

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****Fish and Wildlife Service****Receipt of Applications for Permit**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of applications for permit.

**SUMMARY:** The public is invited to comment on the following applications to conduct certain activities with endangered species.

**DATES:** Written data, comments or requests must be received by October 10, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Documents and other information submitted with these applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203; fax 703/358-2281.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Division of Management Authority, telephone 703/358-2104.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Endangered Species**

The public is invited to comment on the following applications for a permit to conduct certain activities with endangered species. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). Written data, comments, or requests for copies of these complete applications should be submitted to the Director (address above).

**Applicant: Matson's Laboratory, Milltown, MT, PRT-096048**

The applicant requests renewal and amendment of a permit to import samples such as teeth from wood bison (*Bison bison athabascæ*) from government-managed herds such as the Mackenzie Sanctuary herd and the Nahanni population in Canada for the purpose of scientific research. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a five-year period.

**Applicant: Animal Source Texas, Krum, TX, PRT-120288**

The applicant requests a permit to export six live captive-born lemurs (*Lemur catta*) to Leofoo Village Theme Park—Animal Kingdom, Taiwan for the

purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

**Applicant: Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, La Jolla, CA, PRT-844694**

The applicant requests re-issuance of their permit to import biological samples taken from Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), olive ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), and leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), collected in the wild from worldwide locations, for the purpose of scientific research. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a five-year period.

**Applicant: Ziccolone and Carrasco Productions, Inc., Las Vegas, NV, PRT-123261**

The applicant requests a permit to import five (2 male and 3 female) captive born tigers (*Panthera tigris*) from Mexico to Las Vegas, Nevada for the purpose of enhancement of the species through conservation education, and return them to Mexico within a five-year period.

Dated: August 18, 2006.

**Monica Farris,**

*Senior Permit Biologist, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.*

[FR Doc. E6-14765 Filed 9-6-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****Fish and Wildlife Service****Draft Template Safe Harbor Agreement, Draft Environmental Assessment, and Receipt of Applications for Enhancement of Survival Permits**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and receipt of applications; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** As part of ongoing recovery efforts for the endangered Columbia Basin distinct population segment of the pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*), this notice advises the public that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or we), in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), is making available for public review and comment a draft Template Safe Harbor Agreement (Agreement). The proposed Agreement addresses incidental take of Columbia

Basin pygmy rabbits (CBPR) that could result from activities associated with ranching, farming, recreation, residential upkeep, conservation programs, and shrub steppe maintenance, restoration, and enhancement on an undeterminable number of non-Federal properties. The area covered by the proposed Agreement (Covered Area) includes portions of 6 counties in central Washington and totals approximately 2,650,000 acres. However, eligible properties that occur within the Covered Area and are most likely to be enrolled under the Agreement would primarily include those that have existing shrub steppe habitat and/or soil conditions that may be capable of supporting the species, either currently or in the foreseeable future. These lands, as well as adjacent properties that may receive intermittent use by CBPRs, such as for exploratory behavior or dispersal between suitable habitats, total approximately 750,000 acres. Implementation of the proposed Agreement would provide the opportunity for interested non-Federal and non-WDFW landowners and managers to voluntarily enroll their lands under the Agreement and receive an enhancement of survival permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). In exchange for the incidental take authority that would be provided by issuance of permits, participants who enroll their lands under this Agreement would implement conservation measures that would be expected to provide a net conservation benefit to the CBPR. The duration of the proposed Agreement is 20 years. The duration of associated permits could be for shorter periods, but would not exceed the duration of the Agreement. More detailed descriptions of the background biological information, Covered Area, proposed covered activities, conservation measures, and expected net conservation benefits are provided in the draft Agreement and in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

This also announces the receipt and availability for public review and comment three applications for incidental take permits for the enhancement of survival for the CBPR in conjunction with the Agreement. These applications have been received from The Nature Conservancy, Mr. Dave Billingsley and Mr. Peter Lancaster (Applicants). Issuance of these permits would authorize incidental take of CBPRs above the existing baseline conditions of enrolled properties that

may result from the Applicants' proposed activities. Additional applications are expected in the near future from other non-Federal and non-WDFW landowners and managers who propose to enroll their lands under the Agreement. Future applications received by the Service from other prospective participants to the Agreement will be provided for public review in future notices.

In accordance with Service responsibilities pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this notice also announces the availability, for public review, of a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) developed in conjunction with the proposed Agreement.

We request comments from the public on the proposed Agreement, current permit applications, and the draft EA, all of which are available for public review and comment. To review the documents, see "Availability of Documents" in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

**DATES:** All comments from interested parties must be received on or before October 10, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments concerning this notice should be addressed to Susan Martin, Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Upper Columbia Fish and Wildlife Office, 11103 East Montgomery Drive, Spokane, Washington 99206. You may also send comments by facsimile at (509) 891-6748, or by electronic mail at [fw1cbprabbit@fws.gov](mailto:fw1cbprabbit@fws.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Chris Warren at (509) 893-8020, or Michelle Eames at (509) 893-8010.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Availability of Documents**

Copies of the draft documents and permit applications are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the Upper Columbia Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**), or they may be viewed on the internet at the following address: <http://www.fws.gov/easternwashington/>. You may also request copies of the documents by contacting the Service's Upper Columbia Fish and Wildlife Office [see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**]. The Service is furnishing this notice to provide the public, other State and Federal agencies, and tribes an opportunity to review and comment on these documents. All comments received will become part of the public record. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of

your comment. All comments received from organizations, businesses, or individuals representing organizations or businesses, are available for public inspection in their entirety.

##### **Background**

The pygmy rabbit is the smallest rabbit species, and one of only two rabbit species that digs its own burrows, in North America. They are typically found in shrub-steppe habitats that include tall, dense stands of sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.) and that occur in relatively deep, loose soils suitable for the species' burrowing behavior. Pygmy rabbits are highly dependent on sagebrush for food, particularly during the winter, and, along with their burrows, for shelter and escape throughout the year.

The historic distribution of the pygmy rabbit included portions of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Washington. The pygmy rabbit has been present within the Columbia Basin, a geographic area that extends from northern Oregon through eastern Washington, for over 100,000 years. This population segment, referred to as the CBPR and which is the subject of the Agreement, historically occurred only in central Washington and is believed to have been disjunct from the remainder of the species' range for at least 10,000 years. The distribution and abundance of the CBPR has declined dramatically since the mid-1990s. Surveys of the last known occupied site, located in southern Douglas County, have not detected any animals since mid-2004, indicating that the population may now be extirpated from the wild.

In 2001, WDFW captured as many of the remaining CBPRs as possible from the last known subpopulation and began a captive breeding program. The Service emergency-listed the CBPR under the ESA in 2001, and fully listed it as endangered in 2003. Major past threats to the CBPR include the loss and fragmentation of suitable shrub-steppe habitats. Major current threats are associated with the extremely small size of the remaining population, which has made it vulnerable to loss of genetic diversity and inbreeding depression. Inbreeding depression was evidenced in the captive population by the poor reproductive performance, declining genetic diversity, increased susceptibility to disease, and, possibly, skeletal abnormalities in the purebred animals. Intercrossing CBPRs with pygmy rabbits of the same taxonomic classification from Idaho helped to restore the genetic diversity and reduce the effects of inbreeding depression in

the captive population. The inclusion of intercrossed animals with some minor level of non-Columbia Basin ancestry is considered necessary to achieve Federal recovery objectives for the CBPR in the wild.

WDFW, in conjunction with the Service, proposes to reintroduce captive CBPRs into suitable habitats at two recovery emphasis areas: one in southern Douglas County; and one in northern Grant County, Washington. The Service and WDFW anticipate that, as a likely result of planned reintroduction efforts, CBPRs may become established on non-Federal and/or non-WDFW properties, which prompted development of the proposed Agreement.

The primary objective of the Agreement is to facilitate collaboration between the Service, WDFW, and prospective participants to voluntarily implement conservation measures to benefit the CBPR. An additional objective of the Agreement is to provide incidental take coverage to participants through issuance of enhancement of survival permits, which will relieve them of additional section 9 liability under the ESA if implementation of the conservation measures results in increased numbers or distribution of CBPRs on their enrolled properties.

The proposed Agreement is a "template" in that it establishes general guidelines and identifies minimum management responsibilities for non-Federal/non-WDFW landowners and managers to participate in the Agreement. In addition, the proposed Agreement documents background biological information on the CBPR, ongoing conservation actions and Federal recovery objectives for the species, expected net conservation benefits, and the types of land use activities and eligible properties that may be covered by the Agreement. If the Agreement is signed by the Service and WDFW following public review and comment, the process to consider subsequent permit applications in the future will be significantly streamlined as permit applicants will be able to reference the approved Agreement. NEPA compliance also may be tiered. By streamlining the process and minimizing the time it requires to process additional ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) permit applications consistent with the Agreement, the Service and WDFW anticipate that more private landowners will be likely to participate and implement proactive conservation measures, which will enhance State and Federal recovery efforts for the CBPR.

The proposed Agreement clarifies management responsibilities and expectations of the Service, WDFW, and prospective participants. When signed, the Agreement may serve as the basis for additional enhancement of survival permit applications. To be considered for a permit, each participant will need to complete and submit to the Service a Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit Application Form. An issued permit would authorize incidental take of CBPRs that are above the baseline conditions of their enrolled property.

In addition to submitting a Permit application, prospective participants would also need to develop a Site Plan, in cooperation with the Service, that identifies the specific properties to be enrolled and documents the baseline conditions, existing and proposed future land-use activities, and agreed-upon conservation measures that would be expected to provide a net conservation benefit for the CBPR on the enrolled properties. Each prospective participant and the Service would need to sign the completed Site Plan, which will remain within the scope of, and tiered to, the proposed Agreement.

We anticipate that the proposed Agreement would result in the following benefits to the CBPR: (1) Appropriate habitats will be maintained on enrolled properties and be available for use by CBPRs released at the recovery emphasis areas; (2) habitats on enrolled properties will facilitate dispersal of newly released CBPRs and enhance connectivity of recovery emphasis areas; (3) new subpopulations of CBPRs may form on enrolled properties through natural population expansion; (4) additional wild CBPRs may be located on properties being

considered for enrollment and be secured for captive breeding and/or translocation efforts, which will improve the overall recovery outlook for the species; (5) monitoring and future collection of biological information concerning the CBPR (e.g., dispersal, survival, productivity) will be improved through cooperative management efforts on enrolled properties; (6) research and adaptive management for the CBPR can be made more comprehensive if implemented at a broader scale through facilitated access to enrolled properties; and (7) successful implementation of cooperative, voluntary conservation measures will increase public awareness and support for CBPR recovery efforts.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6). The Service will evaluate the permit applications, associated documents, and comments submitted thereon to determine whether the proposed Agreement and permit applications meet the requirements of NEPA regulations and section 10(a) of the ESA. If it is determined that the requirements are met, the Agreement will be finalized and signed and these permits will be issued to the Applicants for incidental take of the covered species. The final NEPA and permit determinations will not be completed until after the end of the 30-day comment period, and will fully consider all public comments received during the comment period.

Dated: August 14, 2006.

**Carolyn A. Bohan,**

*Acting Deputy Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.*

[FR Doc. E6-14773 Filed 9-6-06; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Issuance of Permits**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of permits for marine mammals.

**SUMMARY:** The following permits were issued.

**ADDRESSES:** Documents and other information submitted with these applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, by any party who submits a written request for a copy of such documents to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203; fax 703/358-2281.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Division of Management Authority, telephone 703/358-2104.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Notice is hereby given that on the dates below, as authorized by the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Fish and Wildlife Service issued the requested permits subject to certain conditions set forth therein.

**Marine Mammals**

Permit number	Applicant	Receipt of application <b>Federal Register</b> notice	Permit issuance date
121219 .....	Michael J. Wilmet .....	71 FR 28881; May 18, 2006 .....	August 16, 2006.
123246 .....	Richard J. Edelen .....	71 FR 31197; June 1, 2006 .....	August 14, 2006.
123490 .....	Gibson D. Lewis .....	71 FR 31197; June 1, 2006 .....	August 14, 2006.
125092 .....	John W. Hoose, Jr. ....	71 FR 31197; June 1, 2006 .....	August 14, 2006.
125138 .....	Carl O. Clapp, III .....	71 FR 31197; June 1, 2006 .....	August 15, 2006.

Dated: August 18, 2006.

**Monica Farris,**

*Senior Permit Biologist, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

**[CO-140-1610-DT-009C]**

**Notice of Availability of the Proposed Roan Plateau Resource Management Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement, Colorado**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA, 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMPA/FEIS) for the Roan Plateau planning area.

**DATES:** The BLM Planning Regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-2) state that any person