

management approach through improved biological monitoring. Alternative B would best support the purpose for which the refuge was established.

The refuge would be managed with an active hands-on, labor intensive approach. The refuge would intensely manage up to 1,500 acres of early successional wetlands. Succession would be controlled with more aggressive drawdown cycles, more frequent soil disturbance, and by implementing a more focused fire management program. Public use opportunities would generally increase under this alternative but hunting and fishing opportunities would remain at the same level that is currently occurring with the exception of rabbit hunting. Facilities such as trails, boardwalks, observation platforms, and photography blinds would be improved. The refuge would increase its emphasis on environmental education and interpretation.

Archery hunting for resident deer would continue to manage populations and provide hunting opportunities for archers. Snipe and dove hunting would continue. A lottery waterfowl hunt would be allowed for youth with parental or guardian supervision. The purpose of the youth hunt is to provide opportunities for public access to waterfowl hunting because these opportunities are limited state-wide and would introduce young hunters to a safe controlled hunting environment. The experimental rabbit hunt would be discontinued due to declining public interest and conflicting management activities. Habitat that is managed for wintering waterfowl is not favorable for a quality rabbit hunt and harvest. Commercial alligator harvest would continue in cooperation with Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and would be by lottery only. Commercial guides for wildlife viewing, photography, and environmental education and interpretation would be permitted. Existing fishing areas on the refuge would be improved. Research and monitoring would be enhanced. Programs that promote the beneficial use of dredge material would be allowed. Current partnerships that assist the refuge in accomplishing its conservation objectives would continue under this alternative, however, the refuge would strive to develop new partnerships with conservation groups and state agencies. Communication with local landowners and community groups would continue in order to promote wildlife conservation and the National Wildlife Refuge System. A more aggressive approach to removal of

undesirable plants and animals would be implemented. Cultural resources would continue to be protected and interpretation of cultural resources would be improved.

Under Alternative C, the refuge would degrade all levees to an extent defined as the "nearest marsh elevation found in the area." The refuge would then be in custodial form. No active habitat management would be applied. Staff would serve as caretakers of the refuge, observing and monitoring the natural forces and ecological succession that would shape its habitats and effectively determine their suitability for wildlife. Water management capability would cease and no mechanical or prescribed fire disturbances would occur. Use of fire would be limited to hazardous fuel reduction and suppression of wildfires. Removal of undesirable plants and animals would be minimal. Enjoyment of opportunities for public use may decline because wildlife diversity and abundance may be reduced under this alternative. Cultural resources would continue to be protected and interpretation of cultural resources would be improved.

#### Actions Common to All Alternatives

All three alternatives share the following management concepts and techniques for achieving the goals of the refuge:

- Protecting a variety of freshwater marsh and upland prairie habitat;
- Serving as a critical resting area for waterfowl in a heavily hunted area;
- Establishing, maintaining, and improving partnerships with landowners and local, state, and Federal agencies and organizations;
- Coordinating management actions with local and state land and resource management agencies; and
- Encouraging scientific research on the refuge.

**DATES:** An Open House will be held at the refuge on August 18, 2005, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. to present the plan to the public. The refuge headquarters is located at 1428 Highway 27, Bell City, Louisiana. Individuals wishing to comment on the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge should do so no later than September 12, 2005. Public comments were requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process. Public outreach has included public scoping meetings, technical workgroups, planning updates, and a **Federal Register** notice.

**ADDRESSES:** Requests for copies of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan

and Environmental Assessment should be addressed to Judy McClendon, Natural Resource Planner, Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, 1428 Highway 27, Bell City, Louisiana 70630; Telephone 337/598-2216; Fax 337/598-2492. Comments on the draft may be submitted to the above address or via electronic mail to [judy\\_mcclendon@fws.gov](mailto:judy_mcclendon@fws.gov). Please include your name and return address in your internet message. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home addresses from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, located in southwestern Louisiana, consists of 9,621 acres of freshwater marsh, coastal prairie, and early successional wetlands, and is managed to preserve and protect wintering waterfowl and their habitat. Cameron Prairie is one of three refuges comprising the Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Annually, about 30,000 visitors participate in refuge activities, including recreational fishing, recreational hunting, wildlife photography, wildlife observation, and environmental education and interpretation.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: January 6, 2004.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**  
*Acting Regional Director.*

Editorial note:

This document was received at the Office of the Federal Register July 22, 2005.

[FR Doc. 05-14785 Filed 7-26-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge in Sebastian, Florida.

**SUMMARY:** The Fish and Wildlife Service announces that a Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental

Assessment for Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge are available for review and comment. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the Service to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a comprehensive conservation plan is to provide refuge managers with 15-year strategy for achieving refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, conservation, legal mandates, and Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitat, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

**ADDRESSES:** Requests for copies of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment should be addressed to Mr. Paul Tritaik, Refuge Manager, Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida 32960; Telephone 772/562-3909, extension 275; Fax 772/299-3101. The draft plan and environmental assessment may be accessed and downloaded from the Service's Web site <http://southeast.fws.gov/planning/>.

**DATES:** Individuals wishing to comment on the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge should do so no later than September 26, 2005. Comments on the draft plan and environmental assessment may be submitted to Ms. Cheri Ehrhardt, Planning Team Leader, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, P.O. Box 6504, Titusville, Florida 32782-6504; Telephone 321/861-2368; Fax 321/861-1276, or may be submitted via electronic mail to [cheri\\_ehrhardt@fws.gov](mailto:cheri_ehrhardt@fws.gov). Please include your name and return address in your message. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home addresses from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The draft plan identifies and evaluates three alternatives for managing the refuge over the next 15 years. Under

Alternative A, management would continue with programs following the same direction, emphasis, and intensity as historically occurred. No active management would address threatened and endangered species; neotropical migratory birds; shorebirds; natural and spoil islands; estuarine habitats; fish species; fish and wildlife disturbance; aquatic exotic, invasive, and nuisance species; seagrass beds; commercial operations on the refuge; and research activities occurring on the refuge. Few wildlife surveys would be conducted by the refuge. Limited management activities would address exotic, invasive, and nuisance species in transitional and upland habitats. Under Alternative A, the Kroegel Homestead would not be protected by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Further, no visitor center facility would be developed. Little or no patrol and enforcement would be provided to vulnerable archaeological sites of the refuge. Recreational activities would continue as currently offered, under the current lease with the State of Florida. Recreational activities (e.g., jet skiing and island camping) that are currently negatively impacting refuge wildlife and habitat would continue to occur under the current lease with the State of Florida. Refuge staff would continue at 6 or fewer staff members.

Under Alternative B, management activities would minimally expand. Management activities would complete shoreline restoration of Pelican Island proper, expand the buffer of Pelican Island proper in accord with current research, and conduct regular patrol and enforcement activities. Further, management activities would expand to conduct baseline surveys for neotropical migratory birds; shorebirds; exotic, invasive, and nuisance species; and native wildlife using the refuge. Special use permits would be required for all research and commercial activities on the refuge. The refuge would pursue partnerships to protect key fish and spawning and settlement sites, to limit disturbance. The refuge would enhance opportunities for passive recreative, including observing and photographing wildlife, providing environmental education opportunities through partners, and interpreting the refuge. Fishing activities would continue to occur, under the current lease with the State of Florida. Other recreational activities (e.g., jet skiing and island camping) that are currently negatively impacting refuge wildlife and habitat would continue to occur under the current lease with the State of Florida. Regular patrol and enforcement

activities would help limit negative impacts to archaeological sites on the refuge. Under Alternative B, the Kroegel Homestead would not be protected by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Further, no visitor center facility would be developed. To accomplish the outlined expansions in the biological, public use, and law enforcement programs, the staff level would expand to a total of nine.

Alternative C, the preferred alternative, moderately expands refuge management activities to a level more in keeping with resources protected in the developed and developing landscape that surrounds the refuge. Under Alternative C, the biological program would expand to encompass management activities addressing rare, threatened, and endangered species; migratory birds; and wildlife diversity, including managing research projects, restoring and creating appropriate habitats, mapping key sites, collecting data, coordinating with education and management partners, and monitoring occurrences. Baseline data collection and habitat management activities would be directed towards neotropical migratory birds, shorebirds, native wildlife, and fish and wildlife disturbance. To limit wildlife and habitat disturbance and to provide better management of and protection for wildlife and habitats of the refuge, the refuge would work with the State of Florida and other governmental partners to alter existing agreements to enable the enforcement of Service regulations on all refuge managed lands and waters. Key fish spawning and settlement sites would be protected. Only compatible public use activities would be allowed to occur on all refuge owned or managed lands and waters. All uses not meeting the requirements of compatibility would be eliminated from the refuge (e.g., jet skiing and island camping). Fishing activities would include bank fishing from select upland sites. Signs, boardwalks, additional trails, and a wildlife drive would enhance existing recreational opportunities, including wildlife observation and photography and interpretation. All other activities on the refuge, such as research activities and commercial operations, would be required to obtain and maintain refuge special use permits. The refuge would work with the partners to acquire, manage, and list in the National Historic Register the Kroegel Homestead, home to the first refuge manager. The refuge would develop a modest visitor center and other visitor use facilities. Regular patrol and enforcement activities would help limit negative impacts to wildlife,

habitats, historical resources, and archaeological sites of the refuges. To enable the implementation of management activities outlined under Alternative C, the refuge volunteer program would more than double from current levels and refuge staff would be expanded to eleven.

Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1903 by President Roosevelt "as a preserve and breeding ground for native birds" through an unnumbered Executive Order. Located across the Intracoastal Waterway from Sebastian, Florida, in Indian River County in southeastern Florida, the refuge manages over 5,400 acres of estuarine, transitional, and upland habitats supporting 14 federally listed species and 45 state listed species, as well as a wide variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, fishes, invertebrates, and plants. Although the refuge exists in an increasingly developed landscape, it supports key fish spawning sites, a globally important juvenile sea turtle habitat, and important bird rookeries. Given its location in a transitional zone between subtropical and temperate climates, refuge supports highly diverse resident and migratory species. Over 600 wildlife species have been confirmed on the refuge with hundreds more expected to occur with more extensive surveys. Over 130 species of birds, over 200 species of fish, and 250 species of plants have been confirmed on the refuge.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: January 25, 2005.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

**Editorial Note:** This document was received at the Office of the Federal Register, July 22, 2005.

[FR Doc. 05-14796 Filed 7-26-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge

**ACTION:** Notice of application for a natural gas pipeline right-of-way on Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Washington and Hyde Counties, North Carolina.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that under Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (41 Stat. 449; 30 U.S.C. 185), as amended by Public Law 93-153, the

Eastern North Carolina Natural Gas Company has applied for a permit to construct an 8-inch natural gas pipeline in a 35 foot wide right-of-way. The right-of-way will start at where Canal E Road enters Pungo Unit of the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and running approximately for 8.1 miles. This pipeline right-of-way will be on, under, and across a strip of land lying in Washington and Hyde Counties, in the State of North Carolina. The Fish and Wildlife Service is currently considering the merits of approving this application.

**DATES:** Interested persons desiring to comment on this application must do so by August 26, 2005.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments or requests for additional information should be addressed to Ms. Jackie Cumpton, Refuges and Wildlife (Realty), Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 420, Atlanta, Georgia 30345, telephone (404) 679-7160; fax (404) 679-7273.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** If you wish to comment, you may do so by one of the following methods. You may mail comments to the above address. You may also comment via the Internet at the following address:

*Jackie\_Cumpton@fws.gov*. Please include your name and return address in your Internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your Internet message, contact us at the above phone number or address. Our practice is to make comments, including names and address of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law.

The Fish and Wildlife Services is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

**Authority:** The authority to publish this notice is contained in 30 U.S.C. 185(k).

Dated: June 29, 2005.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

[FR Doc. 05-14795 Filed 7-26-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Geological Survey

#### Request for Public Comments on a Proposed New Information Collection To Be Submitted to OMB for Review Under the Paperwork Reduction Act

A request for a new information collection described below will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). Copies of the proposed collection may be obtained by contacting the USGS Clearance Officer at the phone number listed below. Comments on the proposal should be made within 60 days to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 807 National Center, Reston, VA 20192.

As required by OMB regulations at 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1), the USGS solicits specific public comments as to:

1. Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions on the bureaus, including whether the information will have practical utility;
2. The accuracy of the bureau's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
3. The quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
4. How to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology.

*Title:* National Water Information System Survey.

*OMB Approval No.:* New collection.

**SUMMARY:** The collection of information referred herein applies to a World-Wide Web site questionnaire to be placed on the U.S. Geological Survey NWISWeb Web site (<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>). The optional survey will assist in identifying the types of customers who use the NWISWeb system, their needs and their satisfaction levels. In particular it will request detailed feedback from users who use the NWISWeb to electronically collect the system's data, so that their needs can be incorporated into future changes to NWISWeb.

*Estimated Completion Time:* 10 minutes.

*Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:* 10,000.

*Frequency:* No frequency. Filling out the survey is wholly voluntary but would normally be done only once per user.