

TABLE 3.—PUBLIC LANDS ADJACENT TO DESIGNATED CRITICAL HABITAT UNITS—Continued

Unit 5. Choctawhatchee—Choctawhatchee River SF, Choctawhatchee River Delta Preserve, Choctawhatchee River WtrMA.
Unit 6. Apalachicola—Chattahoochee Nature Park, Torreya SP, Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve, Apalachicola WMA, Apalachicola River WtrMA, Apalachicola NF, Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
Unit 7. Suwannee—Ft. Union CA, Holton Creek CA, Suwannee River SP CA, Twin Rivers SF, Madison Co. CA, Anderson Spring CA, Charles Spring CA, Allen Mill Pond CA, Peacock Spring CA, Little River CA, Troy Springs CA, Grady CA, Stuart Landing CA, Hatchbend CA, Rock Bluff CA, Log Landing CA, Wanee CA, Fanning Springs SRA, Andrews WMA, Manatee Springs SP, Fowler's Bluff CA, Cummer Sanctuary, Lower Suwannee NWR, Troy Springs SP, Convict Spring CA, Yellow Jacket CA, Suwannee River SP, Big Shoals SP, Big Shoals CA, Camp Branch CA, Deep Creek CA, Stephen Foster State Folk Culture Center, Suwannee Valley CA, Swift Creek CA, Woods Ferry CA
Unit 8. Lake Borgne, Mississippi Sound, Lake Pontchartrain—Biloxi WMA, Bayou Sauvage NWR, Big Branch Marsh NWR, Grand Bay NWR, Gulf Islands NS, Buccaneer SP, St. Hospital WMA, Fontainebleau SP, St. Tammany SWR, Pearl River WMA, Fort Pike State Historic Site
Unit 9. Pensacola Bay—Gulf Islands NS, Eglin AFB, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Garcon Point WMD, Yellow River WtMR, Lower Escambia River Mgt. Area, Bay Bluffs Park, Escambia Bay Bluffs, Fort Pickens AP, Yellow River Marsh AP
Unit 10. Santa Rosa Sound—Gulf Islands NS, Eglin AFB.
Unit 11. Near Shore GOM—Gulf Islands NS, Eglin AFB (main base and Cape San Blas), St. Vincent NWR, St. Joe SP, Salina Park, Tyndall AFB, St. Andrew SP, Camp Helen SRA, Deer Lake SP, Grayton SRA, Topsail Hill St. Preserve, Henderson SRA, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Perdido Key SRA, Fort Pickens AP, St. Andrew Bay AP, St. Joseph Bay AP
Unit 12. Choctawhatchee Bay—Choctawhatchee River Delta Preserve, Rocky Bayou State Recreation SRA, Eglin AFB, Basin Bayou Recreation Area.
Unit 13. Apalachicola Bay—St. Vincent NWR, St. George Island SP, Apalachicola WMA, Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, Apalachicola Bay AP
Unit 14. Suwannee Sound—Lower Suwannee NWR, Cedar Keys NWR, Big Bend Seagrasses AP.

* Abbreviations—AFB=Air Force Base, AP=Aquatic Preserve, CA=Conservation Area, NF=National Forest, NS=National Seashore, NWR=National Wildlife Refuge, SCA=State Commemorative Area, SF=State Forest, SP=State Park, SRA=State Recreation Area, SWR=State Wildlife Refuge, WMA=Wildlife Management Area, WMD=Water Management District, WtrMA=Water Management Area.

Effects of Critical Habitat Designation

Section 7 Consultation

Section 7(a)(2) of the Act requires Federal agencies, including us, to insure that their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. The regulatory effects of a critical habitat designation under the Act are triggered through the provisions of section 7, which applies to all activities conducted, authorized, or funded by a Federal agency (Federal actions). Regulations implementing this interagency cooperation provision of the Act are codified at 50 CFR part 402. Individuals, organizations, States, local governments, and other non-Federal entities are affected by the designation of critical habitat if their actions occur on Federal lands, require Federal authorization, or involve Federal funding.

Consultation for Designated Critical Habitat

If a Federal action may affect a listed species or its designated critical habitat, the action agency must initiate consultation with us (50 CFR 402.14). Through this consultation, we would advise the agency whether the action would likely jeopardize the continued existence of the species or destroy or adversely modify its critical habitat, or both.

When we issue a biological opinion that concludes that an action is likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat, we must

provide reasonable and prudent alternatives to the action, if any are identifiable. Reasonable and prudent alternatives are actions identified during consultation that can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the proposed action, are consistent with the scope of the action agency's authority and jurisdiction, are economically and technologically feasible, and would likely avoid the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat (50 CFR 402.02).

Reinitiation of Prior Consultations

Following designation of critical habitat, regulations at 50 CFR 402.16 require a Federal agency to reinitiate consultation for previously reviewed actions that may affect critical habitat and over which the agency has retained discretionary involvement or control.

Activities That May Destroy or Adversely Modify Gulf Sturgeon Critical Habitat

Section 4(b)(8) of the Act requires us, in any proposed or final rule designating critical habitat, to briefly describe and evaluate those activities that may adversely modify such habitat, or that may be affected by such designation, to the maximum extent practicable. Activities that may destroy or adversely modify critical habitat for the Gulf sturgeon, or that may be affected by such designation, include, but are not limited to the following actions when authorized, funded or carried out by a Federal agency:

(1) Actions that would appreciably reduce the abundance of riverine prey for larval and juvenile sturgeon, or of

estuarine and marine prey for juvenile and adult Gulf sturgeon, within a designated critical habitat unit, such as dredging; dredged material disposal; channelization; in-stream mining; and land uses that cause excessive turbidity or sedimentation.

(2) Actions that would appreciably reduce the suitability of Gulf sturgeon spawning sites for egg deposition and development within a designated critical habitat unit, such as impoundment; hard-bottom removal for navigation channel deepening; dredged material disposal; in-stream mining; and land uses that cause excessive sedimentation.

(3) Actions that would appreciably reduce the suitability of Gulf sturgeon riverine aggregation areas, also referred to as resting, holding, and staging areas, used by adult, subadult, and/or juveniles, believed necessary for minimizing energy expenditures and possibly for osmoregulatory functions, such as dredged material disposal upstream or directly within such areas; and other land uses that cause excessive sedimentation.

(4) Actions that would alter the flow regime (the magnitude, frequency, duration, seasonality, and rate-of-change of fresh water discharge over time) of a riverine critical habitat unit such that it is appreciably impaired for the purposes of Gulf sturgeon migration, resting, staging, breeding site selection, courtship, egg fertilization, egg deposition, and egg development, such as impoundment; water diversion; and dam operations.

(5) Actions that would alter water quality within a designated critical