

the twentieth century despite legal protection conferred by the Territory of Hawaii in 1931, the Act in 1973, and the State of Hawaii Endangered Species Act in 1982. Progressive range reduction and population fragmentation have characterized the decline. By 1987, the wild 'Alalā population was reduced to a single bird in north Kona, and an unknown number in central Kona, on the west slope of Mauna Loa volcano, Hawaii. The last reproduction of birds in the wild was in 1996, and the wild population declined from 12 birds in 1992 to 2 birds (possibly 3) in 2002, and apparent extinction in the wild in 2003.

Today, the 'Allalā is believed to survive only in captivity. Small population size and inbreeding are the primary threats to the species at present, fertility and hatching success in captivity are currently low, and the incidence of congenital abnormalities is increasing.

Many factors contributed to the decline of 'Allalā in the wild. Destruction of most of the lowland forests restricted the bird's ability to follow seasonal fruiting up and down the mountains. The upland forests have been thinned and fragmented, and many fruiting plants lost, due to logging, ranching, and the effects of grazing by feral pigs, cattle, and sheep. Mongooses, cats, and rats prey on 'Allalā eggs and fledglings. Diseases carried by introduced mosquitoes may have caused the mortality of many 'Allalā, as they did other forest birds. The role of 'Io in this decline, however, is unknown, despite their known effect on released birds. However, 'Io densities are higher, and vulnerability of 'Allalā may be greater, in areas where ungulate grazing has reduced understory cover.

The overall objective of this plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of the 'Allalā so that its protection under the Act is no longer necessary. Recovery is contingent upon protecting and managing suitable habitat for reintroduction of 'Allalā. Recovery actions include measures to protect habitat where the taxa occurred and habitat where the species is not known to have occurred but which may be suitable, restoration of degraded habitat, removal of feral ungulates from habitat areas, predator control, captive propagation and reintroduction, development of strategies to reduce mortality of reintroduced 'Allalā by 'Io predation, and the development of means to address threats of avian disease. Key to recovery will be propagation of 'Allalā in captivity; removal of feral ungulates that degrade forest habitat, spread introduced nonnative plant species, and create

breeding sites for disease-carrying mosquitoes; control of introduced rodents; removal of feral cats that carry toxoplasmosis; and control of invasive plant species. Habitat management and restoration will increase foods available to released 'Allalā and provide better cover for escape in areas with 'Io.

Significant features of the 'Allalā's life history, behavior, ecological interactions, and habitat needs remain unknown. These unknowns, combined with the pressing need to successfully maintain and augment the last remaining population of the species in captivity, led us to develop a draft revised recovery plan that focuses primarily on actions to conserve the 'Allalā in the short-term while working within the framework of a broader long-term recovery strategy. This draft revised recovery plan is therefore presented in three sections: (1) An Introduction and Overview provides information on the biology of the species; (2) a Strategic Plan outlines the overall long-term goals and broad strategies which we anticipate shall remain effective throughout the recovery process for this species; and (3) a 5-year Implementation Plan which sets short-term goals for recovery efforts and research essential to conservation of the species. It is anticipated that new Implementation Plans will be prepared and published as addenda to the revised recovery plan every 3 to 5 years as we gain further knowledge of the 'Allalā and are better able to determine the parameters and techniques for the effective recovery of this species in the wild.

Public Comments Solicited

We solicit written comments on the draft revised recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered in developing a final revised recovery plan.

Authority

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

Dated: October 16, 2003.

David J. Wesley,

Acting Regional Director, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 03-31467 Filed 12-19-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of an Environmental Assessment and Receipt of an Application for an Incidental Take Permit for a Proposed Commercial Development in Palm Beach County, FL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

Jupiter Island Development Company (Applicant) requests an incidental take permit (Permit) pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), as amended (Act). The Applicant anticipates taking one family of the threatened Florida scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) incidental to the clearing of 0.85 acre of occupied habitat associated with the development of a commercial facility. The proposed commercial development would occur in section 31, Township 40 South, Range 43 East, in the town of Jupiter, Palm Beach County, Florida. A more detailed description of the mitigation and minimization measures to address the effects of the Project to the protected species are outlined in the Applicant's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), the Service's Environmental Assessment (EA), and in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

The Service also announces the availability of an environmental assessment (EA) and HCP for the incidental take application. Copies of the EA and/or HCP may be obtained by making a request to the Regional Office (*see ADDRESSES*). Requests must be in writing to be processed. This notice also advises the public that the Service has made a preliminary determination that issuing the ITP is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on information contained in the EA and HCP. The final determination will be made no sooner than 60 days from the date of this notice. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10 of the Act and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

If you wish to comment, you may submit comments by any one of several methods. You may mail comments to the Service's Regional Office (*see ADDRESSES*). You may also comment via the Internet to david_dell@fws.gov.

Please submit comments over the Internet as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include your name and return address in your Internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the Service that we have received your Internet message, contact us directly at either telephone number listed below (see **FURTHER INFORMATION**). Finally, you may hand deliver comments to either Service office listed below (see **ADDRESSES**). Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the administrative record. We will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law. There may also be other circumstances in which we would withhold from the administrative record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. 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.

DATES: Written comments on the permit application, supporting documentation, EA and HCP should be sent to the Service's Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**) and should be received on or before February 20, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the application, supporting documentation, EA, and HCP, may obtain a copy by writing the Service's Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia. Documents will also be available for public inspection by appointment during normal business hours at the Regional Office, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345 (Attn: Endangered Species Permits), or Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida 32960-3559. Written data or comments concerning the application, supporting documentation, EA, or HCP should be submitted to the Regional Office. Requests for the documentation must be in writing to be processed. Comments must be submitted in writing to be adequately considered in the Service's decision-making process. Please reference permit number TE065793-0 in such comments, or in requests for the documents discussed herein.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Dell, Regional Coordinator, (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: (404) 679-7313, facsimile: (404) 679-7081; or Ms. Sharon Tyson, South Florida Ecological Services Field Office (see **ADDRESSES** above), telephone: (772) 562-3909 extension 324.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Florida scrub-jay (scrub-jay) is geographically isolated from other species of scrub-jays found in Mexico and the Western United States. The scrub-jay is found exclusively in peninsular Florida and is restricted to xeric uplands (predominately in oak dominated scrub). Increasing urban and agricultural development have resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation which has adversely affected the distribution and numbers of scrub-jays. The total estimated population is between 7,000 and 11,000 individuals.

The decline in the number and distribution of scrub-jays in southeastern Florida has been greater than in most other regions of the State. Southeastern Florida has experienced tremendous urban growth in the past 50 years and much of commercial and residential development has occurred on the dry soils which historically supported scrub-jay habitat. Based on existing soils data, much of the historic and current scrub-jay habitat of coastal east Florida occurs along a narrow stretch of historic sand dunes that are situated on a north-south axis from Dade to Flagler County. Much of this area of Florida was settled early because few wetlands restricted urban and agricultural development. Due to the effects of urban and agricultural development over the past 100 years, much of the remaining scrub-jay habitat is now relatively small and isolated. What remains is largely degraded due to the exclusion of fire which is needed to maintain xeric uplands in conditions suitable for scrub-jays.

Scrub-jays using the Project site and adjacent lands are considered part of a larger complex of scrub-jays that occupy xeric uplands of southeastern Florida. This complex of scrub-jay families ranges from about east-central Martin County south to northeastern Palm Beach County. The majority of scrub-jays within this complex are found within Jonathan Dickinson State Park which is located about eight miles north of the Project site. The continued survival of scrub-jays in this area may depend on the maintenance of suitable habitat and the restoration of unsuitable habitat in northeastern Palm Beach and southeastern Martin counties.

Scrub-jay use of the Project site and adjacent lands has been assessed on several occasions. In February 1998, field investigations by Fish and Wildlife Service staff determined that one scrub-jay family comprising three individual birds used portions of the Project site as well as adjacent lands. Systematic surveys conducted by the Applicant subsequently found scrub-jays using 0.85 acre of the 1.00-acre Project site.

The Project site represents one of the few remaining undeveloped private parcels supporting scrub-jays in northern Palm Beach County. Several tracts of public conservation lands are also located in the vicinity of the Project site, but much of the remaining landbase has been developed for commercial or residential uses. The Project site is bounded on two sides by major roadways and on another by commercial development. The Project site and surrounding lands have been negatively influenced by previous land clearing activities, off-road vehicle use, and invasion by exotic species. Due to the proximity of the Project site to existing commercial development and urban infrastructure, fire has been actively excluded because of safety concerns. As a result, the condition of the xeric habitat within the Project site is degraded; periodic fire or land management practices that mimic fire are required to maintain habitat conditions suitable for the scrub-jay.

Land clearing in preparation for commercial construction will destroy habitat and result in death of, or injury to, scrub-jays, incidental to the carrying out of these otherwise lawful activities. Habitat alteration associated with the proposed commercial development will reduce the availability of feeding, nesting, and sheltering habitat for scrub-jays.

The Applicant's HCP and the Service's EA describes the following minimization and mitigation strategy to be employed by the Applicant to offset the impacts of the Project to the scrub-jay:

- The Applicant agrees to contribute \$95,978 to the Florida Scrub-jay Conservation Fund for use in conservation of this species.
- The Applicant agrees to avoid land clearing activities during the scrub-jay nesting season.

The EA considers the environmental consequences of one action alternative which would result in issuance of the Permit. The no action alternative (not issue the Permit) would ultimately result in loss of scrub-jay habitat within the Project site due to habitat degradation. The no action alternative may also expose the Applicant under

Section 9 of the Act. The preferred alternative would affect about 0.85 acre of occupied scrub-jay habitat. The Applicant's financial contribution to the Florida Scrub-jay Conservation Fund would provide funding to assist in the conservation of this species by assisting in land acquisition and/or habitat management.

The proposed action alternative is issuance of the Permit according to the HCP as submitted and described above. Under the proposed alternative, the effect of the proposed minimization and mitigation measures will be a contribution of funding for scrub-jay conservation. The contribution of mitigation funding will provide the Service opportunities to protect and manage other suitable habitat in southeastern Florida. Mitigation funding will likely be used in combination with other matching sources of money to target the purchase of larger tracts of habitat. As a result, the immediate acquisition of habitat with the mitigation funding provided by the Applicant is not anticipated. However, any future acquisition made with all or portions of this funding is expected to benefit scrub-jays since habitat protection and management has been identified as one of the most important conservation tasks for this species.

As stated above, the Service has made a preliminary determination that the issuance of the Permit is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. This preliminary information may be revised due to public comment received in response to this notice and is based on information contained in the EA and HCP.

The Service will also evaluate whether the issuance of a section 10(a)(1)(B) Permit complies with Section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service Section 7 consultation. The results of the biological opinion, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue the Permit.

Dated: December 3, 2003.

Jackie Parrish,

Acting Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 03-31437 Filed 12-19-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Land Acquisitions; Skokomish Tribe of Washington

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Final Agency Determination to take land into trust under 25 CFR part 151.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs made a final agency determination to acquire approximately 3.0 acres, of land into trust for the Skokomish Tribe of Washington on December 8, 2003. This notice is published in the exercise of authority delegated by the Secretary of the Interior to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs by 209 Departmental Manual 8.1. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** George Skibine, Office of Indian Gaming Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, MS-4543 MIB, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240; Telephone (202) 219-4066.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published to comply with the requirement of 25 CFR 151.12(b) that notice be given to the public of the Secretary's decision to acquire land in trust at least 30 days prior to signatory acceptance of the land into trust. The purpose of the 30-day waiting period in 25 CFR part 151.12(b) is to afford interested parties the opportunity to seek judicial review of final administrative decisions to take land in trust for Indian tribes and individual Indians before transfer of title to the property occurs. On December 8, 2003, the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs decided to accept approximately 3.0 acres, of land into trust for the Skokomish Tribe of Washington under the authority of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, 25 U.S.C. 465. The 3.0 acre parcel is located within the exterior boundaries of the Skokomish Indian Tribe in Mason County, Washington. The parcel is currently used for the Tribe's gaming facility. No change in use is anticipated following conveyance of the parcel to the United States in trust for the Tribe.

The real property consists of a 3.0 acre tract known as "Parcel 1 of the Jackpot Property" situated in Mason County, Washington. The legal description of the property is as follows:

All that portion of the East half (E½) Northeast quarter (NE¼) of the Northwest quarter (NW¼) of the Southwest quarter (SW¼) of Section two (2), Township twenty-one (21) North, Range four (4) West, W.M., lying Easterly of the Easterly right-of-way line of U.S. Highway No. 101.

Excepting therefrom all that portion thereof which lies Southerly of the Northerly line of a tract of land particularly described as follows:

The Northerly 210 feet of the Southerly 401 feet of the East half (E½) Northeast quarter (NE¼) of the Northwest quarter (NW¼) of the Southwest quarter (SW¼) of Section two (2), Township twenty-one (21) North, Range four (4) West, W.M., lying Easterly of the Easterly right-of-way line of U.S. Highway No. 101, more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the centerwest sixteenth corner of said Section two (2), which is an iron pipe; thence South 1°10'50" West, 215.95 feet, along the East line of the Northeast quarter (NE¼) of the Northwest quarter (NW¼) of the Southwest quarter (SW¼) of said Section two (2), to the point of beginning of the tract of land hereby described; thence continuing South 1°10'50" West, along said East line, 210.00 feet; thence North 88°50'03" West, parallel with the South line of said Northeast quarter (NE¼) of the Northwest quarter (NW¼) of the Southwest quarter (SW¼), 244.14 feet, more or less, to the Easterly right-of-way line of U. S. Highway No. 101, as located on August 31, 1972; thence North 0°46'28" East, along said Easterly right-of-way line, 210.00 feet, thence South 88°50'03" East, 245.61 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

Also, excepting therefrom road rights-of-way.

Parcel No. 42102 32 00000.

Dated: December 8, 2003.

Aurene M. Martin,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 03-31473 Filed 12-19-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-4N-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Indian Gaming

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of approved tribal-state gaming compacts.

SUMMARY: Under section 11 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (IGRA) Public Law 100-497, 25 U.S.C. 2710, the Secretary of the Interior shall publish in the **Federal Register**, notice of the approved Tribal-State compacts for the purpose of engaging in Class III gaming activities on Indian lands. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, through her delegated authority, has approved the Tribal-State Compacts between the Santa Ysabel Band of Diegueno Mission Indians and the La Posta Band of Mission Indians and the State of California. The Compacts authorize a 350 machine Gaming Facility on the tribes' existing