

and strategies for achieving refuge purposes. We prepared the CCP and FONSI for the Washington Islands Refuges pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370d), as amended, and its implementing regulations, the Refuge Administration Act, and Service policies.

The Washington Islands Refuges are located in Clallam, Jefferson, and Grays Harbor Counties, Washington. Planning for the Refuges was conducted together because many of the same physical characteristics, management issues, and conservation opportunities occur on, or are relevant to the management of each of the Refuges.

During the CCP planning process for the Refuges many elements were considered, including wildlife management and habitat protection, off-refuge wildlife-dependent recreational and educational opportunities, and coordination with tribal, State, and Federal agencies and other interested groups. The Draft CCP and associated Environmental Assessment identified and evaluated two alternatives for managing the Refuges. The Draft CCP was available for a 30-day public review and comment period, which occurred May 31 through June 30, 2005 (May 31, 2005, 70 FR 30967). The Service received 24 comment letters on the Draft CCP, which were incorporated into, or otherwise responded to in the final CCP. No substantive changes were required to address public comments.

By implementing the CCP, the Service will minimize disturbance to wildlife, reduce contaminants, enhance oil spill response preparedness, initiate and participate in cooperative monitoring and research, and enhance the Refuges' public education program.

Wildlife disturbances will be minimized by enforcing access restrictions to Refuge islands, educating boaters and pilots about wildlife disturbances, promoting a voluntary 200-yard boat-free zone, pursuing tideland leases with the State, and enforcing wildlife disturbance regulations. Working with partners to reduce impacts from oil spills and remove derelict fishing gear and other wildlife hazards is a high priority for the Refuges. Long-term wildlife monitoring efforts will continue, and Refuge staff will assist with developing a monitoring manual for seabirds. The Service will develop partnerships to pursue joint research projects and develop and staff an off-refuge interpretive center. The proposal in the CCP for eradication of European rabbits on Destruction Island will be addressed in a separate planning effort with full public involvement.

Dated: June 14, 2007.

Renne R. Lohofener,

Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Washington Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Sequim, WA

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) intend to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment (CCP/EA) for the Protection Island and San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuges (Refuges). The Refuges are located in Island, Jefferson, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties, Washington. The San Juan Islands Refuge includes the San Juan Islands Wilderness Area. We are furnishing this notice to advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and to obtain public comments, suggestions, and information on the scope of issues to be considered during the CCP and National Environmental Policy Act planning process.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the CCP received by October 15, 2007, will be considered during development of the Draft CCP/EA.

ADDRESSES: Address comments, questions, and requests for information to: Kevin Ryan, Project Leader, Washington Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 33 South Barr Road, Port Angeles, WA 98362. Comments may be faxed to the Refuge at (360) 452–5086, or e-mailed to FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov. Include Protection Island and San Juan Islands Refuges CCP in the subject line of your message. Additional information about the CCP planning process is available on the Internet at: <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kevin Ryan, Project Leader, Washington Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex, phone (360) 457–8451.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd–668ee), requires all lands within

the National Wildlife Refuge System to be managed in accordance with an approved CCP. A CCP guides refuge management decisions, and identifies long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving the purposes for which the refuge was established. During the CCP planning process many elements will be considered, including wildlife and habitat protection and management, public use opportunities, and cultural resource protection. Public input during the planning process is essential. The CCP for the Protection Island and San Juan Islands Refuges will describe desired conditions for the Refuges and the long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving those conditions. As part of the planning process, the Service will prepare an environmental assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.)

Background

The Protection Island National Wildlife Refuge Act was enacted in 1982 (Pub L. 97–333), authorizing creation of the 316-acre Refuge located near the mouth of Discovery Bay on the southeast side of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The purposes of the Protection Island Refuge are to provide habitat for a broad diversity of bird species, with particular emphasis on protecting the nesting habitat of the bald eagle, tufted puffin, rhinoceros auklet, pigeon guillemot, and pelagic cormorant; protecting harbor seals' hauling-out areas; and providing for scientific research and wildlife-oriented public education and interpretation. Refuge habitats include grass and shrublands, a small woodland area, shoreline, spits, and sandy bluffs. Most of the breeding seabird population of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca nests on Protection Island. The island is a major resting and breeding site for harbor seals, and also supports a small number of breeding elephant seals. Additional information concerning Protection Island NWR is available at: http://www.fws.gov/pacific/refuges/field/wa_protectionis.htm.

Located in the northwest corner of Washington State between southern Canada and the United States mainland, the San Juan Islands Refuge has a long establishment history. Executive Order 1959 established the Smith Island Reservation in 1914, as a preserve, breeding ground, and winter sanctuary for native birds. Subsequent executive orders and public land orders through 1983 culminated in the current configuration of the Refuge, which totals

approximately 454 acres of islands, rocks, and reefs. Habitats include remnant prairies, cliff faces, shorelines, and old growth forest. San Juan Islands Refuge provides important breeding, resting, and foraging habitat for sensitive marine bird and mammal species. The islands of this refuge are part of the San Juan Islands Wilderness, except for Smith, Minor, and Turn Island, and a 5-acre parcel on Matia Island. The provisions of the Wilderness Act apply to all refuge lands that are designated wilderness. Additional information concerning San Juan Islands Refuge is available at: http://www.fws.gov/pacific/refuges/field/wa_sanjuan.htm.

Preliminary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

The following broad categories of preliminary issues have been identified by the Service for consideration in the planning process: Threats to Refuge resources; Refuge buffers; habitat restoration; wilderness management on San Juan Islands Refuge; research opportunities; visitor services; and refuge administration. Additional issues may be identified during public scoping. The CCP will focus on ways of minimizing threats to the Refuges' resources and visitor services programs will be evaluated based on current Service policies. A revised wilderness stewardship plan for the San Juan Islands Wilderness will be included in the CCP as well.

Public Availability of Comments

All comments received from individuals become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, NEPA, and Service and Department of the Interior policies and procedures.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so.

Dated: July 17, 2007.

David J. Wesley,
Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Proposed Safe Harbor Agreement for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle and the Giant Garter Snake for Landowners Restoring, Enhancing or Managing Native Riparian and Wetland Habitats in Yolo County, CA

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the National Audubon Society, Inc., doing business in California as Audubon California (Applicant) has applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for an enhancement of survival permit pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). The permit application includes a proposed Safe Harbor Agreement (Agreement) between the Applicant and the Service for the threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*) and/or the giant garter snake (GGS) (*Thamnopsis gigas*). The Agreement and permit application are available for public comment.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before September 13, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Shannon Holbrook, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, 2800 Cottage Way, W-2605, Sacramento, California 95825. Written comments may be sent by facsimile to (916) 414-6712.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Shannon Holbrook, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**); telephone: (916) 414-6600.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Availability of Documents

You may obtain copies of the documents for review by contacting the individual named above. You may also make an appointment to view the documents at the above address during normal business hours.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment

to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Background

Under a Safe Harbor Agreement, participating landowners voluntarily undertake management activities on their property to enhance, restore, or maintain habitat benefiting species listed under the Act. Safe Harbor Agreements, and the subsequent enhancement of survival permits that are issued pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), encourage private and other non-Federal property owners to implement conservation efforts for listed species by assuring property owners that they will not be subjected to increased land use restrictions as a result of efforts to attract or increase the numbers or distribution of a listed species on their property. Application requirements and issuance criteria for enhancement of survival permits through Safe Harbor Agreements are found in 50 CFR 17.22(c).

We have worked with the Applicant to develop this proposed Programmatic Agreement for the conservation of the VELB and the GGS in Yolo County, California. The properties subject to this Agreement consist of approximately 200,000 acres of non-Federal properties within the boundaries of Yolo County, on which habitat for the VELB and/or GGS will be restored, enhanced, and managed pursuant to a written agreement between Audubon California and a property owner.

This Agreement provides for the creation of a Program in which private landowners (Program Participants) enter into written cooperative agreements with the Applicant pursuant to the terms of the Agreement, to restore, enhance, and maintain riparian and wetland habitat in ways beneficial to the VELB and/or GGS. Such cooperative agreements will be for a term of at least 10 years. The proposed duration of the Agreement is 30 years, and the proposed term of the enhancement of survival permit is 30 years. The Agreement fully describes the proposed management activities to be undertaken by Program Participants and the conservation benefits expected to be gained for the VELB and GGS.

Upon approval of this Agreement, and consistent with the Service's Safe Harbor Policy published in the **Federal Register** on June 17, 1999 (64 FR 32717), the Service would issue a permit to Audubon California authorizing take of VELB and GGS by Program Participants incidental to the implementation of the