

Comment 11: The Service should take every action available to investigate and, where possible, mitigate the impact of infectious disease and should improve enforcement of the provisions of the MMPA that prevent the intentional shooting of marine mammals.

Response: We support and have provided funding for studies aimed at determining and mitigating the impact of infectious disease. We continue to investigate, and pursue actions in response to, intentional shooting of sea otters.

Comment 12: While section 118 of the MMPA does not govern the incidental taking of southern sea otters, the zero mortality rate goal (ZMRG) provisions in section 101 do apply to southern sea otters. The fact that the Service cannot make a status determination with respect to ZMRG confirms that ZMRG has not been achieved for sea otters and that the Service has not satisfied its requirements under the law. This failure strongly supports the need for [the Service] to aggressively place observers on fisheries that have the potential to take southern sea otters so that it can determine the status of the stock with respect to ZMRG.

Response: Please see our response to comment 4.

Comment 13: The SAR should provide additional discussion and references on the topic of food limitation and nutritional deficiency.

Response: We have included additional references in the final SAR and will expand our discussion as data become available.

Additional References Cited:

Bentall, G.B., 2005. Morphological and Behavioral Correlates of Population Status in the Southern Sea Otter: A Comparative Study Between Central California and San Nicolas Island. Masters Thesis, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, unpublished.

Hatfield, B.B., J.A. Ames, J.A. Estes, M.T. Tinker, A.B. Johnson, M.M. Staedler, and M.D. Harris. Manuscript in preparation. The potential for sea otter mortality in fish and shellfish traps. 22 pp. + appendices.

Authority: The authority for this action is the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et al.*).

Dated: December 17, 2008.

Kenneth Stansell,

Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. E8-31022 Filed 12-29-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R5-FHC-2008-N0336; 53330-1335-0000-J3]

Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey Control Alternatives Workgroup

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce a meeting of the Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey Control Alternatives Workgroup (Workgroup). The Workgroup's purpose is to provide, in an advisory capacity, recommendations and advice on research and implementation of sea lamprey control techniques alternative to lampricide that are technically feasible, cost effective, and environmentally safe. The primary objective of the meeting will be to discuss potential research initiatives that may enhance alternative sea lamprey control techniques. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The Workgroup will meet on Thursday February 5, 2009, from 5 to 8 p.m., with an alternate date of Thursday February 12, 2009, from 5 to 8 p.m., should the meeting need to be cancelled due to inclement weather. Any member of the public who wants to find out whether the meeting has been postponed may contact Stefi Flanders of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 802-872-0629 ext. 10 (telephone); or Stefi_Flanders@fws.gov (electronic mail) during regular business hours on the primary meeting date.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Ilsley Public Library, Jessica Swift Community Meeting Room, 75 Main Street, Middlebury, VT 05753; telephone 802-388-4095.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dave Tilton, Designated Federal Officer, Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey Control Alternatives Workgroup, Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Resources Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 11 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452 (U.S. mail); 802-872-0629 (telephone); or Dave_Tilton@fws.gov (electronic mail).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We publish this notice under section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.). The Workgroup's specific responsibilities are to provide advice regarding the implementation of sea lamprey control methods alternative to lampricides, to recommend priorities for research to be

conducted by cooperating organizations and demonstration projects to be developed and funded by State and Federal agencies, and to assist Federal and State agencies with the coordination of alternative sea lamprey control research to advance the state of the science in Lake Champlain and the Great Lakes.

Dated: December 5, 2008.

Wendi Weber,

Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. E8-31029 Filed 12-29-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R9-IA-2008-N0335; 96300-1671-0000-P5]

Receipt of Applications for Permit

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of applications for permit.

SUMMARY: The public is invited to comment on the following applications to conduct certain activities with endangered species.

DATES: Written data, comments or requests must be received by January 29, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Documents and other information submitted with these applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 212, Arlington, Virginia 22203; fax 703/358-2281.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Division of Management Authority, telephone 703/358-2104.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Endangered Species

The public is invited to comment on the following applications for a permit to conduct certain activities with endangered species. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). Written data, comments, or requests for copies of these complete applications should be submitted to the Director (address above).

PRT-197165

Applicant: University of Georgia,
College of Veterinary Medicine,
Athens, GA

The applicant requests a permit to import biological samples of green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) from Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, for the purpose of enhancement of the species through scientific research. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a five-year period.

PRT-199101

Applicant: Jene W. Mobley, Palmer, AK

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

PRT-198116

Applicant: Herb M.R. Rudolf, Bonita Springs, FL

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

PRT-199697

Applicant: Robert J. Jones, Clovis, CA

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

PRT-200275

Applicant: William S. Young, Dallas, TX

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

PRT-200419

Applicant: Eric T. Bond, Conroe, TX

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa,

for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Dated: December 5, 2008.

Lisa J. Lierheimer,

*Senior Permit Biologist, Branch of Permits,
Division of Management Authority.*

[FR Doc. E8-31012 Filed 12-29-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

[CA-340-08-1220-DD]

Notice of Order Closing Public Lands at the Knoxville Recreation Area, Lake County, CA, to Recreational and Target Shooting.

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 8364.1, an Order has been issued by the Ukiah Field Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), prohibiting recreational and target practice shooting on six (6) acres previously available for such shooting within the Knoxville Recreation Area. These six acres, managed by the Ukiah BLM Field Office, are located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ section 28, Township 12 North, Range 5 West, Mount Diablo Meridian. The BLM land base for the Knoxville Recreation Area is located in southeastern Lake, northern Napa, and northwestern Yolo counties, California. This shooting closure is necessary to protect persons, property, and public lands. An increase in visitors, coupled with housing/subdivision development of adjacent ranches, has led to a significant increase in documented cases where stray bullets have narrowly missed public land users, vehicles, and adjacent private buildings. This Closure Order does not apply to hunting under the laws and regulations of the State of California. Other BLM managed public lands of the Knoxville Recreation Area remain unavailable for shooting due to the lack of identified designated shooting areas as defined by the Ukiah Resource Management Plan (June 2006.)

DATES: This Order is effective upon publication.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rich Burns, Field Manager, BLM Ukiah Field Office, 2550 North State Street, Ukiah, California, 95482. Telephone: (707) 468-4000; Fax: (707) 468-4027, during regular business hours, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday except holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Knoxville Recreation Area is located in a remote region of northern California where Lake, Napa, and Yolo counties meet. The entire Knoxville region is approximately 35,000 acres of lands open to the public of which 11,000 acres are managed by the State of California Department of Fish and Game and 24,000 acres are managed by the BLM, Ukiah Field Office. The BLM-managed area is open to most types of recreational activities including motorized and non-motorized recreational pursuits. The Ukiah Resource Management Plan designated 5,236 acres as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern for botanical studies and research because the Knoxville region is considered a "hot spot" for plant evolution.

BLM has issued this shooting closure because of increased shooting pressures. The Ukiah Resource Management Plan limited shooting at the Knoxville Recreation Area to a designated six (6) acre site historically used for recreational shooting and target practicing. Since designation, the BLM Ukiah Field Office has been receiving an increasing number of public complaints from recreational users, researchers, and adjacent private property owners about near misses to people, animals, buildings, and equipment from stray bullets fired in, around, and from the designated shooting range. In addition, serious resource degradation has been occurring throughout the Knoxville Recreation Area, including the Hunting Creek Campground, caused by indiscriminate shooting of BLM signs, buildings, and natural resources. This shooting closure is necessary to protect resources and meet the documented health and safety concerns raised by the surrounding land owners and public land users regarding the dangers of stray bullets fired by indiscriminate shooters.

Closure Order: Notice is hereby given that effective on this date of publication in the **Federal Register** and pursuant to 43 CFR 8364.1, the public lands described as the Knoxville Shooting Range within SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 28, Township 12 North, Range 5 West, MDM., containing approximately six (6) acres are closed to the public for recreational shooting and target practice. These lands, managed by the Ukiah BLM Field Office, are located at the Knoxville Recreation Area in southeastern Lake County, California. Be advised that other BLM-managed public lands of the Knoxville Recreation Area remain unavailable for shooting due to the lack of identified designated shooting areas as defined by the Ukiah Resource Management Plan. This