

species. We are seeking comments from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties on this Draft Environmental Assessment.

DATES: We must receive comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment on or before September 8, 1999 to be considered. All comments received by the above date will be considered in our final determination whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact on designation of critical habitat within the Virgin River Basin.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and other materials regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment should be directed to the Field Supervisor, Utah Ecological Services Field Office, Lincoln Plaza, 145 East 1300 South, Suite 404, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115. Copies of the draft document are also available from the Field Office. All comments and materials received will be available upon request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Reed E. Harris, Utah Field Supervisor (see ADDRESS above), or at (801) 524-5001 extension 126.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Background

In March of 1994, in response to complaint filed in U.S. District Court, District of Colorado, the Court ordered us to designate critical habitat for the endangered woundfin and Virgin River chub, and for the Virgin spinedace (if listed before December 31, 1994). The Court further ordered that critical habitat be proposed no later than April of 1995, and finalized by December of 1995. In April of 1995 (60 FR 17296) we proposed designation of critical habitat for the woundfin, Virgin River chub, and Virgin spinedace. Shortly after that proposal we entered into a Conservation Agreement with other Federal, State, and private entities to eliminate or reduce impacts threatening the continued existence of the Virgin spinedace. We then withdrew the proposed listing and designation of critical habitat for the Virgin spinedace on February 6, 1996 (61 FR 44010). Subsequent to the proposed designation of critical habitat, and prior to the publishing of a final rule, we were precluded from completing the designation by a Congressional moratorium prohibiting listing species as endangered or threatened, and designating critical habitats for species already listed. Beginning in April 1995

and extending well into 1996, Congress passed a number of spending moratoria prohibiting us from using funds previously allocated for such purposes. These budgetary restrictions created a significant backlog of proposed listing actions, including designation of critical habitat. For this reason, we developed Listing Priority Guidance for fiscal years 1997 (62 FR 55268), and 1998 and 1999 (63 FR 25502) to help prioritize the backlog of listing activities. The designation of critical habitat was given the lowest priority in this Guidance. However, in December, 1998, the 10th circuit court ruled that the Service can no longer use this justification for not designating critical habitat and ordered designation of critical habitat for the Rio Grande silvery minnow (*Hybognathus amarus*). Shortly after the silvery minnow decision, the plaintiffs in the Virgin River case filed a motion for the Service to finalize critical habitat designation. A hearing is scheduled in August 1999 on this issue. We are in the process of proposing a schedule to the Plaintiffs for finalization of critical habitat for the woundfin and Virgin River chub in the Virgin River.

We are proceeding with steps necessary to finalize critical habitat designation for these two species in the Virgin River Basin and are providing notice of availability of an Environmental Assessment for this critical habitat designation.

Public Comments Solicited

We are seeking public input on the Draft Environmental Assessment for critical habitat designation within the Virgin River basin for the woundfin and Virgin River chub. Comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry and/or any interested party regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment are hereby solicited. All comments received will be fully considered prior to a determination whether to prepare a finding of no significant impact or an environmental impact statement on designation of critical habitat within the Virgin River Basin.

Author: The primary author of this notice is Keith L. Rose, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 764 Horizon Drive, Room 227, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506, or at (970) 243-4552.

Authority

The authorities for this action are the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1532 *et seq.*)

Dated: August 3, 1999.

Terry Terrell,

Deputy Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 99-20379 Filed 8-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Fish and Wildlife Service

Central Valley Project Improvement Act, Central Valley, CA

AGENCIES: Bureau of Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Addition of Fish and Wildlife Service as co-lead agency for Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The role of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has been changed from cooperating to co-lead agency, as defined under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), in on-going efforts to prepare the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on implementation of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alan Candlish, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, California 95825, (916) 978-5197; or James McKevitt, Fish and Wildlife Service, 3310 El Camino Avenue, Suite 130, Sacramento, California 95821-6340, (916) 979-2760.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 30, 1992, the President signed into law the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102-575) that included Title XXXIV, the CVPIA. The CVPIA amends the previous authorizations of the California Central Valley Project (CVP) to include fish and wildlife protection, restoration, and mitigation as project purposes having equal priority with irrigation and domestic uses and fish and wildlife enhancement as a project purpose equal to power generation. The CVPIA identifies a number of specific measures to meet these new purposes and directs the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to operate the CVP consistent with these purposes, to meet the Federal trust responsibilities to protect the fishery resources of affected federally recognized Indian tribes, and to meet all requirements of Federal and California law and to achieve a reasonable balance among competing demands for use of

CVP water. Section 3409 directs the Secretary to complete a PEIS to analyze the direct and indirect impacts and benefits of implementing the CVPIA.

On February 25, 1993, the Secretary approved a memorandum signifying roles of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Service in regards to implementing the CVPIA. The Service's role was defined as having " * * * primary responsibility for decisions on biological resource issues; for studies on fish and wildlife, their populations and habitat requirements; for fishery restoration program direction; and for the planning, design, and decisions on the administration of fish and wildlife facilities." Because of this language and other specifications in the CVPIA, the Service began implementing, in an interim manner and jointly with Reclamation, provisions of the CVPIA which met the definition of its responsibility. It also began participating in efforts to complete the PEIS for implementing the CVPIA, supporting complete environmental analysis of long-term program implementation efforts for both Reclamation and the Service.

Since 1993, the Service has participated in efforts leading to release of the Draft PEIS for the CVPIA in 1997. Efforts to date suggest the Service was more a de-facto co-lead agency than cooperating agency. Service efforts included such things as attending public and agency meetings, providing responses from the Department of the Interior perspective on fish and wildlife issues; participating in decisions regarding assumptions, model usage, and analysis in the PEIS; and participating in preparation of documentation. Additionally, possible programmatic-level actions that the Service might take to implement the CVPIA were discussed and evaluated during scoping processes associated with completion of the draft NEPA document.

Dated: July 24, 1999.

Michael J. Spear,

Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office, Fish and Wildlife Service.

Dated: July 30, 1999.

Kirk C. Rodgers,

Acting Regional Director, Mid-Pacific Region, Bureau of Reclamation.

[FR Doc. 99-20385 Filed 8-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-94-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-962-1410-00-P and AA-8096-03]

Notice for Publication; Alaska Native Claims Selection

In accordance with Departmental regulations 43 CFR 2650.7(d), notice is hereby given that the decision to issue conveyance (DIC) to Chugach Alaska Corporation, notice of which was published in the **Federal Register** on June 24, 1999, is modified to add the right-of-way interest in Federal Aid Secondary Route No. 851 (FAS 851) as to T. 8 S., R. 3 E., Copper River Meridian.

A notice of the modified decision will be published once a week, for four (4) consecutive weeks, in the *Anchorage Daily News*. Copies of the modified decision may be obtained by contacting the Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, 222 West Seventh Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599 ((907) 271-5960).

Any party claiming a property interest which is adversely affected by the decision, an agency of the Federal government, or regional corporation, shall have until September 8, 1999 to file an appeal on the issue in the modified DIC. However, parties receiving service by certified mail shall have 30 days from the date of receipt to file an appeal. Appeals must be filed in the Bureau of Land Management at the address identified above, where the requirements for filing an appeal may be obtained. Parties who do not file an appeal in accordance with the requirements in 43 CFR Part 4, Subpart E, shall be deemed to have waived their rights.

Except as modified, the decision, notice of which was given June 24, 1999, is final.

Christine Sitbon,

Land Law Examiner, Branch of 962 Adjudication.

[FR Doc. 99-20382 Filed 8-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-SS-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[MT-960-99-1990-00]

Resource Advisory Council Meeting, Butte, MT

AGENCY: Butte Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, DOI.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Western Montana Resource Advisory Council will convene at 9 a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 1999, at the Dillon Field Office, 1005 Selway Drive, Dillon, Montana. Issues will include an update on the Whitetail-Pipestone (Tailpipe) Environmental Impact Statement and a review of the Muddy Creek Allotment Decision.

The meeting is open to the public and written comments may be given to the Council. Oral comments may be presented to the Council at 11:30 a.m. The time allotted for oral comment may be limited, depending on the number of persons wishing to be heard. Individuals who plan to attend and need further information about the meeting, or who need special assistance, such as sign language or other reasonable accommodations, should contact the Butte Field Office, 106 North Parkmont (P.O. Box 3388), Butte, Montana 59702-3388, telephone 406-494-5059.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

BLM Butte Field Manager Merle Good at the above address or telephone number.

Dated: July 30, 1999.

Merle Good,

Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 99-20439 Filed 8-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-DN-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-930-1430-01; NVN-62570]

Partial Cancellation of Proposed Withdrawal; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management has cancelled its withdrawal application N-62570 for the protection of Ash Springs in Lincoln County, Nevada, as to 4.24 acres. The original Notice of Proposed Withdrawal was published as FR Doc. 98-23426, 63 FR 46467, September 1, 1998. The Bureau of Land Management has determined the 4.24 acres are not needed for the protection of Ash Springs.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 8, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dennis J. Samuelson, BLM Nevada State Office, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520, 775-861-6532.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Bureau of Land Management has cancelled withdrawal application N-