

delisting them, and initial estimates of times and costs to implement the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that a public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service will consider all information presented during a public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. Substantive technical comments will result in changes to the plan.

Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plan, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individualized responses to comments will not be provided.

The species being considered in this recovery plan is the Micronesian megapode (*Megapodius laperouse laperouse*). This forest bird was historically widespread throughout the Mariana islands archipelago and found on all the islands except Farrallon de Medinilla. The extinction of birds in Micronesia began 2000 to 4000 years ago with the arrival of aboriginal man. These human populations altered vegetation, introduced predatory Polynesian rats (*Rattus exulans*), hunted adult birds and gathered eggs. Decline in bird numbers continued with the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century who brought domestic livestock that caused widespread damage to native forests. At this time, predatory black (*R. rattus*) and Norway (*R. norvegicus*) rats were also introduced. Large areas were converted to agriculture during the German (1899–1917) and Japanese (1917–1944) occupations and native forest were further damaged during World War II battles. These factors, along with the appearance of other exotic competitors and predators, such as the brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*), have led to reduction or extirpation of megapode populations from most of the Mariana Islands. Small remnant populations persist on Aguiguan, Tinian, and Saipan, while larger populations persist on Anatahan, Guguan, Sarigan, Alamagan, Pagan, Ascuion, and Maug. Habitat loss and exotic predators, such as the brown tree snake, continue to be the greatest threats

to the survival of the Micronesian megapode.

The Micronesian megapode is currently represented by populations on ten islands with a total estimate of 1,000 to 1,500 birds. The areas of emphasis for recovery actions are the ten islands with existing populations. In addition, the recovery plan recommends reintroduction of the species onto the islands of Agrihan and/or Rota.

The objective of this plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of this species so that protection by the Act is no longer necessary. Recovery efforts will focus on protection of all extant individuals from habitat loss, control of introduced competitors and predators, and preventing the spread of the brown tree snake. Further research on the reproductive ecology, territory size and habitat use, nesting requirements, demographics, and the impacts of predation and hunting is needed to ensure the long-term survival of the megapode. Recovery efforts will include augmenting existing populations and reestablishment of the species in protected areas throughout its former range.

#### Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

#### Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: September 18, 1997.

**Mike Spear,**

*Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.*  
[FR Doc. 97-25423 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Availability of Draft Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Hoary Bat, *Lasiurus cinereus semotus*, for Review and Comment

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

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability for public review of a draft recovery plan for the Hawaiian hoary bat, *Lasiurus cinereus semotus*. This subspecies is known from the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, and

Molokai. Population numbers are not known, but Hawaiian hoary bats are observed regularly only on Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui, and the bat is apparently restricted in distribution on the latter two islands. There is a general lack of historic and current data on this subspecies, and its present status is not well understood.

**DATES:** Comments on the draft recovery plan received by December 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the draft recovery plan are available for inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the following locations: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Ecoregion, Room 3108, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, P.O. Box 50088, Honolulu, Hawaii 96850 (phone: 808/541-3441). Requests for copies of the draft recovery plan and written comments and materials regarding the plan should be addressed to Brooks Harper, Field Supervisor-Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Ecoregion at the Honolulu address given above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Karen Rosa, Assistant Field Supervisor-Endangered Species, at the Honolulu address given above.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystem is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States, its Territories and Commonwealths. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of the species, establish criteria for the recovery levels for downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that a public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service will consider all information presented during a public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. Substantive technical comments will result in changes to the

plan. Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plan, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individualized responses to comments will not be provided.

The subspecies being considered in this recovery plan is the Hawaiian hoary bat, *Lasiurus cinereus semotus*. It is known from the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Oahu Kauai, and Molokai. Population numbers are not known, but Hawaiian hoary bats are observed regularly only on Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui, and the bat is apparently restricted in distribution on the latter two islands. There is a general lack of historic and current data on this subspecies, and its present status is not well understood. Habitat requirements for the Hawaiian hoary bat are not well known. Bats are most often observed foraging in open areas, near the edges of native forests, or over open water. Hawaiian hoary bats roost solitarily in trees. Habitat requirements may vary seasonally, but this is not clear. Threats to this subspecies include habitat destruction (elimination of roosting sites), and possibly direct and indirect effects of predation, pesticides, introduced insects, and disease.

The objective of the actions proposed by this recovery plan is to delist the Hawaiian hoary bat. Interim goals include determining the abundance, distribution, and habitat needs of this subspecies. Interim criteria for downlisting the Hawaiian hoary bat to threatened status are also identified.

Delisting and downlisting decisions cannot be made without a basic understanding of the Hawaiian hoary bat's distribution, abundance, and habitat needs. Research addressing these questions must be undertaken prior to consideration of delisting or downlisting.

#### Downlisting Objectives

A widespread population of Hawaiian hoary bats must be naturally reproducing and stable or increasing in size on the island of Hawaii for a minimum of 5 consecutive years before downlisting is considered.

#### Delisting Objectives

Hawaiian hoary bat populations on Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui must be well-distributed, naturally reproducing, and stable or increasing in size for at least 5 consecutive years before delisting is considered.

#### Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

#### Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: September 15, 1997.

**Thomas J. Dwyer,**

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

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#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### Bureau of Land Management

[CO-050-1220-00]

#### Closure of Public Lands

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management.

**ACTION:** Closure of public lands, roads and trails in Fremont County, CO.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that effective October 1, 1997 that certain public lands, including all existing roads and trails, east of Badger Creek in Fremont County are closed to all types of motor vehicle (including but not limited to 4x4, ATVs, and motorcycles) travel. The purpose of this closure is to prevent further disturbance to soils and vegetation in and near the riparian area, reduce sedimentation into Badger Creek, and stop the expansion of user-created trails in the area. This closure is made under the authority of 43 CFR 8364.1. The public lands affected by this emergency closure are specifically identified as follows: Fremont County, Colorado.

#### New Mexico Principal Meridian

T. 49 N., R. 10 E.,  
Sec. 22 east of Badger Creek  
Sec. 23 N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>  
Sec. 24 N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> west of BLM Road 5980  
Sec. 13 S<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> west of BLM Road 5980  
Sec. 14 SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (locally known as Bloody Gulch and/or Rattlesnake Canyon).

**DATES:** Effective October 1, 1997 and will remain in effect unless revised, revoked or amended.

**ADDRESSES:** Bureau of Land Management, Canon City District Office, 3170 East Main Street, Canon City, Colorado 81212; Telephone (719) 269-8500.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Levi Deike, Area Manager, Royal Gorge Resource Area at the above address and

phone number or John Nahomenuk, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, P.O. Box 126, Salida, CO 81201; (719) 539-7289.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This closure does not apply to emergency, law enforcement, and federal or other government vehicles while being used for official or emergency purposes, or to any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized or otherwise officially approved by BLM. Violation of this order is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment as defined in 18 USC 3571. A copy of this **Federal Register** Notice and map showing the closure area is posted in the Canon City District Office and in public places in the affected area.

**Stuart L. Freer,**

*Associate District Manager.*

[FR Doc. 97-25475 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

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#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### Bureau of Land Management

[WO-220-1060-00-24 1A]

#### Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board; Re-opening of Public Call for Nominations

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Re-opening of Public Call for Nominations for the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board.

**SUMMARY:** This notice is published in accordance with Section 9(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.). Notice is hereby given that the public call for nominations for membership on the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board is being re-opened for a 30-day period to ensure that all interested parties have had an adequate opportunity to submit nominations for board membership.

Any individual or organization may nominate one or more persons to serve on the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board. Individuals may also nominate themselves for Board membership. Nominations that have already been made do not have to be resubmitted. All nomination letters should include the name, address, profession, relevant biographic data, and reference sources for each nominee, and should be sent to the address below.

Nominations may be made for the following categories of interest:

Wild horse and burro advocacy group  
Wild horse and burro research  
(especially genetics and population biology)