

comment period has been considered in the preparation of this final revised recovery plan, and is summarized in the appendix to the plan. As we move forward to implement the final recovery plan, we welcome public input and comment regarding our implementation efforts.

The southern (California) sea otter was listed as threatened on January 14, 1977 (42 FR 2968). It is also recognized as a depleted population pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Reduced range and population size, vulnerability to oil spills, and the oil spill risk from coastal tanker traffic were the primary reasons listing of the sea otter. The southern sea otter population contains about 2,150 individuals and ranges between Half Moon Bay and Point Conception, California. Approximately 27 otters, including pups, are at San Nicolas Island as a result of translocation efforts to establish an experimental population. After review of new biological information, we, with the assistance of the Southern Sea Otter Recovery Team, drafted a revised recovery plan for public review and comment in 1991. A second draft revision was released for public review in 1996. After review of public comments on those drafts, and review of new technical information regarding oil spill risk to southern sea otters, we, with the assistance of the Southern Sea Otter Recovery Team and technical consultants, completed a new draft revised recovery plan, which was released to the public for comment in January 2000. Public comments were reviewed by the Southern Sea Otter Recovery Team and us, and changes based on these comments are incorporated into this final revised recovery plan.

The objective of the final revised recovery plan is to delist the southern sea otter through implementation of a variety of recovery measures including: Monitoring otter populations; implementing plans to minimize the risk of, and impacts from, oil spills; minimizing incidental and intentional take of sea otters; assessing and minimizing other threats; evaluating the sea otter translocation program; improving captive management techniques; and implementing an outreach program and providing information to the public.

Authority: The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: January 29, 2003.

Daniel S. Walsworth,

Acting Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ES-020-01-1310-EI]

Notice of Intent to Prepare Planning Analyses/Environmental Assessments

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare Planning Analyses/Environmental Assessments.

SUMMARY: This document provides notice that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Jackson Field Office, Eastern States intends to prepare Planning Analyses/Environmental Assessments (PA/EA) to consider leasing scattered tracts of Federal mineral estate for oil and gas exploration and development. The PA/EA will fulfill the needs and obligations set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM management policies. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process. Comments on issues and planning criteria can be submitted in writing to the address listed below. Due to the limited scope of this PA/EA process, public meetings are not scheduled. BLM will, however, consider requests for one or more public meetings.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: Bureau of Land Management, Jackson Field Office, 411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404, Jackson, MS 39206.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Reiss, Lead for PA/EA, Jackson Field Office, (601-977-5400).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM has responsibility to consider nominations to lease Federal mineral estate for oil and gas exploration and development. An interdisciplinary team will be used in the preparation of the PA/EAs. Preliminary issues, subject to change as a result of public input, are (1) potential impacts of oil and gas exploration and development on the

surface resources and (2) consideration of restrictions on lease rights to protect surface resources. The number of separate analyses that will be prepared for the tracts will depend on their proximity to each other. Tract locations, along with acreage, are listed below.

Alabama, Fayette County, Huntsville Meridian

T16S, R9W,
Sec. 20, NWNE;
Sec. 23, SW;
Sec. 25, E2SW, SWSW;
Sec. 26, NESE, S2SW;
Sec. 30, SWNW;
Sec. 36, NENW, SESW.
T16S, R10W,
Sec. 1, SWNW;
Sec. 10, NESE;
Sec. 13, SWNW;
Sec. 24, NWNE.

Alabama, Lamar County, Huntsville Meridian

T 15S, R 15W,
Sec. 13, SESE.

Alabama, Tuscaloosa County, Huntsville Meridian

T17S, R9W,
Sec. 14, E2NW;
Sec. 34, NESE.
T17S, R10W,
Sec. 1, NENE;
Sec. 8, SESW;
Sec. 10, SENE.
T18S, R7W,
Sec. 7, NWNW.
T18S, R9W,
Sec. 3, NWNE, NESE.

Alabama, Walker County, Huntsville Meridian

T16S, R8W,
Sec. 21, NESW.
T17S, R7W,
Sec. 6, NWSW.

Arkansas, Franklin County, Fifth Principal Meridian

T10N, R26W,
Sec. 2, SESE, SESW, NENW, NWNE.

Louisiana, Bienville Parish, Louisiana Meridian

T16N, R10W,
Sec. 4, lots 5-8;
Sec. 5, lot 1;
Sec. 8, lots 1-6;
Sec. 9, lots 8-10;

Louisiana, Bossier Parish, Louisiana Meridian

T 16N, R 11W,
Sec. 14, W2NW, SENW, E2SW, NWSW.

MS Wayne Mississippi, Wayne County, St Stephens Meridian

T7N, R7W,
Sec. 2, W2NWNW, N2SWNW;
Sec. 3, E2NENE.
T8N, R9W,
Sec. 4, NWSW;