

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Recovery of endangered or threatened animals or plants is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. A species is considered recovered when the species' ecosystem is restored and/or threats to the species are removed so that self-sustaining and self-regulating populations of the species can be supported as persistent members of native biotic communities. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for delisting listed species, and estimate time and cost for implementing the measures needed for recovery.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, requires that recovery plans be developed 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 during recovery plan development, we provide public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment. Information presented during the comment period has been considered in the preparation of the approved recovery plan, and is summarized in an appendix to the recovery plan. We will forward substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation to appropriate Federal agencies and other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions.

The Mead's milkweed was listed as a threatened species under the Act on September 1, 1988 (53 FR 33982). The Mead's milkweed is currently known to persist in eastern Kansas, Missouri, south-central Iowa, and southern Illinois. Populations no longer occur in Wisconsin and Indiana. Seventy-five percent of the Mead's milkweed populations are in the Osage Plains Physiographic Region in Kansas and Missouri. The remainder of the populations occur in the Shawnee Hills of Illinois; the Southern Iowa Drift Plain in Iowa; the Glaciated Plains, Ozark Border, Ozark Springfield Plateau, the Ozark-St. Francois Mountains, Missouri; and the Glaciated Physiographic Region of Kansas. Mead's milkweed populations have been eliminated by wide-scale agriculture in the eastern part of the species' range. Many large populations occur in private hay meadows where a century of annual mowing has severely reduced genetic diversity by preventing sexual reproduction. Among the surviving populations in eastern Missouri,

Illinois, and Iowa, most consist of a few genetically invariant clones that are incapable of reproduction. Population restoration efforts are being made in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin by introducing Mead's milkweed into suitable habitat.

The objective of this plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of the Mead's milkweed so that protection by the Act is no longer necessary. As recovery criteria are met, the status of the species will be reviewed and it will be considered for removal from the list of Endangered and Threatened Plants (50 CFR part 17). The Mead's milkweed will be considered for delisting when 21 populations are distributed across plant communities and physiographic regions within the historic range of the species, each of these 21 populations is highly viable, and monitoring indicates that these populations have had a stable or increasing trend for 15 years. A highly viable population has the following characteristics: more than 50 mature plants; seed production; increase in size and maturity; genetically diverse with more than 50 genotypes; 125 acres (50 hectares) or more of late-successional habitat; habitat protection through long-term conservation easements, legal dedication as a nature preserve, or other means; and habitat management by fire in order to maintain a late-successional graminoid vegetation structure that is free of woody vegetation.

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

Dated: August 21, 2003.

Charles M. Wooley,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[Investigations Nos. 731-TA-1048-1053 (Preliminary)]

Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide from Australia, China, Greece, Ireland, Japan, and South Africa

Determinations

On the basis of the record¹ developed in the subject investigations, the United States International Trade Commission (Commission) determines, pursuant to section 733(a) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1673b(a)) (the Act), that there

is a reasonable indication that an industry in the United States is materially injured by reason of imports from Australia, Greece, Ireland, Japan, and South Africa of electrolytic manganese dioxide, provided for in subheading 2820.10.00 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, that are alleged to be sold in the United States at less than fair value (LTFV). The Commission has determined that U.S. imports from China are negligible.

Commencement of Final Phase Investigations

Pursuant to § 207.18 of the Commission's rules, the Commission also gives notice of the commencement of the final phase of its investigations. The Commission will issue a final phase notice of scheduling, which will be published in the **Federal Register** as provided in § 207.21 of the Commission's rules, upon notice from the Department of Commerce (Commerce) of affirmative preliminary determinations in the investigations under section 733(b) of the Act, or, if the preliminary determinations are negative, upon notice of affirmative final determinations in those investigations under section 735(a) of the Act. Parties that filed entries of appearance in the preliminary phase of the investigations need not enter a separate appearance for the final phase of the investigations. Industrial users, and, if the merchandise under investigation is sold at the retail level, representative consumer organizations have the right to appear as parties in Commission antidumping and countervailing duty investigations. The Secretary will prepare a public service list containing the names and addresses of all persons, or their representatives, who are parties to the investigations.

Background

On July 31, 2003, a petition was filed with the Commission and Commerce by Kerr-McGee Chemical, LLC, Oklahoma City, OK, alleging that an industry in the United States is materially injured or threatened with material injury by reason of LTFV imports of electrolytic manganese dioxide from Australia, China, Greece, Ireland, Japan, and South Africa. Accordingly, effective July 31, 2003, the Commission instituted antidumping duty investigations Nos. 731-TA-1048-1053 (Preliminary).

Notice of the institution of the Commission's investigations and of a public conference to be held in connection therewith was given by posting copies of the notice in the Office of the Secretary, U.S. International

¹ The record is defined in § 207.2(f) of the Commission's rules of practice and procedure (19 CFR 207.2(f)).

Trade Commission, Washington, DC, and by publishing the notice in the **Federal Register** of August 11, 2003 (68 FR 47607). The conference was held in Washington, DC, on August 21, 2003, and all persons who requested the opportunity were permitted to appear in person or by counsel.

The Commission transmitted its determinations in these investigations to the Secretary of Commerce on September 15, 2003. The views of the Commission are contained in USITC Publication 3633 (September 2003), entitled *Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide* from Australia, China, Greece, Ireland, Japan, and South Africa: Investigations Nos. 731-TA-1048-1053 (Preliminary).

By order of the Commission.

Issued: September 15, 2003.

Marilyn R. Abbott,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-24095 Filed 9-18-03; 12:01 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of the Chief Financial Officer; Extension of Information Collection; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden conducts as preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data could be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer is soliciting comments concerning the proposed *extension* of Department of Labor regulations implementing various provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97-365), including Disclosure of Information to Credit Reporting Agencies; Administrative Offset; Interest, Penalties and Administrative Costs.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addressee section below on or before November 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments concerning this notice to Thomas Stein, Department of Labor, Room S-4214 Frances Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Ave. NW., Washington, D.C. 20210; 202-693-6832 (phone); 202-693-6964 (fax); *stein.thomas@dol.gov* (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Debt Collection Act of 1982, the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-134), and the Federal Claims Collections Standards, as implemented in the Department of Labor by 29 CFR Part 20, require Federal agencies to afford debtors the opportunity to exercise certain rights before the agency reports a debt to a credit bureau or makes an administrative offset. In the exercise of these rights, the debtor may be asked to provide a written explanation of the basis for disputing the amount of existence of a debt alleged owned the agency. A debtor may also be required to provide asset, income, liability, or other information necessary for the agency to determine the debtor's ability to repay the debt, including any interest, penalties and administrative costs assessed.

Information provided by the debtor will be evaluated by the agency official responsible for collection of the debt in order to reconsider his/her initial decision with regard to the existence or amount of the debt. Information concerning the debtor's assets, income, liabilities, etc., will be used by the agency official responsible for collection of the debt to determine whether the agency's action with regard to administrative offset or the assessment of interest, administrative costs or penalties would create undue financial hardship for the debtor, or to determine whether the agency should accept the debtor's proposed repayment schedule.

If a debtor disputes or asks for reconsideration of the agency's determination concerning the debt, the debtor will be required to provide the information or documentation necessary to state his/her case. Presumably, the agency's initial determination would not change without the submission of new information.

Information such as the debtor's assets, income, and liabilities would typically not be available to the agency unless submitted by the debtor.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Department of Labor is particularly interested in comments which:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

III. Current Actions

Failure of the agency to request the information described would either violate the debtor's rights under the Debt Collection Act of 1982 or limit the agency's ability to collect outstanding debts.

If a debtor wishes to appeal an agency action based on undue financial hardship, he/she may be asked to submit information on his/her assets, income, liabilities, or other information considered necessary by the agency official for evaluating the appeal. Use of the information will be explained to the debtor when it is requested; consent to use the information for the specified purpose will be implied from the debtor's submission of the information.

IV. *Type of Review:* Extension without change.

V. *Agency:* Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

VI. *Title:* Disclosure of Information to Credit Reporting Agencies; Administrative Offset; Interest penalties and Administrative Costs.

VII. *OMB Number:* 1225-0030.

VIII. *Affected Public:* Individuals or households; businesses or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions; small businesses or organizations; farms; Federal employees.

IX. *Cite/Reference/Form/etc:* It is estimated that 10% of the individuals and organizations indebted to the Department will contest the proposed collection action and will request an administrative review and/or appeal an action based on undue financial hardship. In some cases the debtor will make one request, but not the other. However, in most cases, it is expected that the debtor will request both actions—first, administrative review of