

Supplemental EIS. Several libraries along the Gulf Coast have been sent copies of the Final Supplemental EIS. To find out the location of libraries that have copies of the Final Supplemental EIS, you may contact BOEM's Public Information Office or visit BOEM's Internet Web site at <http://www.gomr.boem.gov/homepg/regulate/enviro/libraries.html>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For more information on the Final Supplemental EIS, you may contact Mr. Gary D. Goeke, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard (MS 5410), New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394, or by email at [CPASupplementalEIS@boem.gov](mailto:CPASupplementalEIS@boem.gov). You may also contact Mr. Goeke by telephone at (504) 736-3233.

Dated: January 3, 2012.

**Tommy P. Beaudreau,**  
Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy  
Management.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R1-R-2009-N231; 1265-0000-10137-S3]

#### **Columbia National Wildlife Refuge, Adams and Grant Counties, WA; Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Finding of No Significant Impact for Environmental Assessment**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce the availability of our final comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and a finding of no significant impact for the environmental assessment for Columbia National Wildlife Refuge (NWR/refuge). In this final CCP, we describe how we will manage this refuge for the next 15 years. Implementation of the CCP is subject to the availability of funding and any additional compliance requirements.

**ADDRESSES:** You may view or obtain copies of the final CCP and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and environmental assessment (EA) by any of the following methods. You may request a hard copy or CD-ROM.

*Refuge Web Site:* Download a copy of the document(s) at [www.fws.gov/columbia/management.html](http://www.fws.gov/columbia/management.html).

*Email:* [mcriver@fws.gov](mailto:mcriver@fws.gov). Include "Columbia NWR Final CCP" in the subject line of the message.

*Mail:* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Columbia NWR Final CCP, 64 Maple Street, Burbank, WA 99323.

*In-Person Viewing or Pickup:* Call (509) 546-8333 to make an appointment during regular business hours at the address above.

*Local Library:* The document is also available for review at the library listed under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kelly Chase, Refuge Manager, (509) 488-2668 (phone); [mcriver@fws.gov](mailto:mcriver@fws.gov) (email).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Introduction**

With this notice, we announce the completion of the CCP process for Columbia NWR. We started this process through a notice in the **Federal Register** (74 FR 25576; May 28, 2009). We released the draft CCP/EA to the public, announcing and requesting comments in a notice of availability in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 45600; July 29, 2011).

We announce our CCP decision and the availability of a FONSI for Columbia NWR in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee) (Refuge Administration Act) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1506.6(b)) requirements. We prepared an analysis of environmental impacts, which we included in the EA that accompanied the draft CCP.

The CCP will guide us in managing and administering Columbia NWR for the next 15 years. The selected alternative, as described in the final CCP, is a combination of actions from alternatives 2 and 3 in the draft CCP and is the basis for management direction.

##### **Background**

The Refuge Administration Act, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires us to develop a CCP for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose for developing a CCP is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year plan for achieving refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, conservation, legal mandates, and our policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, CCPs identify compatible wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public,

including opportunities for compatible hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. We will review and update the CCP at least every 15 years in accordance with the Refuge Administration Act.

#### **Comments**

We solicited comments on the draft CCP/EA for the refuge from July 29, 2011, to August 29, 2011 (76 FR 45600). All letters and comments received were thoroughly evaluated and considered in the selection of a final alternative. The only change to the alternatives in the draft CCP was modifying the overnight closure of Morgan Lake Road to allow for access starting 1½ hours before legal hunting time and ending 1½ hours after legal hunting time during State hunting seasons.

#### **Selected Alternative**

All actions in the selected alternative are subject to available funding and any other compliance requirements. Under the selected alternative, refuge management will continue much as is, consistent with available funding and staffing, except that 175 acres of emergent marsh wetlands in Marsh Unit III will be converted to riparian habitat, with other wetlands to potentially follow based on the success of the first conversion. The Crab Creek channel will be restored, and stream restoration will be a priority to provide for steelhead and redband trout and improve riparian areas for migrating neotropical birds. Specialized habitats (e.g., rock outcroppings) will receive more planned attention. Grasslands will be maintained to provide for species like the long-billed curlew, and cooperative farming agreements will continue to provide green forage and grains for geese, waterfowl, and Sandhill cranes, while emphasizing low-impact techniques. Habitats will be maintained and protected for loggerhead shrikes, sagebrush lizards, and a variety of raptors. Management of State and Federal species of concern will be emphasized. Refuge lands will continue to be managed using a mix of natural processes and substantial management intervention. For example, many wetland areas are allowed to follow natural succession—although noxious weed control, prescribed fire, and other maintenance actions are undertaken—but several moist soil management areas require water level manipulation, dike maintenance, extensive soil preparation, planting, and other treatments. Land transfers will be pursued to provide continuous blocks of habitats and simplify management.

Public use will be a blend of active and passive. Horseback riding and bicycling will continue, but camping will be eliminated. The Soda Lake Campground will be converted to day-use facilities, and the area around the Bluebird Campground will be available by permit for day use as an educational site. Morgan Lake Road will be closed to overnight travel. Facilities with increased accessibility will be developed to promote compatible hunting and fishing. Waterfowl and big game hunting opportunities will be expanded by opening new areas; providing for additional hunting weapons; and implementing additional youth hunt days, areas, and seasons. The waterfowl hunting lottery will be discontinued in favor of first-come, first-served hunting. A new hiking and interpretive trail will be developed within the Drumheller Channel National Natural Landmark in cooperation with the National Park Service. Seasonal and permanent wildlife observation blinds will be provided. New interpretive and educational programs and brochures will be developed, with an emphasis on building the volunteer program to manage them. The Sandhill Crane Festival will remain a priority. Fish stocking by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will continue, with an approved fisheries management plan, but will be discontinued in lakes where there is the highest likelihood of success for northern leopard frog recovery.

Step-down plans on informational and interpretive signs, cultural resource management, habitat management, and other management areas related to the goals and objectives in this CCP will be developed. Water rights and/or agreements will be pursued to ensure the availability of water for moist soil management.

#### Public Availability of Documents

In addition to the methods in **ADDRESSES**, you can view or obtain documents at the following locations:

- *Agency Web Site:* [www.fws.gov/pacific/planning/](http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning/).
- *Public Library:* Othello Branch of Mid-Columbia Libraries, 101 East Main Street, Othello, WA 99344; (509) 488-9683.

Dated: November 17, 2011.

**Michael Carrier,**

*Acting Regional Director, Pacific Region, Portland, Oregon.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R2-ES-2011-N254;  
FXES1112020000F2-112-FF02ENEH00]

#### Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision on Oncor Electric Delivery Company's Habitat Conservation Plan for 100 Texas Counties

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, make available the final environmental impact statement (EIS), and final record of decision under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 analyzing the impacts of the issuance of an incidental take permit for implementation of the final Oncor Electric Delivery LLC's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Our decision is to issue a 30-year incidental take permit to Oncor for implementation of the preferred alternative (described below), which authorizes incidental take of animal species and impacts to plant species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Oncor has agreed to implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to offset impacts to these species, as described in their HCP.

**DATES:** We will issue a final permit no sooner than 30 days after publication of this notice. Comments on the final EIS and HCP will be accepted until February 21, 2012.

**ADDRESSES:** For where to review documents and submit comments, see Reviewing Documents and Submitting Comments in **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Adam Zerrenner, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78758 or (512) 490-0057.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We, the Service, announce the availability of the final environmental impact statement (EIS) and record of decision (ROD), which we developed in compliance with the agency decision-making requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), as well as the final Oncor Electric Delivery LLC (Oncor) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) as submitted by the applicant. All alternatives have been described in detail, evaluated, and analyzed in our December 2011 final EIS and Oncor's

HCP. The ROD documents the rationale for our decision.

Based on our review of the alternatives and their environmental consequences as described in our final EIS, we have selected Alternative 1, the proposed HCP. The proposed action is to issue Oncor an incidental take permit (ITP) under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) that authorizes incidental take of animal species and impacts to plant species. The term of the permit is 30 years (2012–2042), and it would include the following species that are endangered and threatened (also referred to as “covered species”):

#### Endangered

Large-fruited sand-verbena (*Abronia macrocarpa*)  
Texas poppy-mallow (*Callirhoe scabriuscula*)  
Navasota ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes parksii*)  
American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*)  
Houston toad (*Bufo houstonensis*)  
Whooping crane (*Grus americana*)  
Golden-cheeked warbler (*Dendroica chrysoparia*)  
Black-capped vireo (*Vireo atricapilla*)  
Red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*)

#### Threatened

Pecos sunflower (*Helianthus paradoxus*)  
Louisiana black bear (*Ursus americanus luteolus*)

Take of listed plant species is not defined in the Act, although the Act does identify several prohibitions. However, because covered species in the Oncor HCP include both plants and animals, in the following discussion we use the term “incidental take” when discussing impacts to covered plants, as well as actual incidental take of covered animals.

Oncor will implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to offset impacts to covered species according to their HCP. For all but the whooping crane, impacts will be mitigated through purchase of mitigation credits from a Service-approved conservation bank, purchasing high-quality habitat near the impact area, or if purchase of land is not a viable mitigation option (e.g., mitigation necessary to offset impacts does not generate sufficient funds to purchase a reasonable amount of land to support the conservation of the species), additional options will be explored with the Service as described in the HCP. Within 1 mile of confirmed or potentially suitable stopover habitat for