DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Intent to Prepare Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Williamson, Jackson and Union Counties, IL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent (Revised) to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge.

SUMMARY: This revised notice advises the public that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and an associated environmental document for Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in Williamson, Jackson and Union Counties, Illinois. The Service is furnishing this notice in compliance with Service comprehensive conservation plan policy and the National Environmental Policy Act and implementing regulations 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, opportunities, and concerns for inclusion in the environmental assessment.

DATES: The Service will solicit information from the public via open houses, workshops, focus groups, and written comments. Special mailings, house-to-house, workshops, focus groups, and information from the public via open houses, will be posted on the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge planning web site: http://www.fws.gov/r3/pao/planning/cotop.htm

Public Involvement: Public scoping will begin with three open houses on October 19. The first meeting is scheduled Thursday, October 19, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Southwestern Illinois College in Red Bud, Illinois. The College is located at 500 West South Fourth Street. The meeting will be in the Dining Room of the New Classroom Building. A second meeting is scheduled Friday, October 20, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Marion Hotel and Conference Center in Marion, Illinois. The hotel is located at 2600 West DeYoung Street near the intersection of Interstate 57 (Exit 54B) and Illinois New Route 13. A third open house is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is located on the east side of Route 148 about 1½ miles south of the intersection of Route 148 and New Route 13.

ADDRESSES: Address comments and requests for more information to: Refuge Manager, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, 8588 Route 148, Marion, IL 62959; or E-mail: conwr-ccp@fws.gov


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: It is Service policy to have all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System managed in accordance with an approved comprehensive conservation plan. The plan guides management decisions and identifies Refuge goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving Refuge purposes. Public input into this planning process is encouraged. The plan will provide other agencies and the public with a clear understanding of the desired future conditions of the Refuge and how the Service will implement management strategies. Some of the issues to be addressed in the plan include the following:

(a) Habitat management;
(b) Public use management;
(c) Wildlife population management;
(d) Wilderness management;
(e) Industrial facilities management; and
(f) Cultural resource management.

After the public scoping of issues, a decision will be made whether to prepare an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. If we decide to prepare an environmental impact statement, another notice of intent will be published announcing that decision. The environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will include several alternatives that address the issues and management strategies associated with these topics.

Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge was established on August 5, 1947, by Public law 80–361. This Act of Congress transferred certain Federal lands acquired in connection with the Crab Orchard Creek project and the Illinois Ordnance Plant to the Secretary of the Interior. This legislation...
mandated that these lands be administered by the Secretary through the Fish and Wildlife Service "for the conservation of wildlife, and for the development of the agricultural, recreational, industrial, and related purposes specified in this Act."

The 43,890-acre Refuge contains three large man-made lakes and numerous small ponds totaling 9,000 acres, 26,000 acres of forest and brush land, 5,000 acres of cropland, 2,000 acres of grassland, and 2,000 acres of administrative lands. The Refuge supports an extensive variety of plant and animal species, hosts 1.2 million recreational visitors per year, provides facilities for industrial tenants, and sponsors cooperative farmers and permittee graziers. The 4,050-acre Crab Orchard Wilderness, the first wilderness are a designated in the State of Illinois, is within the Refuge.


Marvin E. Moriarty,
Acting Regional Director.
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BILLY CODE 410–55–M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Operation and Maintenance Rate Adjustment for the Colorado River Irrigation Project, Arizona

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rate adjustment.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs proposes to adjust the assessment rates for operating and maintaining the Colorado River Irrigation Project for the 2001 irrigation season.

DATES: Interested parties may submit comments on the proposed rate adjustment. Comments must be submitted on or before December 4, 2000.

ADDRESSES: All comments concerning the proposed rate adjustment must be in writing and addressed to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Director of Trust Responsibilities, ATTN: Irrigation and Power, Mail Stop 3061, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240, telephone; (202) 208–5480.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Region, P.O. Box 10, Phoenix, Arizona 85001; telephone (602) 379–6956.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The authority to issue this document is vested in the Secretary of the Interior by 5 U.S.C. 301 and the Act of August 14, 1914 (38 Stat. 583; 25 U.S.C. 385). The Secretary has delegated this authority to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs pursuant to part 209 Departmental Manual, Chapter 8.1A and memorandum dated January 25, 1994, from Chief of Staff, Department of the Interior, to Assistant Secretaries, and Heads of Bureaus and Offices. The new rates are specified in the following schedule.

This notice is given in accordance with Section 171.1(e) and 171.1(g) of part 171, Subchapter H, Chapter 1, of Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which provides for the fixing and announcing the rates for annual operation and maintenance assessments and related information of Bureau of Indian Affairs irrigation projects.

BACKGROUND

The assessment rates are based on a prepared estimate of the cost of normal operation and maintenance of the irrigation project. Normal operation and maintenance means the expenses we incur to provide direct support or benefit to the project’s activities for administration, operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation. We must include at least:

(a) Personnel salaries and benefits for the project engineer/manager and our employees under his management/ control;

(b) Materials and supplies;

(c) Major and minor vehicle and equipment repairs;

(d) Equipment, including transportation, fuel, oil, grease, lease and replacement;

(e) Capitalization expenses;

(f) Acquisition expenses; and

(g) Other expenses we determine necessary to properly perform the activities and functions characteristic of an irrigation project.

PAYMENTS

The irrigation operation and maintenance assessments become due based on locally established payment requirements. No water shall be delivered to any of these lands until all irrigation charges have been paid.

INTEREST AND PENALTY FEES

Interest, penalty, and administrative fees will be assessed, where required by law, on all delinquent operation and maintenance assessment charges as prescribed in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 4, Part 102, Federal Claims Collection Standards; and 42 BIAM Supplement 3, part 3.8 Debt Collection Procedures. Beginning 30 days after the due date, interest will be assessed at the rate of the current value of funds to the U.S. Treasury. An administrative fee of $12.50 will be assessed each time an effort is made to collect a delinquent debt; a penalty charge of 6 percent per year will be charged on delinquent debts over 90 days old and will accrue from the date the debt became delinquent. No water shall be delivered to any farm unit until all irrigation charges have been paid. Within 180 days a delinquent debt will be forwarded to the U.S. Treasury for further action in accordance with Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–134).

RATE ADJUSTMENT

The following table illustrates the impact of the rate adjustment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrigation rate per assessable acre</th>
<th>Present 2000</th>
<th>Proposed 2001</th>
<th>Proposed 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 acre-feet/acre</td>
<td>$38.50</td>
<td>$37.00</td>
<td>$37.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess Water/acre-foot</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Determinations and Certifications

Regulatory Planning and Review (E.O. 12866): This rate adjustment is not a significant regulatory action and has been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act: This rate making is not a rule for the purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act because it is "a rule of particular applicability relating to rates" (5 U.S.C. §601(2)).

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act: This rate adjustment imposes no unfunded