

visitor experience, and sensitive resource areas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Superintendent, Padre Island National Seashore, at the above address and telephone number.

Dated: February 26, 1999.

John Gibson,

Acting Superintendent, Padre Island National Seashore.

[FR Doc. 99-4481 Filed 2-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Scoping for Fire Management Plan Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Tulare & Fresno Counties, California

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.) that public scoping has been initiated for a conservation planning and impact analysis process for updating the fire management plan for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The purpose of the scoping process is to elicit early public comment regarding issues and concerns, a suitable range of alternatives and appropriate mitigating measures, and the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts which should be addressed.

Background

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, units of the National Park System, are managed as one administrative unit. Extensive research has shown that fire is a significant natural process across a large portion of the 864,000 acres of the parks. An extensive fire management program was begun in 1968 and has continued to the present time. All forms of fire management, from aggressive suppression to managing natural (lightning) ignitions, have been used to achieve natural and cultural resource management and hazard fuel reduction goals. The parks fire management program also has a significant fire prevention and suppression function.

The last revision of the fire management plan culminated in a *Finding Of No Significant Impact*, dated November 1, 1989. Since that time, a range of new issues, improved information, and unforeseeable constraints have emerged which have the potential to affect the future direction of the fire management

program within the parks. Some of these issues include but are not limited to: a continued decline in ecosystem health due to fire suppression, increased hazards and costs associated with fire suppression, and more stringent air quality regulations.

Comment and Approval

As noted, the National Park Service will undertake an environmental analysis effort to address issues and alternatives for fire management in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. At this time, it has not been determined whether an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared, however, this scoping process will aid in the preparation of either document.

As the first step in this undertaking, a series of five public scoping meetings will be conducted during March, 1999. California cities where scoping meetings will be held are:

- Wednesday March 3, 7:00 pm at Fort Miller Middle School Cafeteria, 1302 E. Dakota, Fresno;
- Wednesday March 10, 7:00 pm at the Tulare County Education Center (Education Building Corner of Burrell Ave. near the County Civic Center), Visalia;
- Monday March 15, 7:00 pm at the Visitor Center Auditorium at Griffith Park, Los Angeles;
- Monday March 22, 7:00 pm at the Presidio Visitor Center, 1st floor conference room, Building 102 on Montgomery St., San Francisco (adjacent parking available on parade grounds);
- Tuesday March 23, 7:30 pm at Three Rivers Union School gym.

For those unable to attend meetings, a scoping document will be available through the park. The main topics addressed in the scoping document and meetings are: background information on the fire management program; a review of relevant policy and law affecting the fire management program; an assessment of current fire management needs; and the identification of issues and alternatives related to the fire management in the parks.

Interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to provide comments or suggestions. Written comments regarding the fire management program must be postmarked no later than June 7, 1999. For additional information on the scoping meetings, or to request a copy of the scoping background material and provide comments, please contact: Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks; Attn: Fire

Management Plan; Three Rivers, California 93271 (telephone (559) 565-3164 or email seki_fire@nps.gov.).

The official responsible for approval is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service. The official responsible for implementation is Michael J. Tollefson, Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The draft fire management plan and environmental document are expected to be available for public review in January, 2000. At this time it is anticipated that the final plan and environmental document are to be completed in June, 2000.

Dated: February 16, 1999.

John J. Reynolds,

Regional Director, Pacific West.

[FR Doc. 99-4484 Filed 2-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Record of Decision; Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement; Oregon Caves National Monument, Oregon

ACTION: Notice of Approval of Record of Decision.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared a Record of Decision on the Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for Oregon Caves National Monument in Oregon.

DATES: The Record of Decision was recommended by the Superintendent of Oregon Caves National Monument, concurred by the Deputy Regional Director, Pacific West Region, and approved by the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, on December 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Inquiries regarding the Record of Decision or the Environmental Impact Statement should be submitted to the Superintendent, Oregon Caves National Monument, 19000 Caves Highway, Cave Junction, OR 97523, phone (541) 592-2100.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The text of the Record of Decision follows:

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS), has prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) on the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the General Management Plan for Oregon Caves

National Monument, Oregon. This ROD is a statement of the decision made, other alternatives considered, public involvement in the decision making process, the basis for the decision, the environmentally preferable alternative, and measures to minimize environmental harm.

Decision (Selected Action)

Oregon Caves National Monument will implement Alternative C, identified as the action that best satisfies the Monument and NPS missions, as well as the Monument's long-term management objectives. Some actions remain consistent with those presented in the draft EIS. Others were modified in the final EIS to respond to public comments and concerns. The selected action recognizes both the need to protect natural and cultural resources and to provide appropriate opportunities for visitors and area residents.

Specific actions to be implemented under the selected action are summarized below:

Adequate administrative and collection storage will be provided at the administrative site. Cave tours will be operated with NPS interpretive rangers, and a cave tour reservation system will be established and based at the Illinois Valley Visitor Center (IVVC). The IVVC will continue to serve as a key point for initial visitor contact and information.

Protection will be provided to the Lake Creek and upper Cave Creek watersheds, the public water supply, and foreground and middleground viewsheds as seen from the Monument through the transfer of 3,410 acres to the Monument from the Siskiyou National Forest (SNF).

Additional hiking, horseback riding, and other recreational opportunities will be provided to the public, and public road access will be maintained to adjacent national forest lands. The cave will be open to public use from the middle of March to mid-December. Concession-provided lodging, food service and gift sales will continue, and will be located at the Chateau. Use of the lower level of the Chalet will be converted from the concession-operated gift shop to the Monument visitor center and will be staffed with NPS and cooperating association employees.

Other Alternatives Considered

Alternative A—The no-action alternative represents no change from present management direction. This alternative, therefore, represents the current situation, including retention of concession-contracted services for cave tours, lodging, food service and gift

sales. No boundary change would be included, no change to current administrative facilities would occur, and the Monument would remain open to cave tours year-round under Alternative A.

Alternative B—This is the "minimum requirements alternative", representing the minimum actions necessary to protect the natural and cultural resources of the Monument and protect the health and safety of the public. Alternative B includes the development of adequate administrative and collection storage facilities in the Chateau. Cave tours would be operated with NPS interpretive guides, and a cave tour reservation system would be established and based at the IVVC. A cooperative agreement between the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and NPS would set aside 3,410 acres as a protected area within the SNF. Under this agreement, protection would be provided to the Lake Creek and upper Cave Creek watersheds, the public water supply, and foreground and middleground viewsheds as seen from the Monument. The caves would be open to public use from mid-March to mid to late December. However, no concession lodging, dining or gift sales would be provided. The lower level of the Chalet would be used for an on-site visitor center.

Alternative D—Under this alternative, a new on-site visitor center would be developed to provide interpretive services to the public. Concession lodging, food service and gift sales operations would be retained at the Chateau and the Chalet. The caves would be open to the public on a year-round basis, and tours would be conducted by a non-profit institute or similar organization. This alternative would also provide adequate administrative and collection storage at the administrative site, and the IVVC would be used for initial visitor orientation, visitor contact, and cave tour reservations. Protection of the Lake Creek and upper Cave Creek watersheds, the public water supply and foreground viewshed would be accomplished through a transfer of 2,377 acres to the Monument from the SNF. In addition, protection of portions of the middleground viewshed would be accomplished by the establishment of a 1,033-acre protected area within the SNF through a cooperative agreement between the USFS and NPS.

Actions common to all alternatives include the continued rehabilitation of the cave trail, the continued use of the IVVC for orientation and information, protection of the Oregon Caves Historic District, and ongoing regional

cooperation on various issues such as fire management and tourism.

Basis for Decision

After careful consideration of public comments throughout the planning process, including comments on the draft EIS, the selected action best accomplishes the legislated purpose of the Monument and balances the statutory mission of the NPS to provide long-term protection of the Monument's resources and significance, while allowing for appropriate levels of visitor use and appropriate means of visitor enjoyment. The selected action also best accomplishes identified management goals and desired future conditions, with the fewest environmental impacts.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative

The alternative which causes the least damage to the cultural and biological environment, and that best protects, preserves, and enhances resources is Alternative C.

Measures to Minimize Environmental Harm

All practicable measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the selected action have been identified and incorporated into the selected action. Implementation of the selected action would avoid any adverse impacts on wetlands and any endangered or threatened species, or that would result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat of such species.

Public Involvement

Public comment has been requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process in numerous ways. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on January 23, 1996 (vol. 61, no. 15, pgs. 1783-1784). In early March 1996, NPS produced a newsletter that was mailed to a list of interested individuals and was inserted in the *Illinois Valley Newspaper* for distribution to its circulation of 3,400 readers. The purpose of the newsletter was to explain the planning process, provide information, and encourage public participation in the process.

Two public scoping meetings were held in March 1996 in Cave Junction and Grants Pass, OR, to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the GMP/EIS. A total of 23 people attended the two meetings. Also in March, the planning team met with several interest groups, at their request. The NPS received 88 written comments during the scoping period.

More than 300 copies of the draft GMP/EIS were mailed to government agencies, organizations and interested individuals in January 1998. In addition, the document was posted on the Internet and mailed to local libraries in Cave Junction, Grants Pass, and Portland, OR. The EPA Notice of Availability was published in the **Federal Register** on January 16, 1998 (vol. 63, no. 11, pg. 2676). A Notice of Availability was also published by NPS on January 15 (vol. 63, no. 10, pg. 2412). A second newsletter was prepared that included a summary of the draft plan and information on scheduled public workshops. Each newsletter included a postage-paid response form for people to use in submitting comments if desired. Approximately 3,500 newsletters were inserted into the *Illinois Valley News* on January 14, and another 1,000 were made available to visitors at the IVVC and the Chateau. In addition, newspapers in Grants Pass and Cave Junction published the notices and local radio stations announced locations and times for the public workshops.

Four public workshops were held in Cave Junction and Grants Pass on February 9 and 10, 1998. The purpose of the workshops was to offer the public an opportunity to meet with the NPS planning staff and discuss the draft GMP/EIS. A total of 111 people attended the workshops.

The final GMP/EIS was released to the public on November 10, 1998. The EPA Notice of Availability of the final GMP/EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on November 20, 1998 (vol. 63, no. 224, pg. 64473); the NPS also published a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The final document included a summary of the comments received at the public workshops and a summary of the comments received from written responses.

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act was undertaken to identify listed plant and animal species that may occur within the Oregon Caves National Monument. In addition, a copy of the draft plan was sent to the USFWS for concurrence that the broad-scale elements of the proposed action would not adversely affect any listed species known or suspected to be in the planning area.

Consultation also occurred with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. A copy of the plan was sent to each of these offices to initiate and plan for coordination of survey, eligibility, effect, and mitigation of cultural resources in the Monument area.

During the comment period, 982 letters were received from government agencies, businesses, special interest groups and individuals. Of these, 735 were individually written letters, individually signed form letters and postcards, 132 E-mail responses through the Internet, and 115 response forms from the newsletter. In addition, a petition with 102 signatures was received. Written responses were prepared for more than 69 substantive questions and/or comments requiring clarification of information contained in the draft plan, changes to the text, or direct responses.

Dated: February 9, 1999.

William C. Walters,

Deputy Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. 99-4480 Filed 2-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Boston Harbor Island Advisory Council; Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (PL 92-463) that the Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council will meet on Thursday, March 4, 1999. The meeting will convene at 6:00 PM in the Exchange Conference Center at the Boston Fish Pier, One Fish Pier, Boston, Massachusetts.

The Advisory Council was appointed by the Director of National Park Service pursuant to Public Law 104-333. The 28 members represent business, educational, cultural, and environmental entities; municipalities surrounding Boston Harbor; and Native American interests. The purpose of the Council is to advise and make recommendations to the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership with respect to the development and implementation of a management plan and the operation of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area.

The Agenda for this meeting is as follows:

1. Presentation of the Annual Report.
2. Election of new members.
3. Vote taken on a recommendation to the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership regarding a preferred alternative of the draft management plan prepared by the Planning Committee for the Boston Harbor Islands.

The meeting is open to the public. Further information concerning Council meetings may be obtained from the Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands.

Interested persons may make oral/written presentations to the Council or file written statements. Such requests should be made at least seven days prior to the meeting to: Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands NRA, 408 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA, 02110, telephone (617) 223-8667.

Dated: February 17, 1999.

George E. Price, Jr.,

Superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands NRA.

[FR Doc. 99-4483 Filed 2-23-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places; Notification of Pending Nominations

Nominations for the following properties being considered for listing in the National Register were received by the National Park Service before FEBRUARY 13, 1999 Pursuant to section 60.13 of 36 CFR Part 60 written comments concerning the significance of these properties under the National Register criteria for evaluation may be forwarded to the National Register, National Park Service, 1849 C St. NW, NC400, Washington, DC 20240. Written comments should be submitted by March 11, 1999.

Beth Boland,

Acting Keeper of the National Register.

Georgia

Butts County

Idlewilde, Lake Clark Rd., Indian Springs State Park, Indian Springs, 99000293

Indiana

Cass County

Courthouse Historic District, Roughly between Third and Sixth Sts., E. Melbourne Ave. and High St., Logansport, 99000294

Grant County

Fairmount Commercial Historic District, 205-101 S. Main, 102-124 N. Main, 124-102 S. Main, 101-123 N. Main, 107 W. 1st, 119-117 W. Washington, Fairmount, 99000295

Hamilton County

Conner Street Historic District, Roughly both sides of Logan and Conner Sts. between 10th and 17th., Noblesville, 99000296
West—Harris House, 10595 Eller Rd., Fishers, 99000297

Miami County

Converse—Jackson Township Public Library, 100 S. Jefferson St., Converse, 99000298

Morgan County

Hastings Schoolhouse (Indiana's Public Common and High Schools MPS), 1/5 mi. S. of Jct. Hacker Creek Rd. and Liberty