

District in the future will be managed according to the direction in this CCP and associated EA and will be incorporated into future revisions and amendments.

Pre-planning for this CCP began in 2016 and three public scoping meetings were conducted in February and March 2017 in Winnett, Roundup, and Laurel, Montana. However, the planning process stalled. On June 29, 2022, the Service published a notice of intent in the **Federal Register** announcing the intent to reinstate the planning process to develop a CCP and EA for the District (87 FR 38775). The Service received comments from two individuals and three organizations during the new scoping comment period, which closed on July 29, 2022. All comments were shared with the planning team and considered throughout the planning process. Some of the valuable comments focused on public opportunity, wildlife resources, and livestock grazing. Findings from public comments and other information were used to develop the proposed action for the District and to analyze the management alternatives.

### Background

#### *Charles M. Russell Wetland Management District*

The District is located within the Northern Great Plains in central and southcentral Montana and is bounded on the north by the Missouri River Breaks and on the south by the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. While it is part of the Charles M. Russell NWR Complex, the District is distinct from the Charles M. Russell NWR in both location and management direction. The District includes wetlands with a mix of grasses, rushes, and occasional greasewood; areas of Ponderosa pine woodlands; creek bottoms filled with cottonwoods; coulees having a mix of juniper, sagebrush, and deciduous shrubs with grass components; and vast, open, flat and rolling grassland hills mixed with sagebrush in some areas. Seasonal and temporary wetland basins provide critical waterfowl and grassland bird habitat for feeding and nesting. The District also lies on the western edge of the Central Flyway and near the eastern edge of the Pacific Flyway. The core of the District's work is managing wetland habitat to benefit waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds.

### National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

This CCP is being developed in accordance with the requirements of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C.

668dd-668ee), as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (Improvement Act; Pub. L. 105–57); the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); other appropriate Federal laws and regulations; and the policies and procedures for compliance with those laws and regulations.

### Tribal Responsibilities

The Service has unique responsibilities to Tribes, including under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306101 *et seq.*); the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (42 U.S.C. 1996); the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 *et seq.*); the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 2000bb *et seq.*); Joint Secretarial Order 3403, Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters (Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture; November 15, 2021); Secretarial Order 3206, American Indian Tribal Rights, Federal-Tribal Trust Responsibilities, and the Endangered Species Act (Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture; June 5, 1997); Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites (61 FR 26771; May 29, 1996); and the Service's Native American Policy. We apply the term "Tribal" or "Tribe(s)" generally to federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Tribal entities. We will refer to Native Hawaiian Organizations separately when we intend to include those entities.

The Service will separately consult with Tribes on the proposals set forth in this CCP. We will also ensure that those Tribes wishing to engage directly in the planning process will have the opportunity to do so. As part of this process, we will protect the confidential nature of any consultations and other communications we have with Tribes, to the extent permitted by the Freedom of Information Act and other laws.

### Review and Comment

At the end of the review and comment period for the draft CCP, comments will be analyzed by the Service and addressed in the final CCP. All information provided voluntarily by mail, by phone, or at public meetings (e.g., names, addresses, letters of comment, input recorded during meetings) becomes part of the official public record. 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, the Service cannot guarantee we will be able to do so. Authority

This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd).

**Matthew Hogan,**

*Regional Director, Mountain-Prairie Region.*

[FR Doc. 2024–31631 Filed 1–13–25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333–15–P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS–R2–ES–2024–0185; FXES  
11140200000–256–FF02ENEH00]

#### **Notice of Availability; Draft Amendments to the Oil and Gas and Renewable (Wind and Solar) Energy, Power Line, and Communication Tower Habitat Conservation Plans for the Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas**

**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 applications from LPC Conservation LLC (applicant) for amended incidental take permits (permits) supported by proposed amendments to the "Oil and Gas and Renewable (Wind and Solar) Energy, Power Line, and Communication Tower Habitat Conservation Plans for the Lesser Prairie-chicken; Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas" (HCPs). With this notice, we announce the availability for public comment of the permit applications, the proposed HCP amendments, and the draft environmental assessments (EAs). Currently, we are only accepting comments on the amended portions of the HCPs and EAs. We invite comments from the public and Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments.

**DATES:** We must receive your written comments on or before February 13, 2025.

**ADDRESSES:**

*Obtaining Documents:* The documents this notice announces, as well as any comments and materials that we receive, will be available for public

inspection online in Docket No. FWS–R2–ES–2024–0185 at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

**Submitting Comments:** If you wish to submit comments on any of the documents, you may do so in writing by one of the following methods:

- **Online:** <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS–R2–ES–2024–0185.

- **U.S. mail:** Public Comments

Processing; Attn: Docket No. FWS–R2–ES–2024–0185; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; MS: PRB/3W; 5275 Leesburg Pike; Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Clay Nichols, Lesser Prairie-Chicken Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services, Southwest Regional Office; telephone 817–471–6372. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), make available for public comment applications submitted by LPC Conservation LLC (applicant) for amended incidental take permits (permits) under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) supported by proposed amendments to the “Oil and Gas and Renewable (Wind and Solar) Energy, Power Line, and Communication Tower Habitat Conservation Plan for the Lesser Prairie-chicken; Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas” (HCPs) and the associated draft environmental assessments (EAs). If approved, the requested amendments would expand the plan areas of the HCPs to the north to reflect updates to the lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*; LEPC) estimated occupied range (EOR) made in 2022 by the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Interstate Working Group. By expanding the HCP plan areas, the HCPs would have the ability to provide LEPC conservation, as well as incidental take permit coverage for covered activities, throughout the entire 2022 EOR boundary.

### Background

Section 9 of the ESA and our implementing regulations at 50 CFR part 17 prohibit the “take” of fish or wildlife species listed as endangered or

threatened. Take is defined under the ESA as to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect listed animal species, or to attempt to engage in such conduct” (16 U.S.C. 1538(19)). However, under section 10(a) of the ESA, we may issue permits to authorize incidental take of listed species. “Incidental take” is defined by the ESA as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity. Regulations governing such take of endangered and threatened species are found at 50 CFR 17.21 and 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.31 and 17.32, respectively.

### Proposed Action

The proposed action is the issuance of amended incidental take permits (permits) under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA supported by proposed amendments to the “Oil and Gas and Renewable (Wind and Solar) Energy, Power Line, and Communication Tower Habitat Conservation Plan for the Lesser Prairie-chicken; Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas” (HCPs) to be consistent with changes in the HCP plan areas, as well as other administrative changes.

The HCPs were approved and permitted by the Service on December 1, 2021 (Renewables HCP), and May 27, 2022 (Oil and Gas HCP). At the time of approval and permit issuance, the plan area for the HCPs was the 2013 LEPC EOR boundary plus a 10-mile buffer. In 2022, after the Service’s approval of the HCPs and issuance of the permits, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Interstate Working Group revised the EOR of the LEPC to expand the range boundaries north and east to include LEPC occurrence documented in Colorado and to connect to the Kansas Shortgrass/Conservation Reserve Program Mosaic. The proposed amendments update the HCPs and permit to incorporate the revised EOR boundary and expand the plan area boundaries in the HCPs accordingly.

The proposed amendments include updated text, figures, and captions resulting from the update to the EOR and plan area. In addition, the amendments include updates to terminology used in figure legends; miscellaneous formatting, spelling, or grammatical corrections; and updates to the certificate of inclusion (CI) application found in Appendix B of each HCP. No changes are proposed to the duration of the HCPs and associated permits, covered activities, or original incidental take estimates.

### Alternatives

We are considering one alternative to the proposed action as part of this process, the no action alternative. Under the no action alternative, the Service would not approve the proposed amendments and would not issue the amended permits. In this case, the plan areas for the HCPs would remain as defined in the approved HCPs and permits.

### Next Steps

We will evaluate the permit applications, proposed amendments, draft EAs, and comments we receive to determine whether the applications meet the requirements of the ESA, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and implementing regulations. If we determine that all requirements are met, we will approve the amendments and issue the amended permits under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA to the applicant, in accordance with the terms of the HCPs and specific terms and conditions of the authorizing permits. We will not make our final decision until after the 30-day comment period ends and we have fully considered all comments received during the public comment period.

### Public Availability of Comments

All comments we receive become part of the public record associated with this action. If you submit a comment at <https://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 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 hardcopy document to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, 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.

### Authority

We provide this notice under the authority of section 10(c) of the ESA and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22 and 17.32) and NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and its implementing

regulations (40 CFR 1500 through 1508 and 43 CFR part 46).

**Amy Lueders,**

*Regional Director, Southwest Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 2025–00566 Filed 1–13–25; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

[Docket No. FWS–R4–ES–2024–0190; FXES1114040000–256–FF04EF4000]

**Receipt of Incidental Take Permit Application and Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan for the Sand Skink and Blue-tailed Mole-skink; Polk County, FL; Categorical Exclusion**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from ADH Rollins Court, LLC (applicant) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act. The applicant requests the ITP to take the federally listed sand skink (*Plestiodon reynoldsi*) and blue-tailed mole skink (*Eumeces egregius lividus*) incidental to the construction of a residential development in Polk County, Florida. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant's proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), and on the Service's preliminary determination that the proposed permitting action may be eligible for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, the Department of the Interior's (DOI) NEPA regulations, and the DOI Departmental Manual. To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review. We invite comment from the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies.

**DATES:** We must receive your written comments on or before February 13, 2025.

**ADDRESSES:**

*Obtaining Documents:* The documents this notice announces, as well as any comments and other materials that we receive, will be available for public inspection online in Docket No. FWS–R4–ES–2024–0190 at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

*Submitting Comments:* If you wish to submit comments on any of the documents, you may do so in writing by one of the following methods:

- *Online:* <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS–R4–ES–2024–0190.

- *U.S. mail:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS–R4–ES–2024–0190; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB/3W, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Al Begazo, by U.S. mail (see **ADDRESSES**), by telephone at 772–226–8134, or via email at [alfredo\\_begazo@fws.gov](mailto:alfredo_begazo@fws.gov). Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce receipt of an application from ADH Rollins Court, LLC (applicant) for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The applicant requests the ITP to take the sand skink (*Plestiodon reynoldsi*) and blue-tailed mole skink (*Eumeces egregius lividus*) (skinks), federally listed as threatened under the ESA, incidental to the construction of a residential development in Polk County, Florida. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant's habitat conservation plan (HCP), and on the Service's preliminary determination that this proposed ITP qualifies as low effect, and may qualify for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1501.4), the Department of the Interior's (DOI) NEPA regulations (43 CFR part 46), and the DOI's Departmental Manual (516 DM 8.5(C)(2)). To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review.

**Proposed Project**

The applicant requests a 5-year ITP to take skinks via the conversion of approximately 5.46 acres (ac) of occupied nesting, foraging, and sheltering skink habitat incidental to the construction of a residential development on 46 ac on Polk County

Parcels 27–27–11–735500–000140 and 27–27–11–734500–030300 within Section 11, Township 27 South, Range 27 East, Polk County, Florida. The applicant proposes to mitigate for take of skinks through the purchase 10.92 ac of conservation credits (in accordance with the Service's 2:1 mitigation ratio guidelines) from a Service-authorized conservation bank prior to engaging in any phase of the project.

**Our Preliminary Determination**

The Service has made a preliminary determination that the applicant's proposed project, including the construction of a residential development and associated infrastructure (e.g., electric, water, and sewer lines), would individually and cumulatively have a minor or negligible effect on the skinks and the human environment. Therefore, we have preliminarily determined that the proposed ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would be a low-effect ITP that individually or cumulatively would have a minor effect on the skinks and may qualify for application of a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations, DOI's NEPA regulations, and the DOI Departmental Manual. A low-effect ITP is one that would result in (1) minor or nonsignificant effects on species covered in the HCP; (2) nonsignificant effects on the human environment; and (3) impacts that, when added together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, would not result in significant cumulative effects to the human environment.

**Next Steps**

The Service will evaluate the application and the comments to determine whether to issue the requested ITP. We will also conduct an intra-Service consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA to evaluate the effects of the proposed take. After considering the preceding and other matters, we will determine whether the permit issuance criteria of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA have been met. If met, the Service will issue ITP number PER11450292 to ADH Rollins Court, LLC.

**Public Availability of Comments**

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made available to the public. If you submit a