

Middle and Inner Bair Island. The levees on Middle and Outer Bair Island would be breached and dredge material would be used to raise the elevation of Inner Bair Island to prevent increasing the bird strike issue for San Carlos Airport. Following dredge material placement, the Inner Bair Island levee would be breached restoring the historic meander of Smith Slough to prevent unacceptable tidal velocities at Pete's Harbor Marina. A flow restrictor would be installed in Corkscrew Slough to prevent increased sedimentation of the Redwood Creek Shipping Channel. Approximately 1,400 acres of tidal salt marsh would be restored more quickly than the No Action Alternative for the endangered California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse and other native wildlife.

A wildlife viewing platform with portage for small boats would be constructed at the flow restrictor in Corkscrew Slough. A 5 mph speed limit and no wake zone would be implemented in Smith and Corkscrew Slough to protect harbor seals and other sensitive wildlife. In addition to waterfowl hunting, Refuge guided trips would continue to be the only public access allowed on Outer and Middle Bair Island. On Inner Bair Island, 2.7 miles trails on the levee which would end at wildlife platforms adjacent to Smith Slough would replace the 3-mile loop trail. Pets (dogs only) would be allowed on the Inner Bair Island trails on a 6-foot leash for a test period to determine compliance with Refuge regulations designed to protect wildlife.

Alternative 2, the Tidal Marsh Restoration with Restricted Public Access Alternative, would be the same as the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1) except for the following: (1) No pets would be allowed on Inner Bair Island and the public access trail would be reduced to 1.8 miles on the levee to the north ending in one wildlife viewing platform on Smith Slough, and (2) there would be a seasonal closure to boating in Corkscrew Slough to protect harbor seals. Approximately 1,400 acres of tidal salt marsh would be restored more quickly than the No Action Alternative for the endangered California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse and other native wildlife.

Alternative 3, the Tidal and Managed Marsh Restoration with Moderate Public Access Alternative, would be the same as Alternative 1 except Inner Bair Island would not be restored to tidal salt marsh. Using water control structures, managed salt marsh would be created on Inner Bair Island, a flow restrictor would be built in Smith Slough to prevent an unacceptable increase in

tidal velocity at Pete's Harbor Marina and the slough would not be restored to its historic meander. Approximately 1,100 acres of tidal salt marsh would be restored on Outer and Middle Bair Island more quickly than the No Action Alternative for the endangered California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse and other native wildlife. Three hundred acres of managed salt marsh would be created on Inner Bair Island for the salt marsh harvest mouse but no habitat would be created for the endangered California clapper rail. Public use would be the same as Alternative 1.

Alternative 4, the Tidal and Managed Marsh Restoration with Restricted Public Access Alternative would be a mixture of Alternative 2 and Alternative 3. The restoration of 1,100 acres of tidal salt marsh and 300 acres of managed salt marsh on Inner Bair Island would be the same as Alternative 3. The restricted public access would be the same as Alternative 2.

The Service invites the public to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report during a 45-day public comment period. The Service will evaluate the comments submitted thereon to prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report. A decision will be made no sooner than 30 days after the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report.

This notice is provided pursuant to regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (40 CFR 1506.6)

Dated: August 13, 2004.

D. Kenneth McDermond,
*Acting Manager, California/Nevada
Operations Office.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AZ-049-1040-JH]

Second Call for Nominations for the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area (NCA) Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management,
Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Call for Nominations.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is publishing this Notice under Section 9(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act to

solicit public nominations for four members on the Gila Box Riparian NCA Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee was created through Title 2, Section 201, of the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 to provide informed advice to the Safford Field Manager on management of public lands in the Gila Box Riparian NCA in southeastern Arizona.

Any individual or organization may nominate one or more persons to serve on the Advisory Committee. Persons wishing to nominate themselves or other individuals should submit an application form, which is available from the BLM Safford Field Office or online at www.az.blm.gov in the News Release section. The application must include at least one letter of recommendation that addresses the nominee's qualifications.

DATES: Nominations and reference letters should be mailed to the BLM address on the application form, and must be received no later than September 30, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Wilbanks, BLM Safford Field Office, 711 14th Avenue, Safford, AZ 85546; call (928) 348-4573; or e-mail Jeff_Wilbanks@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: To ensure membership of the Advisory Committee is balanced in terms of categories of interest represented, nominees must be qualified to provide advice in specific areas related to the primary purposes for which the NCA was created. These include wildlife conservation, riparian ecology, hydrology, outdoor recreation, watershed management, environmental education, cultural resources, or other related disciplines. Committee members are selected by the Secretary of the Interior to serve staggered terms of one to three years, with terms beginning on the date of appointment. The Advisory Committee will meet 2-4 times each year. Members serve without salary, but are reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses at current rates for government employees.

Dated: July 15, 2004.

Bill Brandau,

Acting Field Manager.

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