

for cold (but not freezing) temperatures during hibernation. The fact that Indiana bats congregate and form large aggregations in only a small percentage of known caves suggests that very few caves meet their requirements. Exclusion of Indiana bats from hibernacula by blockage of entrances, gates that do not allow for bat flight or proper air flow, and human disturbance to hibernating bats have been major documented causes of Indiana bat declines.

During the summer, Indiana bats roost in trees and forage for insects primarily in riparian and upland forest. The most important characteristics of roost trees are probably structural (i.e., exfoliating bark with space for bats to roost between the bark and the bole of the tree). To a limited extent, tree cavities and crevices are also used for roosting. Maternity colonies use multiple primary roost trees which are used by a majority of the bats most of the summer, and a number of "secondary" roosts that are used intermittently and by fewer bats, especially during periods of precipitation or extreme temperatures. Thus, there may be more than a dozen roosts used by some Indiana bat maternity colonies. Indiana bats feed exclusively on flying insects.

The Indiana Bat Recovery Plan was approved by the Service in 1983. In October 1966, the Service solicited input from Service personnel, species experts, and state agencies within the range of the species on the Technical Draft Indiana Bat Revised Recovery Plan, prepared by the Indiana Bat Recovery Team. The agency draft incorporates most of the comments and suggestions received on the technical draft. The agency draft identifies priority research tasks that will help determine the limiting factors for the species. This is essential before adequate steps can be taken to halt the continued decline in the species' numbers. The current agency draft reflects an increased emphasis on necessary following discussions among members of the Indiana Bat Recovery Team and comments received from reviewers of the technical draft.

The primary objectives of the agency draft revised recovery plan are to: (1) Summarize research findings that have accumulated since the original plan was approved in 1983, (2) identify priority research tasks intended to pinpoint reasons for the species' continued precipitous decline, and (3) establish realistic objectives that will lead to the recovery and eventual delisting of the species. The species may be reclassified to threatened following documentation of stable or increasing populations for

three consecutive census periods (6 years) and permanent protection [i.e., public ownership or long-term easement/lease, and gate/fence [where necessary and feasible]] at all Priority One hibernacula. Delisting will be considered when the reclassification criteria are met, in addition to protection and documentation of stable or increasing populations for three consecutive census periods at 50 percent of the Priority Two hibernacula in each state, and the overall population level must be restored to that of 1980. The year 1980 was chosen as the baseline for the Indiana bat because some of the currently known major hibernacula were not known prior to 1980, and it is the first year that systematic surveys were conducted at all major hibernation sites. In addition, the 1980 level is believed to be sufficient to maintain enough genetic diversity to enable the species to persist over a large geographical area and avoid extinction.

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 the revised recovery plan.

Authority

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

Dated: April 2, 1999.

Charles M. Wooley,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

[FR Doc. 99-8818 Filed 4-8-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Marine Mammal Annual Report Availability, Calendar Year 1996

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability of calendar year 1996 marine mammal annual report.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey have issued their joint 1996 annual report on marine mammals under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Interior, as required by section 103(f) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. The report covers the period January 1 to December 31, 1996,

and was submitted to Congress on February 25, 1999. This notice informs you that the 1996 report is available and that copies may be obtained on request to the Service.

ADDRESSES: You should address written requests for copies to: Publications Unit, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Conservation Training Center, Route 1, Box 166, Shepherd Grade Road, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeffrey L. Horwarth, Division of Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance, Telephone (703) 358-1718.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Department of the Interior is responsible for eight species of marine mammals, as assigned by the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. These species are polar bear, sea and marine otters, walrus, manatees (three species) and dugong. Administrative actions discussed include appropriations, marine mammals in Alaska, endangered and threatened marine mammal species, law enforcement activities, scientific research and public display permits, certificates of registration, research, Outer Continental Shelf environmental studies and international activities.

Dated: March 31, 1999.

Jamie Rappaport Clark,

Director.

[FR Doc. 99-8889 Filed 4-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-360-1220-00]

Designation of Off-Road Vehicle Use Areas and Trails Within Shasta County, California

SUMMARY: The BLM has formulated off-road vehicle use designations for public lands within the Lower Clear Creek and Mule Mountain management areas located in Shasta County, California. These designations were specified within the Record of Decision for the Redding Resource Area Management Plan approved June, 1993. Under authority of 43 CFR 8342, motor vehicles within the Lower Clear Creek and Mule Mountain management areas are "limited" to designated roads and trails.

Roads and trails available for all registered motor vehicles on public land within the management area will be signed and include two roads connecting Muletown Road to two separate parcels of private property located within Township 31 North,

Range 6 West, sections 21 and 22, of the Mount Diablo Meridian. These private property access roads will be available for public motor vehicle use as long as they are properly maintained under private rights-of-way. Maps illustrating these road locations are available at the BLM's Redding Field Office.

Roads available for motor vehicles registered for highway-use only include: Muletown Road, Placer Street, Cloverdale Road, Clear Creek Road, and China Gulch Drive. These public road systems are controlled by Shasta County. Maps illustrating these road locations are available from the Shasta County Public Works Department.

Background

The BLM prepared an environmental impact statement and approved a record of decision (ROD) for the Redding Resource Area Management Plan in 1993. The ROD provides off-highway vehicle designations for public lands administered by the BLM. The BLM's main objective for managing lands within the Lower Clear Creek and Mule Mountain management areas is to: "Enhance non-motorized recreation opportunities by establishing a Greenway from the Sacramento River to the Whiskeytown Unit of the National Recreation Area along Clear Creek (Resource Management Plan, 1993)".

The identification of available roads and trails under the "limited" designation was further evaluated within an environmental assessment for the Lower Clear Creek Greenway—Motor Vehicle Designations prepared in 1999. The authority for this off-road vehicle designation is 43 CFR 8342. Any person who fails to comply with the terms of an off-road vehicle use designation is subject to arrest and fines of up to \$100,000 and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months under the authority of 43 CFR 8340.0-7. Exceptions apply to authorized BLM employees, contractors, law enforcement personnel, fire prevention crews and others given express permission by the BLM authorized officer.

DATES: This off-road vehicle designation will take effect April 9, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles M. Schultz, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 355 Hemsted Drive, Redding, CA 96002.

Charles M. Schultz,
Redding Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 99-8897 Filed 4-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-40-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, Oklahoma

AGENCY: National Park Service.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the general management plan, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site (NHS).

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service is preparing an environmental impact statement for the general management plan (GMP) for Washita Battlefield NHS. This statement will be approved by the Director, Intermountain Region.

Washita Battlefield NHS was established by Public Law 104-333 on November 12, 1996, to provide for the preservation and interpretation of the Battle of the Washita. The battle, which occurred on November 27, 1868, was one of the largest engagements between Plains tribes and the United States Army on the Southern Great Plains. The site is a registered National Historic Landmark. The GMP is needed to guide the protection and preservation of the natural and cultural environments, considering a variety of interpretive visitor experiences that enhance the enjoyment and understanding of the park resources.

The effort will result in a comprehensive plan that encompasses preservation of natural and cultural resources, provision for visitor use and interpretation, and development of necessary and appropriate facilities. In cooperation with local interests, attention will also be given to resources outside the boundaries that affect the integrity of park resources. Alternatives to be considered include no-action, the preferred alternative, and other alternatives addressing the following major issues:

- How can the important natural and cultural resources be best protected and preserved, while providing for visitor use for present and future generations?
- What level and type of use is appropriate to be consistent with the park's purpose, and to relate to the park's significance?
- What facilities are needed to meet the mission goals of the park regarding natural and cultural resource management, visitor use and interpretation, partnerships, and park operations?

The National Park Service is planning to hold public scoping meetings regarding the GMP during the week of May 10th. Specific dates, times, and

locations will be announced in the local media, and can be obtained by contacting the park superintendent. The purpose of these meetings is to explain the planning process and to obtain comments concerning appropriate resource management; desired visitor use, interpretation, and facilities; and issues that need to be resolved. In addition to attending scoping meetings, people wishing to provide input to this initial phase of developing the GMP may address comments to the superintendent. Scoping comments should be received no later than 60 days from the publication of this Notice of Intent.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Contact Superintendent Sarah Craighead, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, P.O. Box 890, Cheyenne, Oklahoma 73628; Tel: (580) 497-2742; Fax: (580) 497-2712; e-mail: craighead_sarah@nps.gov.

Dated: March 31, 1999.

Sarah Craighead,

Superintendent, Washita Battlefield NHS.

[FR Doc. 99-8840 Filed 4-8-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Announcement of Subsistence Resource Commission Meeting

SUMMARY: The Superintendent of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and the Chairperson of the Subsistence Resource Commission for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve announce a forthcoming meeting of the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve Subsistence Resource Commission. The following agenda items will be discussed:

- (1) Call to order.
- (2) Roll call.
- (3) Approval of summary of minutes from January 14-15, 1998 meeting.
- (4) Review agenda.
- (5) Superintendent's introduction of guests and staff and review of Commission function and purpose.
- (6) Superintendent's Management/Research report.
 - a. Administration and management.
 - b. Park operations.
 - c. Resource management.
 - d. Subsistence program.
- (7) Public and agency comments.
- (8) Old business.
 - a. SRC Chairs meeting report.
 - b. Subsistence Management Plan work session.
 - c. Review traditional use area report.