programs would remain unchanged.

Under Alternative B, (preferred alternative), the Service would restore the portion of the Williamson River and Big Spring Creek on the Refuge; substantially improve management of emergent marsh, meadows, ponderosa pine forest and aspen to increase habitat value for migratory birds and other wildlife; improve and expand visitor services by developing new trails, interpretive exhibits, an environmental education program, and a visitor contact station; maintain existing hunting and fishing programs with minor modifications; increase cultural resources protection; and recommend no units for wilderness designation. The Service would also revise and update the MOU with the Klamath Tribes regarding subsistence hunting and gathering.

Under Alternative C, the Service would restore the portions of the Williamson River and Big Springs Creek on the Refuge; improve management of emergent marsh, meadows, ponderosa pine forest and aspen using a more limited tool set (fire only for non-forested areas); minimally expand opportunities for non-consumptive public uses; eliminate public hunting; increase cultural resource protection; and recommend 11,165 acres for wilderness designation. The Service would also revise and update the MOU with the Tribes regarding subsistence hunting and gathering.

Public Meetings

The locations, dates, and times of public meetings will be listed in a planning update distributed to the project mailing list and posted on the Refuge Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/klamathbasinrefuges/KlamathMarshCCP/kmarshccp.html>.

Review and Comment

Copies of the Draft CCP/EA may be obtained by writing to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attn: Mark Pelz, CA/NV Refuge Planning Office, 2800 Cottage Way, W-1832, Sacramento, CA 95825-1846. Copies of the Draft CCP/EA may be viewed at this address or at the Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, HC 63 Box 303, Chiloquin, OR 97624. The Draft CCP/EA will also be available for

viewing and downloading online at: <http://www.fws.gov/klamathbasinrefuges/KlamathMarshCCP/kmarshccp.html>.

Comments on the Draft CCP/EA should be addressed to: Mark Pelz, Chief, Refuge Planning, 2800 Cottage Way, W-1832, Sacramento, CA 95825-1846. Comments may also be faxed to (916) 414-6497 or if you choose to submit comments via electronic mail, submit them to the following address: fw8plancomments@fws.gov.

At the end of the review and comment period for this Draft CCP/EA, comments will be analyzed by the Service and addressed in the Final CCP/EA. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail 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.

Dated: July 28, 2009.

Ren Lohofener,

Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region, Sacramento, California.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Quarterly Status Report of Water Service, Repayment, and Other Water-Related Contract Negotiations

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of contractual actions that have been proposed to the Bureau of Reclamation and are new, modified, discontinued, or completed since the last publication of this notice on June 24, 2009. This notice is one of a variety of means used to inform the public about proposed contractual actions for capital recovery and management of project resources and facilities consistent with section 9(f) of the Reclamation Project Act of 1939. Additional announcements of individual contract actions may be published in the **Federal Register** and in newspapers of general circulation in the areas determined by Reclamation to be affected by the proposed action.

ADDRESSES: The identity of the approving officer and other information