

endangered species and/or marine mammals.

**DATES:** Written data, comments or requests must be received by May 3, 2004.

**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 700, 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 application(s) 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).

*Applicant: Van C. Bethancourt, Jr., Mesa, AZ, PRT-077021*

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

##### Endangered Marine Mammals and Marine Mammals

The public is invited to comment on the following application(s) for a permit to conduct certain activities with endangered marine mammals and/or marine mammals. The application(s) was/were submitted to satisfy requirements of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, *as amended* (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*) and/or the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, *as amended* (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing endangered species (50 CFR part 17) and/or marine mammals (50 CFR part 18). Written data, comments, or requests for copies of the complete applications or requests for a public hearing on these applications should be submitted to the Director (address above). Anyone requesting a hearing should give specific reasons why a hearing would be appropriate. The holding of such a hearing is at the discretion of the Director.

*Applicant: Philip J. Guarino, Rockford, IL, PRT-084882*

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport hunted from the Foxe Basin polar bear population in Canada prior to February 18, 1997, for personal use.

*Applicant: John McNiell, Whiteville, NC, PRT-084795*

The applicant requests a permit to import a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) sport hunted from the Foxe Basin polar bear population in Canada prior to February 18, 1997, for personal use.

Dated: March 26, 2004.

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

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##### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### Fish and Wildlife Service

##### Issuance of Permits

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

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of permits for endangered species and/or marine mammals.

**SUMMARY:** The following permits were issued.

**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 to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203; fax 703/358-2281.

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Notice is hereby given that on the dates below, as authorized by the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, *as amended* (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*), and/or the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, *as amended* (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Fish and Wildlife Service issued the requested permit(s) subject to certain conditions set forth therein. For each permit for an endangered species, the Service found that (1) the application was filed in good faith, (2) the granted permit would not operate to the disadvantage of the endangered species, and (3) the granted permit would be consistent with the purposes and policy set forth in section 2 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, *as amended*.

##### Endangered Species

Permit number	Applicant	Receipt of application <b>Federal Register</b> notice	Permit issuance date
079368 .....	Iowa State University .....	69 FR 5569; February 5, 2004 .....	March 26, 2004.

##### Endangered Marine Mammals and Marine Mammals

Permit number	Applicant	Receipt of application <b>Federal Register</b> notice	Permit issuance date
080857 .....	Trevor Ahlberg .....	68 FR 75618; December 31, 2003 .....	March 23, 2004.
082018 .....	Ronald K. Montgomery .....	69 FR 5568; February 5, 2004 .....	March 23, 2004.

Dated: March 26, 2004.

**Charles S. Hamilton,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of a Technical/ Agency Draft Implementation Schedule for the South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan

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

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability  
and public comment period.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("we," "our," or "Service") announces the availability of the implementation schedule for the South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP) for public review. The MSRP, as approved in 1999, included a discussion of the need for a coordinated effort to develop an implementation schedule. This implementation schedule was prepared with the assistance of the South Florida Multi-species/Ecosystem Recovery Implementation Team (MERIT). The implementation schedule prioritizes the recovery tasks as described in the MSRP on a community level, and identifies the associated participating parties, time frame, and costs necessary to accomplish those tasks. We are asking for the public's review and comment on the recovery plan implementation schedule.

**DATES:** Comments on the draft implementation schedule must be received on or before June 1, 2004 to ensure consideration by the Service.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the draft implementation schedule can be obtained by contacting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Florida Ecological Services Office, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida 32960. We encourage requests for the CD-ROM version of the implementation schedule, as the hard (paper) copies encompasses approximately 221 pages. Written comments and materials regarding the implementation schedule should be

addressed to Cindy Schulz at the address above. Comments and materials received are available on request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the South Florida Ecological Services Office.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cindy Schulz at the South Florida Ecological Services Office, (772) 562-3909, ext. 305.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Public Comments Solicited

We are asking for written comments on the MSRP implementation schedule as described above. All comments received by the date identified above will be considered. We particularly seek comments concerning: (1) Recommended changes to the Priority Number for recovery tasks; (2) recommendations for additions or deletions to the participants identified for each recovery task; and (3) additional information to assist us with determining costs for accomplishing recovery tasks.

Please note that these recovery tasks are taken directly from the MSRP. Any changes needed to update the language of the tasks themselves would be addressed in a future revision of the MSRP rather than at this time. These changes, if any, would be subject to public comment only during such future revision.

We will take into account all comments and any additional information we receive. Such communications may lead to a final version of this implementation schedule that differs from this Technical/Agency draft.

##### Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining components of their ecosystems is a primary goal of our threatened and endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, we prepare recovery plans for listed species native to the United States, pursuant to section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. *et seq.*), which requires the development of recovery plans for listed species

unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Recovery plans describe actions that may be necessary for conservation of these species, establish criteria for reclassification from endangered to threatened status or removal from the list, and estimate the time and cost for implementing the needed recovery measures.

Section 4(f) of the Act also requires that a public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. Accordingly, the MSRP was made available for public review and comment, before its approval in May 1999. The MSRP identifies the recovery needs of the 68 threatened and endangered species and 23 natural communities in the South Florida ecosystem, which encompasses 67,346 square kilometers (26,002 square miles), covering the 19 southernmost counties in Florida.

The final chapter of the MSRP describes the process for developing an implementation schedule. This process involved the collaborative effort of a team appointed by the Service to focus specifically on recovery implementation efforts. This team, known as MERIT, is comprised of 36 members representing Federal, State and local government agencies; Tribal governments; academia; industry; and the private sector. MERIT members assisted in assigning priorities to recovery tasks, and estimating the expected duration and cost to complete each task. They also identified the organizations or agencies that would likely be involved in accomplishing each task.

The implementation schedule for the MSRP contains recovery tasks for those species that occur only in South Florida, and for which the South Florida Ecological Services Office has recovery lead. Other Service field offices have recovery responsibility for those species that occur in South Florida but also occur elsewhere. Implementation schedules for those species can be found in the approved individual recovery plans for those species. Recovery tasks are provided in this implementation schedule for the following species:

Status/species	Scientific name
Mammals:	
E Key deer .....	<i>Odocoileus virginianus clavium</i>
E Key Largo cotton mouse .....	<i>Peromyscus gossypinus allapaticola</i>
E Key Largo woodrat .....	<i>Neotoma floridana smalli</i>
E Silver rice rat .....	<i>Oryzomys palustris natator</i> (= <i>O. argentatus</i> )
E Lower Keys marsh rabbit .....	<i>Sylvilagus palustris hefneri</i>