

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Notice of Availability of the Draft Recovery Plan for the Chiricahua Leopard Frog**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability of the Draft Recovery Plan for the Chiricahua Leopard Frog (Draft Recovery Plan) for public review. The species occurs in montane and river valley cienegas, springs, pools, cattle tanks, reservoirs, streams, and rivers in central and southeastern Arizona, west-central and southwestern New Mexico, and the sky islands and Sierra Madre Occidental of northeastern Sonora and western Chihuahua, Mexico, at elevations of approximately 3,000–9,000 feet. The Draft Recovery Plan recommends actions to lessen and alleviate threats to the species, and presents objective and measurable delisting criteria. The Service solicits review and comment from the public on this Draft Recovery Plan.

DATES: The comment period for this Draft Recovery Plan closes June 12, 2006. Comments on the Draft Recovery Plan must be received by the closing date to assure consideration.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the Draft Recovery Plan can obtain a copy from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Ecological Services Field Office, 2321 W. Royal Palm Road, Suite 103, Phoenix, Arizona 85021. The Draft Recovery Plan may also be obtained from the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/Endangered> (type "Chiricahua leopard frog" in the Species search field). Comments and materials concerning this Draft Recovery Plan may be mailed to "Field Supervisor" at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Rorabaugh, Arizona Ecological Services Field Office, at the above address; telephone (602) 242-0210, facsimile (602) 242-2513.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

The Chiricahua leopard frog (*Rana chiricahuensis*) was listed as threatened on June 13, 2002, under authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (67 FR 40790). The range of the Chiricahua leopard frog (*Rana chiricahuensis*) is divided into two parts, including—(1) A southern group of populations (the majority of the

species' range) located in mountains and valleys south of the Gila River in southeastern Arizona, extreme southwestern New Mexico, and Mexico; and (2) northern montane populations in west central New Mexico and along the Mogollon Rim in central and eastern Arizona. The distribution and status of the species in Mexico is not well understood. The threats facing the survival and recovery of this species include predation by non-native fish, amphibians, and crayfish; the fungal disease chytridiomycosis; climatic extremes (e.g., drought, floods); degradation and loss of habitat as a result of water diversions, groundwater pumping, catastrophic fire, mining, and some livestock management; disruption of metapopulation dynamics; increased chance of extinction resulting from small populations; and possibly environmental contamination.

The delisting criteria proposed in the Draft Plan recommend that the Chiricahua leopard frog should be considered for delisting when: (1) At least two metapopulations located in different drainages plus at least one isolated and robust population in each of eight recovery units exhibit long-term persistence and stability; (2) aquatic breeding habitats are protected; (3) additional habitat needed for population connectivity, recolonization, and dispersal is protected and managed; and (4) threats and causes of decline have been reduced or eliminated, and commitments of long-term management are in place in each recovery unit. High-priority recovery tasks to lessen and alleviate these threats include actions to protect remaining populations and habitat; restore unoccupied habitats and create new habitat; establish new populations and augment existing populations; monitor; and develop conservation efforts on private, public, and tribal land, and in Mexico.

Restoring an endangered or threatened animal or plant to the point where it is again a secure, self-sustaining member of its ecosystem is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of species, establish criteria for downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species, unless

such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service considers all information presented during a public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. The Service and others also take these comments into account in the course of implementing recovery plans.

The Chiricahua Leopard Frog Draft Recovery Plan is being submitted for review to all interested parties, including independent peer review. After consideration of comments received during the review period, the recovery plan will be submitted for final approval.

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 recovery plan.

Authority

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

Dated: March 15, 2006.

Benjamin N. Tuggle,

Acting Regional Director, Southwest Region, Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Indian Affairs****Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Proposed 151.87 Acre Fee-to-Trust Transfer, Reservation Proclamation and Casino-Resort Project, Clark County, Washington**

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as lead agency, with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe (Tribe), National Indian Gaming Commission, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington Department of Transportation, Clark County, Clark County Sheriff's Office, Cowlitz County, City of La Center, City of Vancouver, City of Ridgefield, Port of

Ridgefield, City of Woodland, and City of Battle Ground as cooperating agencies, intends to file a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) with the EPA for the proposed 151.87 acre fee-to-trust transfer, reservation proclamation, and casino-resort complex construction. This notice also announces two public hearings to receive comments on the DEIS.

DATES: Written comments on the DEIS must arrive by July 14, 2006. The public hearings will be held June 14 and 15, 2006, starting at 6 p.m. and continuing until the last public comment is received.

ADDRESSES: You may mail or hand carry written comments to Stanley Speaks, Director, Northwest Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 911 NE 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97232.

Both public hearings will be held at the Skyview High School, 1300 NW 139th Street, Vancouver, Washington 98685. The BIA will be hosting these hearings.

The DEIS is available for public review at the following branches of the Ft. Vancouver Public Library: La Center Community Library, 1402 E. Lockwood Creek Road, La Center, Washington 98629; and Ridgefield Community Library, 210 North Main Avenue, Ridgefield, Washington 98642. General information for the Ft. Vancouver Public Library system can be obtained by calling (360) 695-1561. The DEIS is also available on the following Web sites: <http://analyticalcorp.com/> and <http://www.cowlitz.org/>.

If you would like to obtain a copy of the DEIS, please write to Chuck James, Acting Regional Environmental Protection Specialist, at the address provided above for the Northwest Region, or call him at the number provided below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chuck James, (530) 231-6229.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Tribe has requested that the BIA take 151.87 acres of land into trust on behalf of the Tribe, for which the BIA would issue a reservation proclamation and on which the Tribe proposes to develop a casino-resort complex. The proposed project site encompasses eight contiguous tax lots in Clark County, Washington, near the cities of La Center and Ridgefield. The project site is located along NW 319th Street between NW 41st Avenue and NW 31st Avenue, and adjacent to Interstate 5 (I-5) at the NW 319th Street Interchange (the La Center Interchange).

The proposed casino-resort complex would include an RV park, wastewater treatment plant, Tribal offices, a cultural center and Tribal elder housing.

Regional access to the project site would continue to be via I-5. The NW 319th Street would provide primary access to local housing to the west of the site and to the casino-resort complex. It would, however, be re-routed to a more southerly location within the proposed project site to allow development of the casino and hotel facilities north of NW 319th Street, without encroachment into wetlands and wetland buffer areas.

A range of project alternatives is considered in the DEIS, including: (1) Proposed casino-resort complex; (2) proposed casino-resort complex without re-routing NW 319th Street; (3) reduced intensity; (4) business park; (5) casino-resort complex at the Ridgefield Interchange Site; and (6) no action. Environmental issues to be addressed in the DEIS include geology and soils, water resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural and paleontological resources, socioeconomic conditions (including environmental justice), transportation and circulation, land use, public services, noise, hazardous materials, aesthetics, cumulative effects, indirect effects and mitigation.

The BIA held a public scoping meeting on the project on December 1, 2004 in Vancouver, Washington.

Public Comment Availability

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the BIA address shown in the **ADDRESSES** section, during business hours, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by the law. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Authority

This notice is published in accordance with section 1503.1 of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508) implementing the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and the Department of the Interior Manual (516 DM 1-6), and is in the exercise of

authority delegated to the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs by 209 DM 8.

Dated: March 27, 2006.

Michael D. Olsen,

Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-050-1020-MJ; HAG 06 0105]

John Day/Snake Resource Advisory Council: Notice of Public Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Prineville District.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meetings—John Day/Snake Resource Advisory Council (RAC).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the Department of the Interior, BLM John Day Snake RAC will meet as indicated below:

The John Day/Snake RAC is scheduled to meet on May 3, 2006, at the Best Western Prineville Inn, 1475 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754 and on September 13, 2006 at the Best Western John Day Inn, 315 W. Main, John Day, Oregon 97845. The meeting times will be from approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A public comment period will begin at 1 p.m. and end at 1:15 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time). The meetings may include such topics as off-highway vehicle and travel management, noxious weeds, planning, Sage grouse, and other matters as may reasonably come before the council.

Meeting Procedures: The meeting is open to the public. The public may present written comments to the RAC. Depending on the number of persons wishing to provide oral comments and agenda topics to be covered, the time to do so may be limited. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance such as sign language interpretation, tour transportation or other reasonable accommodations, should contact the BLM representative indicated below. For a copy of the information to be distributed to the RAC members, please submit a written request to the BLM Prineville District Office 10 days prior to the meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information concerning the John Day/Snake RAC may be obtained from Virginia Gibbons, BLM Public Affairs Specialist, Prineville District