



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer To:
6840 (CA930)P

EMS TRANSMISSION: 8/7/07
Information Bulletin No. **CA-2007-022**

To: District Manager, California Desert
Field Manager, El Centro

From: State Director

Subject: Proposed rule to revise critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch **DD: 9/18/07**

On July 27, 2007, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published a proposed rule (*Federal Register* 72:41258-41284) to revise critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch (*Astragalus magdalenae* var. *peirsonii*). (See Attachment 1.) The proposed rule would designate approximately 15,857 acres of BLM administered lands as critical habitat for this species, distributed among four critical habitat units: (1) Mammoth Wash/North Algodones (4,425 acres), (2) Gecko/Glamis (4,003 acres), (3) Adaptive Management Area/Ogilby (7,212 acres), and (4) Buttercup (218 acres).

The Service has conducted an analysis of the economic impacts of designating the above units as critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch. This draft economic analysis can be accessed from the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office website at http://www.fws.gov/carlsbad/PMV_Docs.htm. The Service has also scheduled public hearings on the proposed critical habitat rule and the draft economic analysis. These hearings will take place on August 23, 2007, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 6010 Hidden Valley Road, Carlsbad, California.

The proposed rule solicits information on several topics, including: (a) the reasons why any areas should or should not be designated as critical habitat and whether the benefits of designation will outweigh any threats to the species caused by such designation, (b) specific information on the amount and distribution of Peirson's milk-vetch habitat and the habitat features essential for the conservation of this species, (c) land use designations and current or planned activities in the subject areas and their possible impacts on proposed critical habitat, and (d) numerous issues associated with the economic costs of this proposal and the analysis used by the Service to estimate such costs.

Please review the proposed rule, associated maps, and the draft economic analysis and advise CA-930 (Attn: John Willoughby) if you have any comments or suggestions regarding the proposed rule or the draft economic analysis. The deadline for submitting comments to the

Service is September 25, 2007. Please provide us with your comments, if any, in electronic format by the close of business September 18, 2007.

In May 2007, the California State Office reviewed an advance copy of the proposed rule and submitted comments on this document to the Washington Office (Attn: Ted Hudson; WO-630). Those comments were subsequently forwarded to the Office of Budget and Management, as submitted. For reference purposes, these comments are provided as Attachment 2.

Questions regarding this proposed rule may be directed to John Willoughby at (916) 978-4638.

Signed by:
James Wesley Abbott
Associate State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachments

- 1 - Proposed rule to revise critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch (*Astragalus magdalenae* var. *peirsonii*) (26 pp.)
- 2 - CA-BLM comments on the advance copy of the proposed rule to revise critical habitat for Peirson's milk-vetch (2 pp.)

Distribution

WO-230 (Attn: Steve Lydick)
CA-610 (Attn: Larry LaPre)
CA-670 (Attn: Daniel Steward)