

Permit No. TE-062121

Applicant: Ryan Young, Carlsbad, California.

The permittee requests an amendment to take (harass by survey) the Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*), the longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), the Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus wootoni*), the San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*), the vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*), and to take (survey by pursuit) the Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) in conjunction with surveys throughout the range of each species in California for the purpose of enhancing their survival.

Permit No. TE-068799

Applicant: Mikael Romich, San Bernardino, California.

The permittee requests an amendment to take (monitor nests, video monitor, and band) the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) in conjunction with demographic studies in Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and Ventura Counties, California, for the purpose of enhancing its survival.

We solicit public review and comment on each of these recovery permit applications.

Dated: November 13, 2003.

Cynthia U. Barry,

Acting Deputy Regional Director, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 03-29870 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

[AK-931-1310-DQ-NPRA]

Notice of Availability of the Northwest National Petroleum Reserve—Alaska Final Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Northwest National Petroleum Reserve—Alaska (NPR-A) Final Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) will be made available to the public for a 30-day period beginning on the date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) files a Notice of Availability of the Final IAP/EIS in the **Federal Register**. The EPA notice is expected to be filed on or about

November 28, 2003. A Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued after the 30-day availability period. The ROD will identify the selected alternative as well as mitigation measures.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has worked closely with the North Slope Borough and the State of Alaska in developing the Final IAP/EIS. The Minerals Management Service of the Department of the Interior has also assisted the BLM in developing the document.

ADDRESSES: The Final IAP/EIS will be available in either hard copy or on compact disk at the Alaska State Office, Public Information Center at 222 West 7th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599. Copies of the Final IAP/EIS will also be available at the following locations: Tuzzy Public Library, Barrow, Alaska; City of Nuiqsut, Nuiqsut, Alaska; City of Atkasuk, Atkasuk, Alaska; City of Anaktuvuk, Pass, Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska; City of Wainwright, Wainwright, Alaska; and City of Point Lay, Point Lay, Alaska.

The Final IAP/EIS will also be available on BLM's Web site at <http://www.ak.blm.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Curt Wilson, BLM Alaska State Office, (907) 271-5546.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Planning Area boundary encompasses approximately 9.4 million acres located in the northwestern portion of the NPR-A. Within the 9.4 million acre Planning Area are approximately 8.8 million acres of federal surface and 9.1 million acres of federal subsurface estate. The Planning Area is roughly bounded on the east by the Ikpikpuk River. The southern boundary extends along a portion of the Colville River and then proceeds along township and section lines in a "stair-step" fashion to the northwestern corner of the NPR-A at Icy Cape on the Arctic Ocean. The northern boundary from Icy Cape to the mouth of the Ikpikpuk River follows the Arctic Ocean coastline encompassing the bays, lagoons, inlets, and tidal waters between the NPR-A's outlying islands and the mainland. The Final IAP/EIS addresses three primary questions regarding management of the Northwest portion of the NPR-A. First, what lands, if any, will be made available for oil and gas leasing? Second, what measures will BLM use to protect important surface resources during oil and gas exploration and development activities? Third, what non-oil and gas land use allocations should BLM consider for the Northwest portion of the NPR-A?

The release of the Final IAP/EIS concludes a planning and

environmental analysis process for the Northwest portion of the NPR-A which started in November, 2002. A Draft IAP/EIS was made available for a 60-day comment period on January 17, 2003. Scoping and comment meetings on the Draft IAP/EIS were held in Nuiqsut, Atkasuk, Barrow, Wainwright, Point Lay, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. The Planning Area provides particularly important habitat for caribou, waterfowl, and other species. Many of the local residents of the area rely on harvesting these resources for subsistence purposes. Ensuring adequate protection of these resources has been one of the main focuses of public comment. The BLM held public hearings on subsistence in conjunction with the public meetings held on the Draft IAP/EIS.

The Final IAP/EIS describes the Preferred Alternative which was developed in consideration of more than 96,000 public comments on the four alternatives included in the Draft IAP/EIS. All the significant elements of the Preferred Alternative were included in one or more of the alternatives presented in the Draft IAP/EIS.

Under the Preferred Alternative, all 9.1 million acres of BLM administered subsurface estate within the Planning Area would be available for oil and gas leasing. No areas would be recommended as Wilderness Study Areas or Wild and Scenic Rivers. Leasing, however, would be deferred for 10 years in the western portion of the Planning Area, which encompasses approximately 1,570,000 acres. The Preferred Alternative also recommends the Kasegaluk Lagoon and adjacent lands for designation as a Special Area and prohibits permanent oil and gas facilities within this 102,000-acre proposed Special Area. Under the Preferred Alternative, setbacks have been established prohibiting permanent facilities within 1/4 to 1 mile along major rivers, deep water lakes and coastal areas to protect subsistence resources/activities and other important surface resources. Multi-year studies are required prior to development to protect spectacled and Steller's eiders, yellow-billed loons, brant and caribou. Other stipulations and required operating procedures establish restrictions and guidance that apply to waste prevention and spills, water use, winter overland moves and seismic activity, exploratory drilling, aircraft use and subsistence consultation.

The no action alternative calls for continuation of current management, and no leasing would occur. Alternatives A through C make progressively less land, especially

environmentally sensitive land, available for oil and gas leasing. Alternative A makes 100 percent available for oil and gas leasing, Alternative B makes 96 percent available, and Alternative C makes 47 percent available. Stipulations would provide protection for natural and cultural resources under all alternatives, but their nature, number and scope varies between the alternatives.

Authority for developing this document is derived from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976, as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Henri R. Bisson,
State Director, Alaska.

[FR Doc. 03-30035 Filed 11-26-03; 4:43 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-027-1610-PG; G-04-0036]

Notice of Public Meetings, Steens Mountain Advisory Council

AGENCY: Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Burns District Office.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings for the Steens Mountain Advisory Council.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Steens Act), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC) will meet as indicated below:

DATES: The SMAC will meet at the BLM, Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, on February 17, 18 and 19; April 12 and 13, 2004; June 14 and 15, 2004; August 9 and 10, 2004; and November 15 and 16, 2004. A meeting in Bend, Oregon, (location to be determined) will be held on May 10 and 11, 2004 and one in Frenchglen, Oregon, on September 13 and 14, 2004. All meeting sessions will begin at 8 a.m., local time, and will end at approximately 4:30 p.m., local time.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SMAC was appointed by the Secretary of Interior on August 14, 2001 pursuant to the Steens Act and re-chartered in August 2003. The SMAC's purpose is to provide representative counsel and advice to the BLM regarding (1) new

and unique approaches to management of the land within the bounds of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA), (2) cooperative programs and incentives for landscape management that meet human needs, maintain and improve the ecological and economic integrity of the area and (3) preparation and implementation of a management plan for the CMPA.

Topics to be discussed by the SMAC at these meetings include categories such as transportation, recreation/public use, wildlife, special designated areas, partnerships/programs, cultural resources, watersheds, projects, education, volunteer-based information, adaptive management, planning process (Andrews Management Unit/Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement), science committee/consultants, socioeconomics, and other matters that may reasonably come before the SMAC.

All meetings are open to the public in their entirety. Information to be distributed to the SMAC is requested at least 10 days prior to the start of each SMAC meeting. Public comment is generally scheduled for 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., local time, both days of each meeting session. The amount of time scheduled for public presentations and meeting times may be extended when the authorized representative considers it necessary to accommodate all who seek to be heard regarding matters on the agenda.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Additional information concerning the SMAC may be obtained from Rhonda Karges, Management Support Specialist, Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, (541) 573-4400 or Rhonda_Karges@or.blm.gov or from the following Web site: <http://www.or.blm.gov/Steens>.

Dated: November 24, 2003.

Karla Bird,

Andrews Resource Area Field Manager.

[FR Doc. 03-29896 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Submitted for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of new information collection survey.

SUMMARY: To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), we are notifying the public that we have submitted to OMB an information collection request (ICR) to conduct a new survey on Potential Impacts of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Activities on Bowhead Whale Hunting Activities in the Beaufort Sea. This notice also provides the public a second opportunity to comment on the paperwork burden of these regulatory requirements.

DATES: Submit written comments by January 2, 2004.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments either by fax (202) 395-6566 or email (OIRA_DOCKET@omb.eop.gov) directly to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior (1010-NEW). Mail or hand carry a copy of your comments to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Attention: Rules Processing Team; Mail Stop 4024; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817. If you wish to e-mail your comments to MMS, the address is: rules.comments@mms.gov. Reference Information Collection 1010-NEW in your subject line and mark your message for return receipt. Include your name and return address in your message text.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Arlene Bajusz, Rules Processing Team, at (703) 787-1600, to obtain a copy of the survey instruments. For more information on the survey itself, contact Dr. Dee Williams in the MMS Alaska Regional Office, at (907) 271-6680.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Survey Instruments—Quantitative Description of Potential Impacts of OCS Activities on Bowhead Whale Hunting Activities in the Beaufort Sea.

OMB Control Number: 1010-NEW.

Abstract: The Minerals Management Service (MMS) of the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI) is responsible for oil and gas leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) under the OCS Lands Act of 1953, the OCS Lands Act Amendments of 1978 (OCSLA), and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. OCSLA (Section 18) and NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508) require assessment of the effects of OCS oil and gas activities on adjacent human and physical environments. Therefore, USDOI/MMS acquires and analyzes and/or oversees collection and analysis of environmental, socio-economic, and