

Public Availability of Comments

All comments and materials we receive in response to these requests will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Michael G. Thabault,

Assistant Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region.

[FR Doc. 2016-06591 Filed 3-23-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R1-ES-2016-N042;
FXES11120100000-167-FF01E00000]

Proposed Template Candidate Conservation Agreement With Assurances for the Fisher in Oregon and a Draft Environmental Action Statement

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has developed a proposed template Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for the West Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the fisher in Oregon, and proposes to issue enhancement of survival (EOS) permits under the CCAA, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). The permits would authorize incidental take with assurances to eligible landowners who are willing to enroll in the template CCAA and carry out conservation measures that would benefit the West Coast DPS of the fisher. We request comments from the public on the proposed template CCAA, the issuance of EOS permits, and on the Service's draft Environmental Action Statement

(EAS) for our preliminary determination that the CCAA and issuance of EOS permits qualify for categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be received from interested parties no later than April 25, 2016.

ADDRESSES: To request further information or submit written comments, please use one of the following methods, and note that your information request or comments are in reference to the "Template Fisher CCAA."

- **Internet:** Documents may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>.

- **Email:** ORfisherCCAAcomments@fws.gov. Include "Template Fisher CCAA" in the subject line of the message or comments.

- **U.S. Mail:** State Supervisor, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 2600 SE. 98th Avenue, Suite 100; Portland, OR 97266.

- **Fax:** 503-231-6195, Attn: Template Fisher CCAA.

- **In-Person Drop-off, Viewing or Pickup:** Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment (necessary for viewing or picking up documents only), during normal business hours at the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 2600 SE. 98th Avenue, Suite 100; Portland, OR 97266; telephone 503-231-6179. Written comments can be dropped off during regular business hours at the above address on or before the closing date of the public comment period (see **DATES**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jody Caicco, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see **ADDRESSES**); telephone: 503-231-6179; facsimile: 503-231-6195. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf, please call the Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

A CCAA is a voluntary agreement whereby landowners agree to manage their lands to remove or reduce threats to species that may become listed under the ESA (64 FR 32726; June 17, 1999). CCAAs are intended to facilitate the conservation of proposed and candidate species, and species likely to become candidates in the near future by giving non-Federal property owners incentives to implement conservation measures for declining species by providing certainty with regard to land, water, or resource use restrictions that might be imposed

should the species later become listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. In return for managing their lands to the benefit of the covered species, enrolled landowners receive assurances that additional regulatory requirements pertaining to the covered species will not be required if the covered species becomes listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA so long as the CCAA remains in place and is being fully implemented.

A CCAA serves as the basis for the Service to issue EOS permits to non-Federal participants pursuant section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. EOS permits are issued to applicants in association with an approved CCAA to authorize incidental take of the covered species from covered activities, should the species become listed. Through a CCAA and its associated EOS permit, the Service provides assurances to property owners that they will not be subjected to increased land use restrictions if the covered species become listed under the ESA in the future, provided certain conditions are met. Because enrollment in a CCAA is voluntary, participating landowners may subsequently choose to discontinue their participation and their ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) permit coverage would then lapse.

Application requirements and issuance criteria for EOS permits for CCAAs are found in the Code of Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR 17.22(d) and 17.32(d), respectively. See also our joint policy on CCAAs that was published in the **Federal Register** by the Service and the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (64 FR 32726; June 17, 1999). Each prospective CCAA participant will need to complete and submit to the Service an ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) EOS permit application form.

On April 8, 2004, the Service published a 12-month status review (69 FR 18769) finding that listing the West Coast Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) as threatened or endangered under the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1538) was warranted, but precluded by higher priority actions. On October 7, 2014, the Service published a proposed rule (79 FR 60419) to list the West Coast DPS of the fisher as threatened under the ESA. In that proposed rule, the Service identified habitat loss from wildfire and vegetation management, toxicants (rodenticides), and the cumulative impact of these and other stressors in small populations as threats to the continued existence of the West Coast DPS of the fisher. On April 14, 2015, the Service issued a 6-month extension to

the final determination based on substantial disagreement regarding available information (80 FR 19953). The Service will issue a final regulation implementing the proposed rule or a notice that the proposed regulation is being withdrawn by April 7, 2016. The Service's Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office developed the proposed template CCAA on behalf of non-Federal landowners in western Oregon to address some of the threats to the fisher that were identified in the 2014 proposed listing rule.

Proposed Action

The Service proposes to issue EOS permits pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA under a proposed template CCAA for the West Coast DPS of the fisher within Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Deschutes, Douglas, Hood, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Linn, Lincoln, Polk, Tillamook, Yamhill, Wasco, and Washington counties, Oregon. The geographic area covered by the proposed CCAA and EOS permits includes the known and potential range of the fisher in those portions of the above listed Oregon counties that contain suitable forested habitat. The term of the proposed CCAA and EOS permits is 30 years.

The proposed template CCAA is between the Service and prospective non-Federal landowners and managers (participants) who would voluntarily commit to conservation measures, that when taken together with a sufficient number of other properties, may preclude or remove the need to list the West Coast DPS of the fisher as threatened or endangered. The CCAA is a template in that it establishes general guidelines and identifies minimum conservation measures for participants in the CCAA. Interested participants would enroll their property under the CCAA through individual "site plans." Once the CCAA is signed, the documentation needs and approval process to enroll participants with their individual site plans will be significantly streamlined as they will be able to reference and rely upon the information and completed administrative procedures associated with finalizing the template CCAA and finalizing the EAS for purposes of compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) (NEPA).

To qualify for take coverage, all enrollees must agree to implement the following conservation measures on enrolled lands:

- Allow the Service or its agents to access enrolled lands to evaluate fisher presence for the 30-year term of the CCAA and to determine if one or more female fisher are occupying dens and raising kits;
- Protect confirmed denning female fisher and their young by limiting or preventing access and disturbance near occupied sites, including preventing the destruction of the denning structure itself;
- Prohibit trapping and nuisance animal control activities on enrolled lands within 2.5 miles of known fisher occupied dens;
- Report to the Service within 48 hours upon finding any potentially fisher occupied den sites or any dead, sick, or incidentally trapped and released fishers on enrolled lands; cover all man-made structures on enrolled lands that pose an entrapment risk to fishers; and,
- Where suitable habitat exists and where agreed upon by the participant and the Service, allow for the reintroduction of fishers.

Details regarding the actual reintroduction of fishers, including when the reintroduction might occur, the sources and numbers of fishers, the duration of the reintroduction effort, and the parties responsible for the capture and movement of fisher are unknown at this time. We anticipate that any required environmental or regulatory analysis for fisher reintroduction will be done by the Service or other responsible parties when a reintroduction plan is developed under the laws and policies in effect at that time.

Covered activities include those activities that may be carried out by participating landowners or their authorized representatives on enrolled lands that may result in the incidental take of the fisher consistent with the provisions of the CCAA and their EOS permit. Covered activities under the proposed CCAA include the following land-management related activities commonly practiced on forest lands: Timber harvest and reforestation, road maintenance and construction, transport of timber and rock, collection of minor forest products, and recreational activities.

National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

The proposed issuance of an ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) permit with its associated CCAA is a Federal action that triggered the need for compliance with NEPA. We have made a preliminary determination that the proposed CCAA and the proposed issuance of EOS

permits under the CCAA are eligible for categorical exclusion under NEPA. The basis for our preliminary determination is contained in an EAS, which is available for public review (see **ADDRESSES**).

Public Comments

You may submit your comments and materials by one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section. We request data, comments, new information, or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, Tribes, industry, or any other interested party on our proposed Federal action.

Public Availability of Comments

All comments and materials we receive become part of the public record associated with this action. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comments, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety. Comments and materials we receive, as well as supporting documentation, will be available for public inspection by appointment, during normal business hours, at our Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**).

Next Steps

After considering public comments, the Service will make a decision regarding the proposed CCAA, the draft EAS, and our preliminary determination that the proposed permit action is eligible for categorical exclusion under NEPA, provided they meet the requirements of section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA and the requirements of NEPA. We will not make a final decision on NEPA and the template CCAA until after the end of the 30-day public comment period on this notice, and we will fully consider all comments we receive during the public comment period. If we determine that all the requirements are met, we will sign the CCAA and be able to accept EOS permit applications submitted under the requirements of the CCAA and section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. The Service will

then be able to issue EOS permits to interested, eligible landowners for the potential take of the West Coast DPS of the fisher incidental to otherwise lawful activities in accordance with the terms of the CCAA, the site plans, and appropriate EOS permit conditions.

Authority

We provide this notice in accordance with the requirements of section 10(c) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and their implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22 and 17.32, and 40 CFR 1506.6, respectively).

Rollie White,

Acting State Supervisor, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.

[FR Doc. 2016-06627 Filed 3-23-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[GX16NM00FU5010]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Request for Comments

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of revision of a currently approved information collection, (1028-0094).

SUMMARY: We (the U.S. Geological Survey) are notifying the public that we have submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the information collection request (ICR) described below. To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) and as part of our continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, we invite the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on this ICR. This collection is scheduled to expire on 3/31/2016.

DATES: To ensure that your comments on this ICR are considered, OMB must receive them on or before April 25, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Please submit written comments on this information collection directly to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior, via email: (OIRA_SUBMISSION@omb.eop.gov); or by fax (202) 395-5806; and identify your submission with 'OMB Control Number 1028-0094 Energy Cooperatives to Support the National Coal Resources

Data System (NCRDS). Please also forward a copy of your comments and suggestions on this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive MS 807, Reston, VA 20192 (mail); (703) 648-7195 (fax); or gs-info_collections@usgs.gov (email). Please reference 'OMB Information Collection 1028-0094: Energy Cooperatives to Support the National Coal Resources Data System (NCRDS) in all correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Joseph East, Eastern Energy Resources Science Center, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Mail Stop 956, Reston, VA 20192 (mail); 703-648-6450 (phone); or jeast@usgs.gov (email). You may also find information about this ICR at www.reginfo.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The primary objective of the National Coal Resources Data System (NCRDS) is to advance the understanding of the energy endowment of the United States (U.S.) by gathering and organizing digital geologic information related to coal, coal bed gas, shale gas, conventional and unconventional oil and gas, geothermal, and other energy resources and related information regarding these resources, along with environmental impacts from using these resources. These data are needed to support regional or national assessments concerning energy resources. Requesting external cooperation is a way for NCRDS to collect energy data and perform research and analyses on the characterization of geologic material, and obtain other information (including geophysical or seismic data, sample collection for generation of thermal maturity data) that can be used in energy resource assessments and related studies.

The USGS will issue a call for proposals to support researchers from State Geological Surveys and associated accredited state universities that can provide geologic data to support NCRDS and other energy assessment projects being conducted by the USGS.

Data submitted to NCRDS by external cooperators constitute more than two-thirds of the USGS point-source stratigraphic database (USTRAT) on coal occurrence. In 2015, NCRDS supported 21 projects in 19 States. This program is conducted under various authorities, including 30 U.S.C. 208-1, 42 U.S.C. 15801, and 43 U.S.C. 31 *et seq.* This collection will consist of applications, proposals and reports (annual and final).

II. Data

OMB Control Number: 1028-0094.

Form Number: None.

Title: Energy Cooperatives to Support the National Coal Resources Data System (NCRDS).

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved information collection.

Respondent Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

Frequency of Collection: One time every 5 years for applications and final reports; annually for progress reports.

Description of Respondents: State, local and tribal governments; State Geological Surveys, State universities.

Estimated Total Number of Annual Responses: 21.

Estimated Time per Response: We estimate that it will take 20 hours to complete an application and 4.6 hours to prepare annual reports.

Estimated Annual Burden Hours: 181.

Estimated Reporting and Recordkeeping "Non-Hour Cost"

Burden: There are no "non-hour cost" burdens associated with this collection of information.

Public Disclosure Statement: The PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) provides that an agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Until the OMB approves a collection of information, you are not obliged to respond.

Comments: On 11/23/2015, we published a **Federal Register** notice (80 FR 72985) announcing that we would submit this ICR to OMB for approval and soliciting comments. The comment period closed on 1/22/2016. We received No comments.

III. Request for Comments

We again invite comments concerning this ICR as to: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) how to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) how to minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Please note that comments submitted in response to this notice are a matter of public record. Before including your personal mailing address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifiable information in