DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Summary for Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge, Contra Costa County, CA

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces that a Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and a Summary for Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) are available for distribution. The CCP, 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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service intends to manage the Refuge for the next 15 years. The compatibility determinations for environmental education, interpretation, wildlife observation, and photography, and research are also available with the CCP.

DATES: The Final CCP is available now. The finding of no significant impact (FONSI) was signed on July 29, 2002. Implementation of the plan began after the FONSI was signed.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Final CCP or Summary may be obtained by writing to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attn: Leslie Lew, California/Nevada Refuge Planning Office, Room W–1916, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, California, 95825. Copies of the plan may be viewed at this address or at the San Francisco Bay NWR Complex Headquarters, #1 Marshlands Road, Fremont, California. The Final CCP will also be available online for viewing and downloading at http://pacific.fws.gov/planning.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Refuge was the first National Wildlife Refuge in the country established to protect endangered plants and insects. Created in 1980 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), this riverside refuge provides protection and critical habitat for three endangered species; Lange’s metalmark butterfly (Apodemia mormo langei) (Lange’s), Contra Costa wallflower (Erysimum capitatum ssp. angustatum) (wallflower), and Antioch Dunes evening primrose (Oenothera deltoides ssp. howellii) (primrose). The Refuge, 55-acres of former dunes, in addition to an adjacent 12 acres of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) land, is an isolated patch of what was once a larger dune system that hosted a unique assemblage of plants, insects, and reptiles. The Refuge staff is based in the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex office in Fremont, California.

The availability of the Draft CCP/Environmental Assessment (EA) for 30-day public review and comment was noticed in the Federal Register on Friday, November 2, 2001 in Volume 66, Number 213. The Draft CCP/EA identified and evaluated four alternatives for managing the Refuge for the next 15 years. Alternative A was the no-action alternative—current Refuge management would continue. Alternative B emphasized restoring and managing the Refuge to pre-industrial natural conditions (oak woodland on sandy soils) with limited and controlled public access. Alternative C emphasized managing the Refuge as a mosaic of dune habitat at varying successional stages with unrestricted public access. Alternative D was very similar to Alternative C with the exception that public use would be limited and controlled. The Service received 9 comment letters on the Draft CCP. The comments received were incorporated into the CCP and are responded to in an appendix to the CCP. Alternative D was selected as the Service’s preferred alternative for a CCP.

With the Refuge management program described in the Final CCP, nonnative weeds will continue to be controlled using land weeding, herbicides, and prescribed fire. The Service would create a cycle of disturbance by scraping the soil in a mosaic pattern. In addition, the Service will plan to construct additional dunes using imported sand in the areas that currently do not provide good habitat for endangered species. The Refuge’s outplanting program would be expanded to include other native plant species, especially...
plants that are either locally significant and/or were historically present. The Service will continue monitoring the
primrose, wallflower, and Lange’s populations and encouraging research on the Refuge. With funding, additional studies will be undertaken to assess the effects of management actions on other plants and animals, including reptiles and invertebrates, at the Refuge.

Nonnative weeds such as Ailanthus and Oleander would be removed from the river shore to the extent possible and be replaced with native species. Parts of the river bank would be allowed to erode so that the endangered plants could colonize them. Refuge staff would explore other opportunities for dune and riparian habitat protection and restoration in the vicinity of the Refuge. The CCP directs that the Refuge be open to restricted and controlled public access as staff and funding permit. Environmental education, interpretation, wildlife observation, and photography would be allowed on the Refuge with visitors accompanied by Refuge staff or Refuge volunteers. Regularly scheduled tours of the Refuge would be conducted by Refuge staff. An outreach program would be developed to help expand the Refuge’s presence and support in the community. Interpretive programs and facilities would be developed, including an automobile pull-out with an interpretive kiosk. The Service would also promote the Refuge with teachers and develop an educator-led curriculum for Refuge resources.

Daniel S. Walsworth,
Acting Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office, Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento, California.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WO–350–1430–ER–24 1A]

OMB Approval Number 1004–0188; Information Collection Submitted to the Office of Management and Budget Under the Paperwork Reduction Act

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has submitted an extension of a currently approved collection to collect the information listed below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). On August 21, 2001, the BLM published a notice in the Federal Register (66 FR 43900) requesting comment on this information collection. The comment period ended on October 22, 2001. BLM received no comments. You may obtain copies of the collection of information and related forms and explanatory material by contacting the BLM Information Collection Clearance Officer at the telephone number listed below.

The OMB must respond to this request within 60 days but may respond after 30 days. For maximum consideration your comments and suggestions on the requirement should be made within 30 days directly to the Office of Management and Budget, Interior Department Desk Officer (1004–0188), Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Washington, DC 20503. Please provide a copy of your comments to the Bureau Information Collection Clearance Officer (WO–630), Bureau of Land Management, Eastern States Office, 7450 Boston Blvd., Springfield, Virginia 22153.

Nature of Comments: We specifically request your comments on the following:
1. Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper functioning of the BLM, including whether the information will have practical utility;
2. The accuracy of BLM’s estimate of the burden of collecting the information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
3. The quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and
4. How to minimize the burden of collecting the information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology.

Title: Rights-of-Way, 43 CFR 2800 and 2880.

OMB Approval Number: 1004–0188.
Bureau Form Number: No Form.
Abstract: We use the information to issue rights-of-way grants to use a specific piece of the public lands for certain projects, such as roads, pipelines, transmission lines, and communication sites.
Frequency: Once.
Description of Respondents: Individuals, partnerships, corporations, associations or other business entity and any Federal, State or local governmental entity including municipal corporations seeking to obtain a rights-of-way grant.
Estimated Completion Time: 25 hours.
Annual Responses: 5,066.
Average Application Fee per Response: $368.
Annual Burden Hours: 126,650.

Bureau Clearance Officer: Michael Schwartz, (202) 452–5033.
Dated: July 11, 2002.
Michael H. Schwartz,
Bureau of Land Management, Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 02–22517 Filed 9–3–02; 8:45 am]
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