

a categorical exclusion under NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), as provided by Federal regulations (40 CFR 1500, 5(k), 1507.3(b)(2), 1508.4) and the Department of the Interior Manual (516 DM 2 and 516 DM 8). A categorical exclusion for a HCP is based on the following three criteria: (1) Implementation of the proposed plan would result in minor or negligible effects on federally-listed, proposed, and candidate species and their habitats; (2) implementation of the proposed HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources; and (3) impacts of the HCP, considered together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects, would not result, over time, in cumulative effects to environmental values or resources that would be considered significant. Based upon the preliminary determination made in our draft NEPA screening document, we believe this action is covered by a categorical exclusion. We will consider public comments when making the final determination on whether to prepare an additional NEPA document on the proposed action.

Background

Since purchasing the San Rafael Ranch in 2000, the San Rafael Cattle Company has been implementing grazing practices that have improved range and habitat conditions on private lands within the San Rafael Valley of Santa Cruz County, Arizona. These improved habitat conditions provide opportunities for conservation actions that may enhance the status and distribution of covered species on the San Rafael Ranch. The San Rafael Cattle Company would like to continue ranch management activities while working with agencies to conduct conservation actions on the San Rafael Ranch such as introduction of covered species or other species and removal of aquatic invasive species. The covered area would encompass 18,440 acres of primarily open rangeland owned by the applicant. The covered ranch management activities would consist of watering and grazing by cattle in stock tanks and riparian habitats, including herding of cattle within pastures and between pastures; maintenance of stock ponds, wells, waterlines, fences, roads, and utility lines supporting these facilities; and brush and invasive plant management to reduce shrub invasion of upland grasslands. All of these activities have short-term impacts on species and their habitats, and incidental take of some covered species may occur.

However, a long-term benefit is anticipated for the watershed and habitats of the covered species. In addition, San Rafael Cattle Company proposes actions to minimize the impacts of the activities and assist in recovery of covered species. These actions are also proposed to be covered by the associated section 10(a)(1)(B) permit.

To meet the requirements of a section 10(a)(1)(B) permit, San Rafael Cattle Company has developed and will implement the San Rafael Ranch HCP, which provides measures to minimize and mitigate for incidental take of the four proposed covered animal species to the maximum extent practicable. The biological goal of the HCP is to provide long-term protection for multiple species of concern and key natural communities through maintenance or improvement of the habitat conditions and ecosystem functions necessary for their survival, and to ensure that any incidental take of listed species will not appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival and recovery of those species in the wild.

Public Availability of Comments

Written comments we receive become part of the public record associated with this action. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that the 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(c) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22) and NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Benjamin N. Tuggle,

Regional Director, Region 2, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLCAN00000.L18200000.XZ0000]

Notice of Public Meeting; Northeast California Resource Advisory Council and Subcommittee

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Northeast California Resource Advisory Council and its wild horse and burro management subcommittee will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The subcommittee will meet Wednesday, June 30, 2010, at 10 a.m. at the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office, 2950 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA. The full RAC will meet Friday, July 9, 2010, at 10 a.m. at the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office in Susanville, CA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Haug, BLM Northern California District manager, (530) 221-1743; or Joseph J. Fontana, BLM public affairs officer, (530) 252-5332.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in northeast California and the northwest corner of Nevada. At the subcommittee meeting members will discuss management of the Wild Horse and Burro program and the BLM's management strategy. The full RAC will consider subcommittee recommendations and develop recommendations to the BLM on the BLM's proposed management strategy. Time for public comments will be set aside at 1 p.m. Depending on the number of persons wishing to speak, and the time available, the time for individual comments may be limited. Members of the public are welcome on field tours, but they must provide their own transportation and lunch. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation and other reasonable accommodations, should contact the BLM as provided above.

Dated: June 14, 2010.

Joseph J. Fontana,
Public Affairs Officer.

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