

means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see Request for Information below for more information).

We request that you send comments by only one of the methods described above. We will post all information received on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see the Public Availability of Comments section below for more information).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ken Richkus, at 703-358-1780 (telephone), or [ken\\_richkus@fws.gov](mailto:ken_richkus@fws.gov) (email). Individuals who are hearing impaired or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8337 for TTY assistance.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) uses a collision risk model (CRM) to predict the number of golden and bald eagles that may be killed at new wind facilities (USFWS 2013; New *et al.* 2015). The CRM incorporates existing knowledge of eagle use around a proposed wind facility (exposure) and the probability of an eagle colliding with an operating turbine (collision probability).

The CRM is constructed using a Bayesian framework, and as such incorporates existing information on eagle exposure and collision probability in the form of prior distributions (priors). The priors are formally combined with site-specific data on exposure and the amount of hazardous area and operational time for a site to estimate the expected number of annual eagle collision fatalities.

The Service recently updated the priors for both species of eagle using all available data that meet specific criteria, substantially more data than were available when the original priors were established. We released a report of the analysis undertaken to generate the updated priors and announced the availability of the report in a June 21, 2018, **Federal Register** notice published on (83 FR 28858). In that notice we asked for public input on options for how we should apply the new bald eagle priors. Several of the comments we received during the initial comment period requested that the Service provide the values for the shape and rate parameters of the gamma and beta distributions described in the referenced report. In response to these comments, we have posted an updated version of the report that provides those parameter values on the Service's website at:

<https://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managedspecies/eaglemanagement.php>. You can also find the report on the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search for FWS-HQ-MB-2017-0092.

Because the bald eagle collision prior is based on data from only 14 sites that do not span the range of bald eagle density conditions that exist across the country, the prior may not be as representative as it would be if data from a wider range of location had been available. Given this uncertainty, the Service is considering three alternatives for how to incorporate species-specific priors for bald eagles into the CRM and fatality modeling process:

(1) Use the updated species-specific priors, and use the 80th quantile of the CRM fatality estimates as the initial permitted take number for permits, as is the current practice.

(2) Use the updated species-specific priors, but because the status of bald eagles is secure, adopt a risk-tolerant policy for bald eagles and select a more liberal quantile on the CRM fatality distribution as the initial permitted take number for this species.

(3) Given the limitations in data available to inform the bald eagle priors, initiate an expert elicitation process to further refine the bald eagle priors.

Under any of these scenarios, the Service would use data submitted under permits to make updates to the priors in the future.

Alternative 1 would mean that for a similar level of eagle use observed at a project site, the Service would use higher fatality estimates for bald eagles than for golden eagles. Alternative 2 would be a decision by the Service to be more 'risk-tolerant' for bald eagles. This would mean that initial fatality predictions would be lower, however it would also likely mean that more permits would have to be amended to increase the permitted take over time (*i.e.*, the Service would be underestimating take more often). Alternative 3 would be a decision by the Service that more information is needed to understand the potential variability of exposure and collision probability for bald eagles. Such a process could result in either higher or lower (or more variable) priors. We are soliciting input from the public on these three alternatives. We are not seeking input on the CRM itself, which has been peer-reviewed and been the subject of multiple rounds of public comment in the past.

#### Public Availability of Comments

Written comments 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 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. 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.

Dated: October 29, 2018.

**Andrea Travnicek,**

*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Water and Science, Exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.*

[FR Doc. 2018-24718 Filed 11-9-18; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4333-55-P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2018-N107;  
FXES11140400000-189-FF04E00000]

##### Endangered Species; Recovery Permit Applications

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

**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of permit applications; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have received applications for permits to conduct activities intended to enhance the propagation or survival of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. We invite the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies to comment on these applications. Before issuing any of the requested permits, we will take into consideration any information that we receive during the public comment period.

**DATES:** We must receive written data or comments on the applications by December 13, 2018.

##### ADDRESSES:

*Reviewing Documents:* Documents and other information submitted with the applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the

Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act. Submit a request for a copy of such documents to Karen Marlowe (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

**Submitting Comments:** If you wish to comment, you may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- *U.S. mail or hand-delivery:* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office, Ecological Services, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30345 (Attn: Karen Marlowe, Permit Coordinator).

- *Email:* [permitsR4ES@fws.gov](mailto:permitsR4ES@fws.gov). Please include your name and return address in your email message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that we have received your email message, contact us directly at the telephone number listed in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Karen Marlowe, Permit Coordinator, 404-679-7097 (telephone), [karen\\_marlowe@fws.gov](mailto:karen_marlowe@fws.gov) (email), or 404-679-7081 (fax). Individuals who are hearing or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY assistance.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We invite review and comment from local, State, and Federal agencies and the public on

applications we have received for permits to conduct certain activities with endangered and threatened species under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and our regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR part 17. With some exceptions, the ESA prohibits activities that constitute take of listed species unless a Federal permit is issued that allows such activities. The ESA's definition of "take" includes hunting, shooting, harming, wounding, or killing, and also such activities as pursuing, harassing, trapping, capturing, or collecting.

A recovery permit issued by us under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA authorizes the permittee to conduct activities with endangered or threatened species for scientific purposes that promote recovery or for enhancement of propagation or survival of the species. These activities often include such prohibited actions as capture and collection. Our regulations implementing section 10(a)(1)(A) for these permits are found at 50 CFR 17.22 for endangered wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.32 for threatened wildlife species, 50 CFR 17.62 for endangered plant species,

and 50 CFR 17.72 for threatened plant species.

#### Permit Applications Available for Review and Comment

Proposed activities in the following permit requests are for the recovery and enhancement of propagation or survival of the species in the wild. The ESA requires that we invite public comment before issuing these permits. Accordingly, we invite local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies and the public to submit written data, views, or arguments with respect to these applications. The comments and recommendations that will be most useful and likely to influence agency decisions are those supported by quantitative information or studies.

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.

Permit application No.	Applicant	Species/numbers	Location	Activity	Type of take	Permit action
TE 676379-6 .....	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Miami, FL.	Hawksbill ( <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> ), Kemp's ridley ( <i>Lepidochelys kempii</i> ), and Leatherback ( <i>Derموchelys coriacea</i> ) sea turtles.	Florida, Mississippi, and Texas.	Turtle Excluder Device (TED) certification trials and nest surveys and excavation.	Conduct nest surveys, locate egg chambers, screen and mark nests, monitor nests for hatching, and excavate nests. Remove Kemp's ridley sea turtle hatchlings from wild to rear in captivity for a period of 1-2 years for use in TED certification trials.	Renewal and Amendment.
TE 97308A-1 .....	John L. Harris, Scott, AR.	19 species of freshwater mussels.	Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.	Presence/absence surveys, population estimate surveys, and DNA sampling.	Remove from substrate, handle, identify, collect tissue swabs, return to substrate, and salvage relic shells.	Renewal.
TE 48576B-1 .....	Carson Wood, Castle Hayne, NC.	Red-cockaded woodpecker ( <i>Picoides borealis</i> ).	Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.	Population management and monitoring.	Capture, band, monitor nest cavities, construct and monitor artificial nest cavities and restrictors, and salvage.	Renewal.
TE 86956C-0 .....	Robert Davis, Tallahassee, FL.	16 species of freshwater mussels.	Alabama, Florida, and Georgia.	Presence/absence surveys.	Remove from the substrate, handle, identify, and return to substrate.	New.

Permit application No.	Applicant	Species/numbers	Location	Activity	Type of take	Permit action
TE 041314-6 .....	U.S. Army, Fort Polk, LA.	Red-cockaded woodpecker ( <i>Picoides borealis</i> ) and Louisiana pine snake ( <i>Pituophis ruthveni</i> ).	Fort Polk Military Base, Fort Polk, Louisiana. Red-cockaded woodpecker translocation activities also in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.	Population management and monitoring and screening for disease.	Red-cockaded woodpecker: Capture, band, translocate, monitor nest cavities, construct and monitor artificial nest cavities and restrictors. Louisiana pine snake: capture, handle, measure, weigh, PIT-tag, swab, remove radio transmitters, and collect blood, fecal, and shed skin samples.	Renewal and Amendment.
TE 88796C-0 .....	Geological Survey of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL.	Watercress darter ( <i>Etheostoma nuchale</i> ).	Watercress Darter National Wildlife Refuge, Bessemer, Alabama.	Presence/absence and population surveys.	Capture with seine nets, identify, and release.	New.
TE 89030C-0 .....	Mark Strong, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.	25 species of plants ...	Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge, Florida.	Collect genomic tissue samples and herbarium vouchers.	Collect leaf tissue samples and a single branch or small above-ground portion of the plant.	New.
TE 171594-1 .....	Craig Martin, Wetland Sciences, Inc., Pensacola, FL.	Alabama beach mouse ( <i>Peromyscus polionotus ammobates</i> ), Choctawhatchee beach mouse ( <i>Peromyscus polionotus allophrys</i> ), and Perdido Key beach mouse ( <i>Peromyscus polionotus trissyllepsis</i> ).	Alabama and Florida	Presence/absence surveys.	Capture, identify, and release.	Renewal and Amendment.
TE 97394A-3 .....	Zachary Couch, Pleasureville, KY.	Gray bats ( <i>Myotis grisescens</i> ), Indiana bats ( <i>Myotis sodalis</i> ), Northern long-eared bats ( <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> ), and Virginia big-eared bats ( <i>Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus</i> ).	Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.	Presence/absence surveys, population monitoring, and studies to document habitat use.	Enter hibernacula or maternity roost caves, capture with mist nets or harp traps, handle, identify, band, radio-tag, light-tag, collect hair samples, wing-punch, and salvage.	Renewal.
TE 02200B-1 .....	Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, GA.	<i>Helonias bullata</i> (Swamp pink), <i>Platanthera integrilabia</i> (White fringeless orchid), <i>Sarracenia oreophila</i> (Green pitcher plant), <i>Spiraea virginiana</i> (Virginia spiraea), <i>Trillium persistens</i> (Persistent trillium), <i>Trillium reliquum</i> (Relict trillium), and <i>Xyris tennesseensis</i> (Tennessee yellow-eyed grass).	Federal lands in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.	Long-term storage, artificial propagation, and <i>ex situ</i> safeguarding.	Remove and reduce to possession (collect) seeds.	Renewal and Amendment.

Permit application No.	Applicant	Species/numbers	Location	Activity	Type of take	Permit action
TE 35594A-3 .....	Alabama Power Company, Birmingham, AL.	Gray bats ( <i>Myotis grisescens</i> ), Indiana bats ( <i>Myotis sodalis</i> ), Northern long-eared bats ( <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> ), Gopher tortoise ( <i>Gopherus polyphemus</i> ), Black Warrior waterdog ( <i>Necturus alabamensis</i> ).	Alabama .....	Presence/absence surveys, population monitoring, upper respiratory tract disease testing, and DNA analysis.	Bats: Capture with mist-nets, handle, identify, band, and radio-tag. Gopher tortoise: Add authorization to trap, attach radio transmitters, and collect blood. Black Warrior waterdog: Trap, handle, identify, and collect tail sample.	Amendment.

**Authority** We publish this notice under section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

**Leopoldo Miranda,**

*Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Southeast Region.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

[18X.LLES964000.L14400000.FR0000; FLES-58597]

**Notice of Proposed Withdrawal Extension and Opportunity for Public Meeting for the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge; Florida**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary of the Interior proposes to extend the duration of Public Land Order (PLO) No. 5683 for an additional 40-year term. PLO No. 5683 withdrew 37.50 acres of public land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws and reserved under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior as part of the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge (PINWR), administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This Notice gives an opportunity for the public to comment on the petition/application for the proposed withdrawal extension and to request a public meeting.

**DATES:** For a period until February 11, 2019, all persons who wish to submit comments, suggestions, or objections in connection with the proposed withdrawal extension may do so in writing.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to the BLM Southeastern States District Office, Attn: Victoria Craft, 273

Market Street, Flowood, MS 39232 or by email to: [vcraft@blm.gov](mailto:vcraft@blm.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Sally Spencer, phone: 202-912-7700; email: [sspencer@blm.gov](mailto:sspencer@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The withdrawal created by PLO No. 5683 (44 FR 53084, 1979), will expire on September 11, 2019, unless extended. The USFWS has filed a petition/application requesting extension of the withdrawal created by the PLO for an additional 40-year term. The PLO withdrew the following described public land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, and reserved them as part of the PINWR:

**Tallahassee Meridian, Florida**

T. 31 S, R. 39 E,  
Sec. 9, lot 9

The land withdrawn by PLO No. 5683 are located in Indian River County (formerly a portion of Brevard County), Florida.

The purpose of the withdrawal extension is to continue to provide an upland buffer zone between the existing refuge and the adjacent privately held land. The withdrawn land is home to PINWR's Centennial Trail, Boardwalk, and Observation Pavilion, which were developed in recognition of the 2003 Centennial Celebration of the National Wildlife Refuge System, at the home of the first National Wildlife Refuge. The PINWR contains 5,400 acres and is visited by over 100,000 people annually who come to experience nature and learn about the Refuge.

The use of a right-of-way, interagency agreement, or cooperative agreement would not provide adequate protection

for the wildlife habitat and unique resource values within the PINWR.

No additional water rights would be needed to fulfill the purpose of the requested withdrawal extension.

There are no suitable alternative sites since the lands described herein contain the natural and biological resources of interest for protection.

All persons who wish to submit comments, suggestions, or objections in connection with the proposed withdrawal extension may present their views in writing to the BLM Eastern States, at the address indicated above. Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address stated above, during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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

Notice is hereby given that an opportunity for a public meeting is afforded in connection with the proposed withdrawal extension. All interested persons who desire a public meeting for the purpose of being heard on the proposed withdrawal extension must submit a written request to the District Manager, BLM Southeastern States District Office at the address provided in the **ADDRESSES** section, within 90 days from the date of publication of this Notice. If the authorized officer determines that a public meeting will be held, a Notice of the date, time, and place will be published in the **Federal Register** and local newspapers and posted on the BLM website at: [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov) at least