

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 habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education and interpretation.

The staffing and funding for Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge support both Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges as a complex.

Alternatives

The Service developed and analyzed three alternatives for managing the refuge and chose Alternative 2 as the proposed alternative. The proposed action is to adopt and implement a comprehensive conservation plan for the refuge that best achieves the refuge's purpose, vision, and goals; contributes to the National Wildlife Refuge System mission; addresses the significant issues and relevant mandates; and is consistent with principles of sound fish and wildlife management.

Alternative 1 is a proposal to maintain the current management. The refuge currently manages its impoundments intensively by managing water levels and vegetation to create optimum habitat for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and aquatic organisms. It also manages marshes and pine forests with prescribed fire. The staff surveys waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds on a routine basis. The refuge allows the six priority public use activities: Hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation. The staff conducts extensive environmental education and interpretation programs with the assistance of 10,000 hours of volunteer service every year. The total complex staff consists of 26 positions, with 19.7 of these assigned to manage Alligator River Refuge. The staff manages the refuge from a rented building in Manteo, 10 miles east of the refuge.

Alternative 2, the proposed alternative, proposes moderate program increases. The refuge would continue to manage its impoundments intensively by managing water levels and vegetation to create optimum habitat for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and aquatic organisms. The marshes and pine forests would be managed with prescribed fire. The staff would

inventory and monitor fire-dependent habitats to document their conditions and assess the effectiveness of management. Waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds would be surveyed on a routine basis. The staff would also document the presence of wildlife species as they are found and document the density of invertebrates in moist-soil units. The refuge would allow the six priority public use activities: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation. The staff would conduct extensive environmental education and interpretation programs with the assistance of 12,000 hours of volunteer service every year. Programs would be conducted on the refuge and in the newly constructed visitor center. Under this alternative, the refuge staff would be increased by 7.05 positions, for a total of 26.75 positions to manage Alligator River Refuge. The staff would manage the refuge from a Service-owned building in Manteo, 10 miles east of the refuge.

Alternative 3 proposes substantial program increases. The refuge would continue to manage its impoundments intensively by managing water levels and vegetation to create optimum habitat for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and aquatic organisms. It also would manage marshes and pine forests with prescribed fire and deciduous forests with thinning. The staff would inventory and monitor all habits to document their conditions and assess the effectiveness of management. All wildlife species would be surveyed on a routine basis. The staff would also document the presence of wildlife species as they are found and document the density of invertebrates in moist-soil units. The refuge would allow the six priority public use activities: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation. The staff would conduct extensive environmental education and interpretation programs with the assistance of 15,000 hours of volunteer service every year. The staff would conduct programs on the refuge and in the newly constructed visitor center. Under the alternative, the refuge staff would be increased by 17.75 positions, for a total of 37.45 positions to manage Alligator River Refuge. The staff would manage the refuge from a Service-owned building in Manteo, 10 miles east of the refuge.

Meetings will be held in Manns Harbor, North Carolina, to present the Draft CCP/EA to the public. Mailings, newspaper articles, and postings on the refuge website will be the avenues to

inform the public of the dates and times of the meetings. After the review and comment period for the Draft CCP/EA, all comments will be analyzed and considered by the Service. All comments received from individuals on the Draft CCP/EA become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and Service and Departmental policies and procedures.

Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, in northeast North Carolina, consists of 152,260 acres in fee simple ownership. On the refuge, 38,533 acres are pond pine shrub pocosin, 30,400 acres are pond pine cane pocosin, 25,204 acres are brackish marsh, 12,236 acres are non-alluvial hardwood forest, 11,380 acres are mixed pine hardwood forest, and 8,468 acres are Atlantic white cedar swamp. These habitats support a variety of wildlife species, including red wolves, red-cockaded woodpeckers, waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, marsh birds, and neotropical migratory songbirds.

The refuge hosts more than 100,000 visitors annually who participate in hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, 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: April 10, 2006.

Cynthia K. Dohner,
Acting Regional Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Delta and Breton National Wildlife Refuges

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Delta National Wildlife Refuge in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, and Breton National Wildlife Refuge in St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parishes, Louisiana.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act

of 1969 and its implementing regulations.

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 a 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 habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

The purpose of this notice is to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document.

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be received no later than June 29, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Comments, questions, and requests for more information regarding the planning process for Delta and Breton National Wildlife Refuges should be sent to: Refuge Manager, Delta and Breton National Wildlife Refuges, Southeast Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 61389 Highway 434, Lacombe, Louisiana 70445. Comments may also be submitted electronically to: Charlotte_Parker@fws.gov; or by telephone: 985/882-2000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The comprehensive conservation planning process will consider many elements, including wildlife and habitat management, habitat protection and acquisition, wilderness preservation, public recreational activities, industrial use, and cultural resource preservation. Public input into this planning process is essential. Open house style meetings and focus group meetings will be held throughout the scoping phase of the planning process for each refuge. The Service will conduct a cultural resources overview study in support of the comprehensive conservation plan. The professional study will identify known sites on the refuge.

Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media announcements will inform people of opportunities for written input throughout the planning process. Information on this process will be posted on the Internet at <http://southeastlouisiana.fws.gov>. All comments received from individuals become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations [40 CFR 1506.6(f)].

Delta National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1935. Its 49,000 acres were formed by the deposition of sediment carried by the Mississippi River. The primary purpose of the refuge is to provide sanctuary and habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Breton National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1904 through executive order of President Theodore Roosevelt. It's the second-oldest refuge among the National Wildlife Refuge System. Its objectives are to provide sanctuary for nesting and wintering seabirds, to protect and conserve the wilderness character of the islands, and to provide sandy beach habitat for a variety of wildlife species.

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

Dated: April 13, 2006.

Cynthia K. Dohner,

Acting Regional Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-920-1320-EL, WYW172693]

Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, WY

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Cordero Mining Company, WYW172693, WY.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 2(b) of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended by section 4 of the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, 90 Stat. 1083, 30 U.S.C. 201 (b), and to the regulations adopted as 43 CFR part 3410, all interested qualified parties, as provided in 43 CFR 3472.1, are hereby invited to participate with Cordero Mining Company on a pro rata cost

sharing basis in its program for the exploration of coal deposits owned by the United States of America in the following-described lands in Campbell County, WY:

T. 46 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming

Sec. 4: Lot 8, 9, 16, 17;

Sec. 5: Lots 5-20;

Sec. 8: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 9: Lots 6-8;

Sec. 10: Lots 7-10;

Sec. 11: Lots 13-16;

Sec. 14: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 15: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 17: Lots 1-15;

T. 47 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming

Sec. 7: Lots 6-11, 14-19;

Sec. 17: Lots 1-15, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 18: Lots 5-20;

Sec. 19: Lots 5-20;

Sec. 20: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 21: Lots 4, 5, 12, 13;

Sec. 28: Lots 4, 5, 12, 13;

Sec. 29: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 30: Lots 5-20;

Sec. 31: Lots 5-19, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 32: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 33: Lots 4, 5, 12, 13;

T. 47 N., R. 72 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming

Sec. 12: Lots 1-16;

Sec. 13: Lots 1, 2, 7-10, 15, 16;

Sec. 24: Lots 1, 2, 7-10, 15, 16.

Containing 11,216.65 acres, more or less.

DATES: Written Notice of Intent to Participate in Exploration License WYW172693 should be addressed to the attention of both of the following persons and must be received by them 30 days after publication of this Notice of Invitation in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the exploration plan are available for review during normal business hours in the following offices (serialized under number WYW172693): Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003; and, Bureau of Land Management, Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604. The written notice should be sent to the following addresses: Cordero Mining Company, c/o Kennecott Energy and Coal Company, Attn: Tom Suchomel, Caller Box 3009, Gillette, WY 82717, and the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, Branch of Solid Minerals, Attn: Mavis Love, PO Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All of the coal in the above-described land consists of unleased Federal coal within the Powder River Basin Known Coal Leasing Area. The purpose of the exploration program is to obtain supplemental geotechnical data from previous drilling programs and to assess the reserves contained in a potential lease. The proposed exploration