

multiple sexually reproducing populations of Raven's manzanita in association with its historically associated species of local serpentine outcrops.

The objectives of this recovery plan are to delist San Francisco lessingia and to downlist Raven's manzanita through implementation of a variety of recovery measures including: (1) Protection and restoration of a series of ecological reserves (often with mixed recreational and conservation park land uses); (2) promotion of population increases of San Francisco lessingia and Raven's manzanita within these sites, and reintroduction of them to restored sites; (3) management of protected sites, especially the extensive eradication or suppression of invasive dominant non-native vegetation; (4) research; and (5) public participation, outreach, and information.

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

Dated: August 8, 2003.

Steve Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 03-25238 Filed 10-3-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

Working Group on Land Consolidation Program

AGENCIES: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior; Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: On April 22, 2003, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) in the Department of the Interior filed a **Federal Register** notice (68 FR 19845) calling for nominations of Tribal officials to participate in a working group to address the rapidly increasing fractionation of ownership of Indian land. This fractionation is due to the system of allotments established by the General Allotment Act of 1887. The President's fiscal year (FY) 2004 Budget incorporates a request for a significant increase for the Indian Land Consolidation program aimed at reducing the number of individual owners in parcels of Indian lands allotted to individuals. The Department has been actively working with tribal

groups on the issue and will therefore not be convening a new working group.

DATES: Effective on the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

ATTN: Terry Virden, Deputy Commissioner for Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Room 4160, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240, or ATTN: Donna Erwin, Acting Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Room 5140, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The allotment of Indian lands—dividing tribal lands into small parcels and allocating those parcels to individual Indians—became federal policy in 1887 with the enactment of the General Allotment Act. By the 1930s, however, it was widely accepted that the policy was a failure and, in 1934 it was ended with passage of the first Indian Reorganization Act. Interests in these allotted lands started to “fractionate” as interests divided among the heirs of the original allottees, expanding rapidly with every generation.

Today, there are approximately four million owner interests in the 10 million acres of individually-owned trust lands, and these four million interests could expand to 11 million interests by 2030. Moreover, there are an estimated 1.4 million fractional interests of 2 percent or less involving 58,000 tracks of individually-owned trust and restricted lands. There are not single pieces of property with ownership interests that are less than 0.000002 percent of the whole interest.

Addressing this issue is critical to improving the management of trust assets. The Department of the Interior, the Department in which the BIA and OST are located, is bound by its trust obligations to maintain ownership records, and in some cases to collect and distribute income for each Indian owner's interest, regardless of size. Reduction of fractional interests will increase the likelihood of more productive economic use of the land, reduce record keeping and large numbers of small dollar financial transactions, and decrease the number of interests subject to probate.

Starting in 2004, the BIA will oversee the National Indian Land Consolidation Program. The Department has established an internal working group that has actively met with tribal organizations, such as the Indian Land Working Group and the National Congress of American Indians, to discuss fractionation, the problems associated with fractionation, and

possible solutions to problems. Since the Department is actively working with tribal organizations, the Department will not be convening another fractionation working group.

Dated: September 10, 2003.

Aurene M. Martin,

Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 03-25232 Filed 10-03-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-02-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

Working Group on the “As-Is” “To-Be” Process and Trust Improvement Efforts

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: On April 22, 2003, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) in the Department of the Interior filed a **Federal Register** notice (68 FR 19846) calling for nominations of Tribal officials to participate in a working group to discuss the “As-Is” “To-Be” processes and provide input and comments on potential alternatives on how the trust process should be improved and administered. Because mechanisms are now in place for soliciting input from Tribes on the “To-Be” processes, the Department will not be convening a new working group.

DATES: Effective on the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

ATTN: Terry Virden, Deputy Commissioner for Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Room 4160, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240; or ATTN: Donna Erwin, Acting Special Trustee, Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, Room 5140, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Electronic Data Systems Corporation, in its January 2002 Trust Reform Report, recommended that the Department develop an accurate, current state model to include business processes, internal controls, and associated information technology. The Department worked extensively on documenting the “As-Is” business processes currently employed in managing Indian trust assets. Through this “As-Is” business process,