

Barton Springs salamander, it will remain on the List under its current status. Information provided during this 5-year review could also affect the recommendations of the recovery plan for this species.

Public Comments and New Information Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the draft recovery plan described above. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of the recovery plan.

To ensure that the 5-year status review is complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial information, we are also soliciting new information from the public, concerned governmental agencies, Tribes, the scientific community, industry, environmental entities, and any other interested parties concerning the status of the Barton Springs salamander.

Comments on the draft recovery plan and information and/or materials for the 5-year review should be provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office (see **ADDRESSES** section). Information submitted should be supported by documentation such as maps, bibliographic references, methods used to gather and analyze the data, and/or copies of any pertinent publications, reports, or letters by knowledgeable sources. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Respondents may request that we withhold a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name or address, you must state this request prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. To the extent consistent with applicable law, we will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours (see **ADDRESSES** section).

Authority

This document is published under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: December 3, 2004.

H. Dale Hall,

Regional Director, Region 2, Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NM-030-04-1610-DR]

Notice of Availability of Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) for Federal Fluid Minerals Leasing and Development in Sierra and Otero Counties

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) management policies, the BLM announces the availability of the ROD/RMPA for Federal fluid minerals leasing and development in Sierra and Otero Counties, New Mexico. The New Mexico State Director has signed the ROD/RMPA, which amends the White Sands RMP.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the fluid minerals ROD/RMPA are available upon request from the Field Manager, Las Cruces Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 1800 Marquess St., Las Cruces, NM 88005 or via the Internet at <http://www.nm.blm.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Phillips, RMPA Team Leader/Land Use Planner, 1800 Marquess St., Las Cruces, NM 88005. Telephone number is (505) 525-4377, email address is Tom_Phillips@nm.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The fluid minerals RMPA was developed with broad public participation through a 6-year public planning process. This RMPA addresses management of the Federal fluid mineral resources on approximately 2.1 million acres of public lands in the planning area. The fluid minerals RMPA is designed to identify which lands under BLM jurisdiction in Sierra and Otero Counties will be made available for potential fluid mineral leasing, and what measures are needed to manage those lands and protect other resource values.

The approved fluid minerals RMPA is relatively unchanged from the proposed

plan in the Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMPA/FEIS), dated December 2003. In response to the PRMPA/FEIS, the Governor of New Mexico submitted a Consistency Review that recommended adopting an alternative plan he had developed. This alternative was similar to an alternative that was analyzed by the BLM in the draft and final environmental impact statements; therefore, the BLM determined it did not require an additional public comment period. The Governor's Consistency Review helped lead to the May 2004 PRMPA/FEIS Supplement that included the proposed closure of 35,790 acres to leasing. This closure was a change from the proposed plan in the PRMPA/FEIS where those acres were to be withheld from leasing for five years and re-evaluated. The BLM New Mexico State Director declined to accept the other recommendations made by the Governor, but replied with a written response addressing issues raised in the Consistency Review. Public comments on the supplement were taken for 30 days, and those comments have been considered and addressed in the ROD/RMPA.

The Governor appealed the State Director's decision not to fully adopt his alternative plan to the BLM Director. The BLM Director has issued a final response affirming the State Director's decision. All formal protests to the PRMPA/FEIS have also been resolved.

Minor modifications have been made to the proposed plan as set forth in the PRMPA/FEIS and Supplement. The modifications corrected errors noted in the review of the PRMPA/FEIS and provide further clarification regarding some of the decisions.

Linda S.C. Rundell,

State Director.

[FR Doc. 05-1316 Filed 1-24-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of BLM Director's Response to an Appeal From the Governor of New Mexico Regarding the Resource Management Plan Amendment for Federal Fluid Minerals Leasing and Development in Sierra and Otero Counties

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.