

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.

You may submit your comments and materials by one of the methods in **ADDRESSES**. We will not consider comments sent by email or fax, or to an address not in **ADDRESSES**. We will not consider or include in our administrative record comments we receive after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**).

When submitting comments, please specify the name of the applicant and the permit number at the beginning of your comment. Provide sufficient information to allow us to authenticate any scientific or commercial data you include. The comments and recommendations that will be most useful and likely to influence agency decisions are: (1) Those supported by quantitative information or studies; and (2) those that include citations to, and analyses of, the applicable laws and regulations.

B. May I review comments submitted by others?

You may view and comment on others' public comments at <http://www.regulations.gov>, unless our allowing so would violate the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a) or Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

C. Who will see my comments?

If you submit a comment at <http://www.regulations.gov>, your entire comment, including any personal identifying information, will be posted on the website. If you submit a hardcopy comment that includes personal identifying information, such as your address, phone number, or email address, you may request at the top of your document that we withhold this information from public review. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Moreover, 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.

II. Background

To help us carry out our conservation responsibilities for affected species, and in consideration of section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), we invite public comments on permit applications before final action is taken. With some exceptions, the ESA

prohibits certain activities with listed species unless Federal authorization is issued that allows such activities. Permits issued under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA allow otherwise prohibited activities for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species. Service regulations regarding prohibited activities with endangered species, captive-bred wildlife registrations, and permits for any activity otherwise prohibited by the ESA with respect to any endangered species are available in title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations in part 17.

III. Permit Applications

We invite comments on the following applications.

Applicant: Elizabeth Tapanes, Takoma Park, MD; Permit No. 09835D

The applicant requests a permit to import biological samples from Diademed sifaka (*Propithecus diadema*) for the purpose of scientific research. This notification is for a single import.

Applicant: Regis Opferman, Pueblo, CO; Permit No. 073270

The applicant requests a captive-bred wildlife registration under 50 CFR 17.21(g) for radiated tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*), to enhance the propagation or survival of the species. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a 5-year period.

Applicant: Robert Jackson, Jonesboro, AR; Permit No. 13264D

The applicant requests a permit to import a 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 enhancing the propagation or survival of the species.

IV. Next Steps

After the comment period closes, we will make decisions regarding permit issuance. If we issue permits to any of the applicants listed in this notice, we will publish a notice in the **Federal Register**. You may locate the notice announcing the permit issuance by searching <http://www.regulations.gov> for the permit number listed above in this document. For example, to find information about the potential issuance of Permit No. 12345A, you would go to regulations.gov and search for "12345A".

V. Authority

We issue this notice under the authority of the Endangered Species Act

of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and its implementing regulations.

Brenda Tapia,

Program Analyst/Data Administrator, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

**[FWS-R1-ES-2018-N160;
FXES1114010000-189-FF01E00000]**

Draft Safe Harbor Agreement for Nene at Haleakala Ranch, Maui

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an application from the Haleakala Ranch Company (the Ranch) for an enhancement of survival permit (permit) pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). The permit application includes a draft Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) between the Ranch, the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), and the Service. Implementation of the proposed SHA is intended to benefit the recovery of the nene (Hawaiian goose, *Branta sandvicensis*) on 3,056 acres of privately-owned Ranch land on the island of Maui. The proposed SHA conservation measures on the Ranch include nene habitat improvement and maintenance, establishment and maintenance of a nene release pen, and control of predators. The activities implemented under this SHA will aid in increasing the current range of the covered species, restoring this species to part of its historic range, and increasing the total population of the species, thus contributing to its overall recovery. The Service is making the permit application, including the proposed SHA, and the NEPA environmental action statement for categorical exclusion available for public review and invites comments, including the submission of written data.

DATES: All comments from interested parties must be received on or before March 21, 2019.

ADDRESSES: To request further information, obtain copies of documents, or submit written comments, please use one of the following methods. Please include your name and return address in your

comments and refer to the “Safe Harbor Agreement for Nene at Haleakala Ranch”:

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

- *Email:* pifwo_admin@fws.gov. Include “Safe Harbor Agreement for Nene at Haleakala Ranch” in the subject line of the message.

- *U.S. Mail:* Field Supervisor, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room #3-122, Honolulu, HI 96822.

- *In-Person Drop-off, Viewing, or Pickup:* Documents will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office.

- *Fax:* Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, 808-792-9580, Attn: Safe Harbor Agreement for Nene at Haleakala Ranch.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jodi Charrier, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**), telephone 808-792-9400, or email pifwo_admin@fws.gov. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service has received an application from the Haleakala Ranch Company (the Ranch) for an enhancement of survival permit (permit) pursuant to the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The permit application includes a draft SHA between the Ranch, the State of Hawaii DLNR, and the Service. Implementation of the proposed SHA is intended to benefit the recovery of the nene on 3,056 acres of privately-owned Ranch land on the island of Maui. The proposed SHA conservation measures on the Ranch include nene habitat improvement and maintenance, establishment and maintenance of a nene release pen, and control of predators. The activities implemented under this SHA will aid in increasing the current range of the nene, restoring this species to part of its historic range, and increasing the total population of this species, thus contributing to the overall recovery of the nene. The Service is making the permit application, including the proposed SHA, and the NEPA environmental action statement for categorical exclusion available for public review and comment.

Background

Under a SHA, participating landowners voluntarily undertake

management activities on their property to enhance, restore, or maintain habitat benefiting species listed under the ESA. SHAs, and the subsequent permit issued to participating landowners pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA, encourage private and other non-Federal property owners to implement conservation actions for federally listed species by assuring the landowners that they will not be subjected to increased property use restrictions as a result of their efforts to either attract listed species to their property, or to increase the numbers or distribution of listed species already on their property. Enrolled landowners may make lawful use of the enrolled property during the permit term and may incidentally take the listed species named on the permit. Application requirements and issuance criteria for permits associated with SHAs are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR 17.22(c).

Draft Safe Harbor Agreement

Nene were probably extirpated from Maui by the end of the 19th century. Today nene are found on Maui primarily within the boundaries of Haleakala National Park, where reintroduction efforts on Maui began in 1962. In addition, populations of the nene have been established through reintroduction programs at Piholo Ranch on Maui, which has been successfully implementing a SHA for the reintroduction of nene since 2004. In 2011, the estimated population of nene on Maui was approximately 350 to 375 birds.

The private lands subject to the proposed SHA and permit consist of 3,056 acres on the Ranch, and current land use practices include cattle ranching operations. Habitat on the Ranch varies and includes nonnative-plant-dominated grasslands, native and nonnative forests, and gulches. Land elevation ranges from sea level to approximately 3,000 feet. The baseline nene population for this SHA is zero (0) nene.

The expected net conservation benefit to the nene as a result of the proposed SHA is the establishment of a breeding population of 200 nene on the Ranch. This benefit will be achieved by providing high-quality, predator-controlled nene habitat on Ranch property. Conservation measures proposed by the Ranch to encourage the establishment and survival of nene on the enrolled lands include allowing DLNR to: (1) Construct or expand a nene release pen; (2) make road improvements as needed to implement the agreement; (3) maintain the release pen and associated water source, and to

monitor nene throughout the term of the agreement; (4) allow DLNR to release nene into the release pen; and (5) allow DLNR to conduct predator control in and around the release pen.

The proposed duration of the conservation measures contained in the SHA is for 10 years; however, the landowner may terminate the SHA after 5 years for reasons beyond their control and return to baseline. The proposed duration of the permit is for 50 years. The permit would authorize the incidental take of nene on the enrolled lands as a result of lawful activities at the Ranch, from the time the SHA is executed. The Ranch may continue current land use practices, undertake new ones, or make any other lawful use of the property, even if such use incidentally results in the loss of nene or their habitat covered under this SHA. Once the SHA has ended, the Ranch can return the enrolled lands to baseline conditions. The authority for incidental take of the nene associated with the return to baseline conditions is provided by the permit.

During the nonbreeding season, the birds may disperse and have seasonal movement throughout Maui, but due to their site fidelity, they are expected to return to the protected pen for breeding. It is expected that some of the nene released under the SHA, and their progeny, will still utilize the site upon expiration or termination of the SHA and that a percentage of nene will remain on the Ranch property for the permit term and beyond. Based on experience from similar sites, the Service and DLNR anticipate this SHA will result in an increase in the number of nene on Maui and an increase in the total area of suitable habitat on private lands utilized by nene. Without this cooperative government/private landowner effort, these lands would not otherwise be utilized by nene in the foreseeable future. For these reasons, this SHA and the activities it covers, which are facilitated by the allowable incidental take, would provide a net conservation benefit to the nene.

When this 10-year SHA expires, the parties have the option to extend the term of the SHA, or return to baseline numbers. By establishing the term of the permit at 50 years, the Ranch may defer returning the property to baseline conditions when the 10-year SHA expires. Nene would, in this case, continue to benefit from any ongoing or residual conservation actions on the Ranch for an additional period of time. Providing for a 50-year term of the permit also offers flexibility to the Ranch landowner; if there is no immediate need to return to baseline

conditions, the Ranch landowner may therefore be interested in having nene on the Ranch for a longer period of time. The Ranch will notify DLNR and the Service in advance of conducting any activities that it anticipates will adversely affect the nene and also report any dead, injured, or diseased nene during the term of the permit, as well as provide a report on the status of the reintroduced nene population every 5 years after the SHA expires for the 50-year term of the permit.

If at the end of 10 years the Ranch plans to return to baseline conditions, they will notify DLNR and the Service to provide time to relocate nene from the property. At the end of the term of the SHA, the Ranch may also remove any nene habitat and return the property to the baseline conditions existing prior to the SHA. Additionally, the Ranch will provide 1-year notice to DLNR and the Service prior to a potential return to baseline conditions to allow DLNR to develop a suitable alternate site and move birds. The SHA may be renewed upon approval by the Service and DLNR.

National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

The development of the draft SHA and the proposed issuance of a permit is a Federal action that triggers the need for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). The Service has made a preliminary determination that the proposed SHA and permit application are eligible for a categorical exclusion under NEPA, based on the following criteria: (1) Implementation of the SHA would result in minor or negligible adverse effects on federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and their habitats; (2) implementation of the SHA would result in minor or negligible adverse effects on other environmental values or resources; and (3) impacts of the SHA, considered together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects, would not result, over time, in cumulative adverse effects to environmental values or resources which would be considered significant. We explain the basis for this determination in more detail in an Environmental Action Statement (EAS) that is also available for public review.

Based on the EAS, we have preliminarily determined that the issuance of the associated permit would have minor or negligible adverse effects on the species covered in the SHA. Therefore, we determined that the SHA qualifies for categorical exclusion under

NEPA, as provided by the Department of the Interior NEPA regulations (43 CFR part 46).

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. Comments and materials we receive, as well as supporting documentation we use in preparing the EAS, will be available for public inspection by appointment, during normal business hours, at our Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**).

Authority

We provide this notice in accordance with the requirements of section 10(c) of the ESA and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22 and 17.32) and NEPA and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Katherine B. Hollar,

Acting Deputy Regional Director, Pacific Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R1-ES-2018-N147];
[FXES114010000-189-FF01E00000]

Proposed Green Diamond Resource Company Candidate Conservation Agreement With Assurances for Fisher in Oregon

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an enhancement of survival permit application from Green Diamond Resource Company pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The requested permit would authorize the incidental take of fisher should the species become federally listed in the future under the ESA. The permit application is associated with a

template candidate conservation agreement with assurances (CCAA) previously developed for the conservation of the fisher. We also have prepared a draft environment action statement (EAS) pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) for the potential issuance of this individual permit. We are making the permit application package and draft EAS available for public review and comment.

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be received from interested parties no later than March 21, 2019.

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 “Green Diamond CCAA.”

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

- **Email:**

GreenDiamondCCAAcomments@fws.gov. Include “Green Diamond 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: Green Diamond 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 (at the above address); call 503-231-6179 to make an appointment. 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:

Richard Szlemp (see **ADDRESSES**); telephone: 503-231-6179; facsimile: 503-231-6195. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an enhancement of survival permit application from Green Diamond Resource Company pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The requested permit would authorize the incidental take of fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) during