

announcing the criteria for tribes to be included in an applicant pool and the establishment of the selection process for tribes/consortia to negotiate agreements pursuant to the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994. This interim rule was added to Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations at Part 1001 of Chapter VI. While it may be changed by later rulemaking, the Act stipulates that the lack of promulgated regulations will not limit its effect. It should be noted that a proposed rulemaking has been negotiated between tribal and Federal members of a self-governance negotiated rulemaking committee and is currently in the process of being prepared for publication in the **Federal Register** for review and comment.

Purpose of Notice

The interim rules established at 25 CFR parts 1001.1 to 1001.5 will be used to govern the application and selection process for tribes/consortia to begin their participation in the tribal self-governance program in fiscal year 1999 and calendar year 1999. Applicants should be guided by the requirements in 25 CFR parts 1001.1 to 1001.5 in preparing their applications. Copies of the interim rules published in the **Federal Register** on February 15, 1995, may be obtained from the information contact person identified in this notice.

Tribes/consortia wishing to be considered for participation in the tribal self-governance program in fiscal year 1999 or calendar year 1999 must respond to this notice, except for those which are (1) currently involved with negotiations with the Department; (2) one of the 64 tribal entities with signed agreements; or (3) one of the tribal entities already included in the applicant pool as of the date of this notice.

The Director's decision on the actual number of tribes that will enter negotiations will be made at a later date. Tribes already in the applicant pool will retain their existing ranking with tribes entering the applicant pool under these rules receiving a lower ranking. Being in the applicant pool will not guarantee that a tribe will actually be provided the opportunity to negotiate in any given year. However, it does mean that a tribe will not be passed over by a tribe with a lower ranking in the applicant pool or by a tribe not in the applicant pool, with the exception of a tribe already in the negotiation process.

For example, if the Department determines that five tribes will be afforded the opportunity to negotiate self-governance agreements for fiscal year 1999 and calendar year 1999, the five tribes with highest rankings would

be notified and negotiations would be scheduled. The tribe ranked sixth on the list would then have the highest ranking to negotiate a self-governance agreement for 2000 or might enter negotiations for 1999 if one of the first five tribes discontinued negotiations. In such a case, the tribe that discontinued negotiations would remain in the applicant pool with its original ranking and would be the first to be selected in 1999 for negotiating agreements commencing in 2000.

Dated: January 14, 1998.

William A. Sinclair,

Director, Office of Self-Governance.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary

Tribal Self-Governance Notice of Availability of Self-Governance Negotiation/Planning Grants

AGENCY: Office of Self-Governance, Office of the Secretary, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of grants availability.

SUMMARY: In this notice, the Office of Self-Governance (OSG) announces the availability of fiscal year 1998 negotiation grants (up to 15 grants of no more than \$40,000 each) and advance planning grants (up to 5 grants of no more than \$40,000 each). The timeframes for application and selection vary with the type of grant and are specified in this announcement.

DATES: Applications must be submitted in accordance with the table below:

Type of grant	Deadline for submitting application
Negotiation	Mar. 31, 1998.
Advance planning	May 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Completed applications for grants should be sent to the Director, Office of Self-Governance, U.S. Department of the Interior, Mail Stop 2542, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Kenneth D. Reinfeld, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Self-Governance, 1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 2542, Washington, DC 20240, 202-219-0240.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The tribal self-governance program is designed to promote self-determination by allowing tribes to assume more control through negotiated annual funding agreements of programs operated by the Department

of the Interior. The Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-413) allows for negotiations to be conducted for programs operated by BIA and for programs operated by other bureaus and offices within the Department that are otherwise available to Indians or when there is a historical, cultural, or geographic connection to an Indian tribe.

The purpose of this notice is to announce the availability of planning and negotiation grants in accordance with the self-governance interim rule published in the **Federal Register** on April 23, 1996. The interim rules were established at 25 CFR 1001.7 to 1001.9 and will be used to govern the application and selection process for tribes/consortia to receive fiscal year 1998 negotiation and planning grants as specified in this notice. Applicants should be guided by the requirements in 25 CFR 1001.7 to 1001.9 in preparing their applications. Copies of the interim rules published in the **Federal Register** on April 23, 1996, may be obtained from the information contact person identified in this notice.

Subject to the discretion of the Director, Office of Self-Governance, the following types of grants are available to tribes/consortia in 1998 with the deadlines as stated below:

(1) *Negotiation Grants:* Up to 15 grants of no more than \$40,000 may be made available. Grants to tribes/consortia already receiving advance planning grants shall be limited to \$20,000. As announced in today's **Federal Register**, the closing date for submitting completed applications to begin participation in tribal self-governance in fiscal year 1999 or calendar year 1999 is March 2, 1998. Applications requesting to be included in the applicant pool to begin participation in tribal self-governance may be submitted at any time. Tribes/consortia selected from the applicant pool to begin participation in tribal self-governance in fiscal year 1999 or calendar year 1999, may be eligible to receive a negotiation grant. Each selected tribe/consortium will be notified by March 16, 1998, and must submit a written application for a negotiation grant, no later than March 31, 1998, indicating its intention to negotiate an annual funding agreement with any bureau within DOI for 1999.

(2) *Advance Planning Grants:* Up to five grants of no more than \$40,000 may be made available. The closing date for submitting applications to receive a grant to plan for future participation in the tribal self-governance program is May 1, 1998. No later than June 1, 1998, each applicant will be notified by letter

from the Director, Office of Self-Governance whether it has been selected to receive an advance planning grant.

In order to provide sufficient time for tribes/consortia to effectively use the planning and negotiation grants, the following target dates have been established for the awarding of grants.

(1) *Negotiation Grants*: Since agreements for the 1998 fiscal year need to be signed and submitted by July 1, 1998, to allow sufficient time to prepare for negotiations, new participating tribes will be selected and awarded negotiation grants by May 1, 1998.

(2) *Advance Planning Grants*: In order to avoid delays in planning activity and future participation in tribal self-governance, advance planning grants will be awarded to tribes/consortia by July 1, 1998.

Submitting Applications

(1) Applications must be submitted in accordance with the interim rule published in the **Federal Register** on April 23, 1996, and by the deadlines identified in this announcement.

(2) Applications may be mailed or hand-delivered.

(3) Applications which are mailed must be postmarked no later than the date given in this notice for the particular type of grant being applied for.

Dated: January 14, 1998.

William A. Sinclair,

Director, Office of Self-Governance.

[FR Doc. 98-1289 Filed 1-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary

Alaska Land Managers Forum

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice is published in accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) and 41 CFR 101-6.1015(b). The Department of the Interior hereby gives notice of a public meeting of the Alaska Land Managers Forum to be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, January 28, 1998. The meeting will take place in Conference Room 114, 1689 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska. This meeting will be held to receive and discuss work group reports on recreation and tourism. The agenda will also include several briefing items.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ronald B. McCoy at (907) 271-5485 or Sally Rue at (907) 465-4084.

Deborah L. Williams,

Special Assistant to the Secretary for Alaska.
[FR Doc. 98-1300 Filed 1-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of an Environmental Assessment, Finding of No Significant Impact, and Receipt of an Application for an Incidental Take Permit by International Paper Company for Timber Management Practices on its Lands in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: International Paper Company (Applicant) seeks an incidental take permit (ITP) from the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), as amended (Act). The permit would apply to all of the applicant's land holdings in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina that contain the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) (*Picoides borealis*). The applicant has a total of 18 known active clusters in Alabama (2), Georgia (2), South Carolina (9), and Louisiana (5). The applicant wants to eventually transfer its baseline responsibility of 18 RCW clusters to its Southlands Experimental Forest (SEF) in Bainbridge, Georgia where there are currently two active RCW clusters. This ITP would authorize take of the existing 16 RCW groups in Alabama, South Carolina, and Louisiana incidental to timber management activities, plus any clusters in excess of the baseline at SEF.

The Service also announces the availability of an environmental assessment (EA) and Habitat Conservation Plan/Application for Incidental Taking (HCP). Copies of the EA and/or HCP may be obtained by making a request to the Regional Office (see ADDRESSES). Requests must be in writing to be processed. This notice also advises the public that the Service has made a preliminary determination that issuing the ITP is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on information contained in the EA and HCP. The final determination will be made no sooner than 30 days from the date of this notice. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 10 of the Act and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6). The Service specifically requests comment on the appropriateness of the "No Surprises" assurances should the Service determine that an ITP will be granted and based upon the submitted HCP. Although not explicitly stated in the HCP, the Service has, since August 1994, announced its intention to honor a "No Surprises" Policy for applicants seeking ITPs. Copies of the Service's "No Surprises" Policy may be obtained by making a written request to the Regional Office (see ADDRESSES). The Service is soliciting public comments and review of the applicability of the "No Surprises" Policy to this application and HCP.

DATES: Written comments on the permit application, EA, and HCP should be sent to the Service's Regional Office (see ADDRESSES) and should be received on or before February 20, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the application, HCP, and EA may obtain a copy by writing the Service's Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia. Documents will also be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the Regional Office, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345 (Attn: Endangered Species Permits), or Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Brunswick Field Office, 4270 Norwich Street, Brunswick, Georgia 31520. Written data or comments concerning the application, EA, or HCP should be submitted to the Regional Office. Requests for the documentation must be in writing to be processed. Comments must be submitted in writing to be processed. Please reference permit number PRT-833203 in such comments, or in requests of the documents discussed herein.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Rick G. Gooch, Regional Permit Coordinator, (see ADDRESSES above), telephone: 404/679-7110; or Mr. Robert Brooks, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Brunswick Field Office, (see ADDRESSES above), telephone: 912/265-9336.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Picoides borealis* (or RCW) is a non-migratory species that once was common in the southern Coastal Plain from east Texas to Florida and north to Maryland,