not scheduled. Members of the public may submit written comments to the address listed below.

DATES: Teleconference meeting will be Thursday, September 12, 1996, from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

ADDRESSES: Written statements may be provided to the following address: Western Water Policy Review Office, D–5001; P.O. Box 25007; Denver, CO 80225–0007.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Members of the public wishing to listen to this teleconference should contact the Commission Office by telephone, 303–236–6211, or fax, 303–236–4286, by no later than September 10, 1996. Participants will be asked to provide a telephone number where they will be contacted by the conference call operator prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Dated: August 21, 1996.

Larry Schulz,

Administrative Officer.

[FR Doc. 96–21876 Filed 8–27–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–94–M

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Receipt of Applications for Permit

The following applicants have applied 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.):

Applicant: Dennis G. Bailey, Pelham, NH, PRT–818420.

The applicant requests a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygarcus dorcas*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Applicant: Jimmie Rosenbruch, Santa Clara, UT, PRT–818660.

The applicant requests a permit to import a sport-hunted cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) from Namibia for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Applicant: Jerome Bofferding, Maple Grove, MN, PRT–818684.

The applicant requests a permit to import a sport-hunted cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) from Namibia for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Written data or comments should be submitted to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 430, Arlington, Virginia 22203 and must be received by the Director within 30 days of the date of this publication.

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 the following office within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 430, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Phone: (703/358–2104); FAX: (703/358–2281).

Dated: August 23, 1996.

Mary Ellen Amtower,

Acting Chief Branch of Permits, Office of Management Authority.

[FR Doc. 96–21974 Filed 8–27–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–U

Species Being Considered for Amendments to the Appendices to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; Request for Information

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) regulates international trade in certain animal and plant species, which are listed in the appendices of this treaty. The United States, as a Party to CITES, may propose amendments to the appendices for consideration by the other Parties.

This notice invites comments and information from the public on species that have been suggested as candidates for U.S. proposals to amend Appendix I or II at the tenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10, June 9–20, 1997, Harare, Zimbabwe) and which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) believes deserve further review. For reasons explained below, the Service has opted against consideration of other recommendations by the public for species listings and will reconsider these only under circumstances presented by new scientific data or studies.

A separate, concurrent Federal Register notice presents COP10 provisional agenda topics, and announces draft resolutions or other documents that the United States is considering for submission for consideration by the Parties at COP10.

DATES: The Service will consider all comments received by October 11, 1996, on species proposals described in this notice. A public meeting on these proposals, and on proposed resolutions and agenda items for COP10, will be held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on October 3, 1996, Room 200, Arlington Square Building, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia (see separate Federal Register notice).

ADDRESSES: Please send correspondence concerning this notice to Chief, Office of Scientific Authority; 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 750; Arlington, Virginia 22203. Fax number 703–358–2276. Comments and other information received will be available for public inspection by appointment, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Marshall A. Howe, Office of Scientific Authority, at the above address, telephone 703–358–1708.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: CITES regulates import, export, re-export, and introduction from the sea of certain animal and plant species. Species for which trade is controlled are included in one of three appendices. Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction that are or may be affected by international trade. Appendix II includes species that, although not necessarily now threatened with extinction, may become so unless the trade is strictly controlled. It also lists species that must be subject to regulation in order that trade in other currently or potentially threatened species may be brought under effective control (e.g., because of difficulty in distinguishing specimens of currently or potentially threatened species from those of other species). Appendix III includes species that any Party country identifies as being subject to regulation within its jurisdiction for purposes of preventing or restricting exploitation, and for which it needs the cooperation of other Parties to control trade.

In a March 1, 1996, Federal Register notice (61 FR 8019), the Service requested public recommendations or draft proposals to amend Appendix I or II that the Service might consider proposing on behalf of the United States at COP10. That notice described the provisions of CITES for listing species in the appendices and set forth information requirements for proposals, based on new listing criteria adopted by the Parties at COP9. The present notice announces the recommendations and proposals on taxa received, explains why the Service does not intend to consider certain recommendations or proposals, and describes those that will

receive further consideration, prior to a decision as to whether to submit any of these proposals to the CITES Secretariat by the January 10, 1997, deadline. A separate but concurrent Federal Register notice addresses the COP10 provisional agenda, and proposed resolutions and agenda items being considered by the United States for COP10; that notice also announces the public meeting on all these topics to be held in early October 1996 (see **DATES** above).

The Service received recommendations or proposals on taxa from the following: Defenders of Wildlife (DOW), Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), International Wildlife Coalition (IWC), North American Falconers Association (NAFA), National Trappers Association (NTA), New York Turtle and Tortoise Society (NYTTS), Ocean Wildlife Campaign (OWC), a consortium of the National Audubon Society, National Coalition for Marine Conservation, National Resources Defense Council, New England Aquarium, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund-US), Oregon Natural Resources Council (ONRC), Safari Club International (SCI), World Wildlife Fund-US (WWF), two members of the Northeast Pacific Region of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group, and several unaffiliated individuals, by the comment deadline of April 30, 1996. These proponents recommended amending (adding to, deleting from, or transferring between) the appendices for 29 different taxa (species or genera). In addition, DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS requested a review of the status of Appendix II parrots (Psittaciformes) and proposed the uplisting of any of those species qualifying for Appendix I. WWF proposed consideration of certain Southeast Asia unlisted songbird species, based on a trade analysis. DOW and OWC, respectively, proposed consideration of shark species in general and shark species of the family Carcharhinidae, specifically. In addition, the Service is considering (1) delisting four species of freshwater mussels presently in Appendix II, and (2) cosponsoring with Germany a proposal for including most or all populations of urial sheep (*Ovis vignei*) in Appendix I, depending on the results of further review by the Service.

All proposals and recommendations received have been reviewed in the context of the new CITES listing criteria adopted by the Parties at COP9 (Resolution Conf. 9.24). This resolution, available from the Service on request at the above address, presents detailed biological and trade criteria for listing and delisting, and for transferring listed species between appendices. Emphasis is placed on the principle that scientific uncertainty should not be used as a reason for failing to act in the best interest of the conservation of species affected or potentially affected by international trade. The following sections present the Service's decisions on which proposals it does not plan to submit, and which ones remain under consideration and for which additional information and comment is sought.

Proposals That the Service Does Not Plan to Submit

DOW and IWC raised concerns about whether a mechanism was in place to transfer the South African population of the southern white rhinoceros (Ceratotherium simum simum) to Appendix I, if there existed any significant conservation problems resulting from its annotated downlisting at COP9. Absent such a mechanism, they recommended that the United States prepare a proposal to transfer the population back to Appendix I, if no other Party were preparing such a proposal.

The transfer of the South African population to Appendix II at COP9 was annotated to restrict trade to live animals ''to appropriate destinations'' and sport-hunted trophies only. It was agreed by the Parties at COP9 that the downlisting would be reviewed at COP10 to determine if the new listing status was having a detrimental impact on the population. In response to the recommendation from DOW and IWC, the Service contacted the Secretariat and was informed that no ''automatic'' uplisting mechanism was in place and that the record of the discussion at COP9 did not connote an assumption that an uplisting proposal should be prepared, such as has been done by the depositary government (Switzerland) in the case of populations of Appendix I species transferred to Appendix II subject to quota provisions. The depositary government agreed with the Secretariat's interpretation and indicated it had no plans to prepare such a proposal.

The Service has received no information to suggest that the downlisting at COP9 has resulted in any threats to the South African white rhinoceros population. Furthermore, the Service understands that South Africa is preparing a report on its implementation of the downlisting and that this report will be provided to the Service and submitted to the Parties for their consideration at COP10. This issue is included in the provisional agenda for COP10 (see item XIV.7 in the Service's concurrent Federal Register notice).

In the unlikely event that a conservation problem arises as a consequence of the downlisting, the Service believes that any substantive concerns can be addressed by South Africa and/or collectively by other Parties, or if appropriate, through the postal-vote process of CITES. Therefore the Service does not intend to pursue this recommendation further.

The NTA recommended that the Service propose removal of the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), Canadian lynx (*L. canadensis*), and river otter (*Lontra canadensis*) from Appendix II. Each of these species (except the Mexican race of the bobcat *Lynx rufus escuinapae,* which was listed in 1975) was included in Appendix II in 1977 with the listing of the entire cat family, Felidae, and the otter subfamily, Lutrinae. In 1983, the United States and Canada stated their position (recorded in the plenary minutes of COP4) that these three species (excepting the Mexican bobcat) were listed under provisions of CITES Article II(2)(b), i.e., only because of the need to control trade in similar-appearing cat or otter species that are listed because of their population status and vulnerability to trade [Article II(1) or II(2)(a)]. The Service believes that the traded parts of these species, including various portions of the pelts, are sufficiently similar in appearance to those of other species listed under provisions of Article II(2)(a) and Article II(1) to justify continuation of the current listing in Appendix II under provisions of Article II(2)(b).

SCI recommended that the United States submit a proposal clarifying that the listing of the urial sheep (*Ovis vignei*) in Appendix I applies only to one race of the species, *O. v. vignei.* The Service has long considered the taxonomic intent of the original listing to apply only to *O. v. vignei* (with other races unlisted). It is expected that the review of the population status of the entire species currently being conducted by a working group of the CITES Animals Committee, in consultation with the IUCN Caprinae Specialist Group, will clarify the listing(s) appropriate for each race. Germany has offered to submit a proposal based on this analysis and the United States has indicated that it will consider cosponsoring such a proposal. Therefore the Service will not consider advancing the proposal suggested by SCI.

NAFA recommended that the Service propose removal of the North American population of the red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) from

Appendix II. These species were listed on Appendix II in 1979 as part of a listing of most of the order Falconiformes (including almost all hawks, eagles, and falcons). North American populations of the red-tailed hawk and kestrel appear to be healthy and are certainly not threatened by trade. However, delisting of the American kestrel may introduce a trade enforcement problem, because of its similarity of appearance to several other species of kestrels listed in Appendix I. Delisting of either species would also create similarity-of-appearance problems with other populations of the same or related species, which would continue to be listed in Appendix II. For these reasons, the Service does not support this recommendation.

EIA and IWC, supported by DOW and NYTTS, recommended that the Service propose transferring the blue-crowned conure (*Aratinga acuticaudata neoxena*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. DOW further recommended transfer of other species of parrots from Appendix II to I, if appropriate. Regarding the conure, its population consists of 50–60 individuals endemic to the island of Margarita in Venezuela, it is a very poorly marked subspecies, and it is not known at present to be affected by international trade. The Service intends to consult with Venezuelan authorities with respect to the conservation and taxonomic status of this subspecies. Regarding other parrots, the Service believes there are likely species (other than those proposed below) that would qualify for transfer from Appendix II to I. However, the Service presently has no supporting information and no additional information has been submitted.

HSUS, supported by DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS submitted a proposal to list the common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) in Appendix II. Common snapping turtles, native to the Americas from Canada to Ecuador, are harvested in large numbers both for food and for the pet trade. Although certain local or regional (e.g., Ontario) populations may have been depleted by overharvest, this species continues to be generally common and widely distributed. Much of the market is domestic. Although international trade involving the United States may be increasing, the Service believes the species does not qualify for listing in Appendix II, given the general abundance of the species throughout most of its range and considering its apparently higher reproductive potential than many other turtle species.

DOW also recommended that the Service should support efforts to bring additional protection to declining species of corals. The Service acknowledges the many difficulties involved in assuring sustainability of trade in CITES-listed corals. Although not presently considering proposing the listing of additional coral taxa, the Service, in consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and TRAFFIC-USA, is participating in the ''significant trade'' analysis presently being conducted under the auspices of the CITES Animals Committee. The Service plans to propose a resolution at COP10 establishing guidelines for more effective documentation of corals involved in international trade. The Service has also produced coral identification keys and is exploring the possibility of sponsoring coral workshops in cooperation with the NMFS and the Department of State.

The above-listed proposals will be reconsidered for COP10 only if new scientific data warrant. Any change in the Service's position on these species will be announced in a future Federal Register notice.

Proposals for Which the Service Seeks Additional Information

To determine whether they should be proposed by the United States as amendments to the appendices, the Service solicits additional information or comment on the following proposals or recommendations. Respondents to this notice are encouraged to present their comments in the specific context of the new listing criteria (Resolution Conf. 9.24), indicating where possible the applicability (or lack thereof) of specific elements of the resolution annexes to the recommendation or proposal being addressed.

1. Urial (Ovis vignei)

The urial of the central Asian steppes, a species of sheep popular among sport trophy hunters, has been listed on CITES Appendix I since 1975. Due to uncertainty about the taxonomic relationships among populations of this and related sheep species, confusion exists among the Parties as to the precise taxonomic entity intended for protection by the original listing. The history of this situation is described in detail in a January 27, 1994, Federal Register notice (59 FR 3833). In conducting its own analysis, the Service concluded that the original listing applied only to certain populations in India and Pakistan and that other populations are presently unlisted. Import of specimens of *Ovis vignei* into the United States has been guided by this interpretation of the CITES listing.

A working group of the CITES Animals and Nomenclature Committees, in consultation with the IUCN Caprinae Specialist Group, has been studying this problem and is attempting a fresh assessment of the status of *Ovis vignei* populations (based on the taxon described in the nomenclatural reference for mammals now adopted by the Parties: ''Mammal Species of the World,'' 2nd Edition, by Wilson and Reeder). On the basis of this assessment, Germany will prepare a listing proposal clarifying the appropriate appendix for each of the populations. Based on information presently available to the working group, it is likely that all populations of the urial will be proposed by Germany for listing in Appendix I. The Service has participated in the working group and is considering the possibility of cosponsoring the proposal prepared by Germany. The Service solicits information bearing on the status of these sheep populations and the merits of cosponsoring the German proposal.

2. Gyrfalcon (Falco rusticolus)

NAFA recommended that the Service propose transferring the gyrfalcon from Appendix I to Appendix II and is preparing a proposal in support of this recommendation. The gyrfalcon is circumpolar in distribution, including arctic and subarctic regions of Alaska, Canada, Iceland and Greenland. It was listed in Appendix I by the Parties in 1975 due to concern over threats to raptors in general and because of extraordinarily high prices commanded by the species in trade. Being the largest species of falcon and having a largely white color morph, the gyrfalcon has long been popular among falconers. Although the North American population was transferred to Appendix II in 1981, the Parties adopted a proposal from Denmark at COP5 in 1985 to transfer it back to Appendix I because of concern over illegal trade.

The Service is not aware of any evidence that the North American gyrfalcon population has ever been threatened due to habitat loss, nest-robbing, or trade. Service records indicate that a total of 126 gyrfalcons were legally imported into or exported from the United States from 1990 through June 1996, and there were no seizures of illegally traded specimens during that period. European range States have expressed concern in the past about enforcement problems that could arise if the North American population were downlisted. However, husbandry techniques have been developed for breeding the species in captivity (all but four of the 126 birds mentioned above were captive-bred); and the prices asked now are far lower

than in the past, at least in part because of the availability of captive-bred birds. Therefore, the Service will consider a transfer of the North American population of the gyrfalcon to Appendix II if a substantive proposal is received. In such a case, the Service will consult with Canada and other range States before making a final decision. The Service solicits any information and comment bearing on this downlisting recommendation.

3. Amazon Parrots (Amazona viridigenalis, A. oratrix and A. finschi)

EIA, WWF, IWC, NYTTS, and DOW recommended that the Service propose the green-cheeked (red-crowned) parrot (*Amazona viridigenalis*), a Mexican endemic, for transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I. EIA, IWC, NYTTS, AND, DOW also proposed the same action for the yellow-headed amazon (*A. oratrix*), endemic to Mexico and Belize. In addition, WWF has also recommended the lilac-crowned parrot (*A. finschi*), another Mexican endemic, for transfer from II to I. The first two of these species have experienced severe population declines. The status of the third species is not as clear. Except for limited statutory exemptions, imports into the United States of the first two species have been banned since October 1992 under the Wild Bird Conservation Act. Imports of *A. finschi* have been banned since October 1993. Mexican law prohibits export from Mexico of all native, wild-caught parrots. Between 1990 and 1994, 337 *viridigenalis,* 542 *oratrix,* and 149 *finschi* were confiscated by wildlife law enforcement agents at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Amazona viridigenalis is endemic to riparian forests and deciduous woodlands of Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosi in northeast Mexico. Feral populations have been established in several locations, including Texas. Recent population estimates of only 3,000 to 6,500 birds in the wild represent a severe decline from populations several decades ago. Habitat loss, control as an agricultural pest, and extensive exploitation for the pet trade have all contributed to the decline. Although protected from capture and trade in Mexico since 1982, the level of illegal trade suggested by confiscations is highly significant relative to the estimated population of the species. *Amazona oratrix,* though more widely distributed than the previous species, is restricted to the Atlantic and Pacific lowlands of Mexico and Belize and has also suffered massive population declines (particularly in Mexico) because of habitat loss and the pet trade. It has long been one of the most popular parrots in international trade.

The level of known, illegal international trade relative to the population status of *A. viridigenalis* and *A. oratrix* indicates that trade is a significant contributor to the precarious status of their populations. The Service believes that Appendix I trade controls would further discourage illegal trade, because of the more stringent permitting requirements and because of the rigorous criteria that captive-breeding facilities for Appendix I species must meet. Both species qualify for transfer to Appendix I under the new listing criteria. More information is needed on the status of *A. finschi* in the wild to clarify whether an Appendix I listing is warranted. The Service is reviewing this situation with Mexico. The Service also understands that Mexican authorities support the listing of *A. viridigenalis* and *A. oratrix* and may prepare listing proposals themselves. In the event this takes place, the Service will consider offering to cosponsor the proposals. The Service solicits any additional information on population status and trade of all three amazon parrots.

4. Straw-headed Bulbul (Pycnonotus zeylanicus)

WWF proposed that ''southeast Asian songbirds'' involved extensively in the pet trade be considered for CITES protection, but did not provide a draft proposal. The Service examined the information contained in the TRAFFIC Southeast Asia report, ''Sold for a Song,'' provided by WWF. Although an extensive trade clearly exists for many Southeast Asian passerines, the Service has not reviewed information on the status of most of these species in the wild. Because such information, in addition to information on trade levels, is desirable in most Appendix II listing proposals, the Service proposes to defer consideration of most of these species until a future time.

However, the Service believes that sufficient information may be available to warrant listing in Appendix II of one species identified in the report, the straw-headed bulbul (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*). This species has declined or been extirpated from all but the remotest parts of its range in Indonesia by a combination of excessive trapping and habitat destruction. *Birds To Watch 2: The World List of Threatened Birds* states the population has declined over 50 percent in the past 20 years and lists its status as vulnerable. Although the species remains widespread and common in Peninsular Malaysia, it is a popular cagebird and birds are being imported into Indonesia from Malaysia through Singapore, despite legal protection in Malaysia. Since the species' remaining range in Peninsular Malaysia is smaller than its former range in Sumatra, Kalimantan and Java, trade in this species may cause further population declines unless regulated. The Netherlands is also considering submitting an Appendix II proposal for this species. Cosponsorship will be discussed with the Netherlands if they choose to proceed with a proposal. The Service seeks additional comments and information on proposing the straw-headed bulbul for Appendix II.

5. North American Softshell Turtles (Apalone spp.)

HSUS, supported by DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS, prepared a proposal to include the softshell turtle genus *Apalone* in Appendix II. This genus consists of three species of freshwater turtles inhabiting both riverine and stillwater habitats: *A. spinifera,* ranging across most of the United States and northern Mexico, except for the very far West; *A. mutica,* inhabiting the Missouri, Ohio, and Mississippi River drainages south to the Gulf of Mexico and extending to western Florida and central Texas, with an isolated population in New Mexico; and *A. ferox,* ranging through southern South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and the coastal plain of Alabama. Egg-laying potential of these species appears to be higher than for many species of turtles, with maximum clutch size ranging from 24 in *A. ferox* to 39 in *A. spinifera,* and number of clutches per year ranging from 1–2 in *A. mutica* to 6 in *A. ferox.* Information on population sizes and trends is very limited, but anecdotal evidence suggests declines in some populations of *A. spinifera* and *A. mutica* that have been studied. All species are vulnerable to damming of rivers and to loss of preferred habitats in general. *A. ferox* appears to be more vulnerable to pesticides than other species of turtles. All species are taken for human consumption and some animals enter the pet trade.

Information on volume of catch for commercial trade appears to be available only for Florida, where *A. ferox,* the largest of the three species, seems to be heavily targeted for a trade destined domestically for New York, San Francisco, and Boston in particular. In addition to food, much of the use of these animals appears to be of the ribs and shells as medicinal products in Asian communities. An analysis of trade conducted during the period from July 1, 1990 to June 30, 1991 showed 27,494 sold in Florida or to dealers in other States. There appear to be no

comparable data for other States or for any species outside of Florida. Based on Service export records identified to genus only, the volume of international trade in the genus is expanding significantly. The number of live exports was reported as 5,517 in 1992, 13,524 in 1993, and 34,467 in 1994. There was no clear trade pattern for meat or parts.

Although the Service is concerned about the increasing volume of international export of *Apalone* spp. and possible expansion of foreign markets, the proposal does not make a convincing case for a likely impact on populations. However, the Service recognizes the importance of leaving the option for an Appendix II proposal open if new information can be brought to bear. In this regard, the Service solicits additional information on populations of any *Apalone* species and more specific information on both domestic and international trends in trade, including the geographic origins of animals in trade. Mexico is also being consulted on the two species in the genus whose ranges include Mexico.

6. Map Turtles (Graptemys spp.)

HSUS, supported by DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS, prepared a proposal to include the twelve species of map turtles, genus *Graptemys,* in Appendix II and requested the Service to consider proposing it at COP10. This genus includes the following species: *Graptemys geographica, barbouri, pulchra, ernsti, gibbonsi, caglei, pseudogeographica, ouachitensis, versa, oculifera, flavimaculata,* and *nigrinoda.* While most species are confined to portions of the southeastern United States or Texas (*G. versa*), *G. geographica* occurs throughout most of the eastern half of the United States and southeastern Canada; *G. pseudogeographica* ranges through the Missouri and Mississippi River drainages; and *G. ouachitensis* overlaps extensively with the latter but extends farther east and west. *Graptemys flavimaculata* and *G. oculifera* are the most geographically restricted species, occurring only in limited river systems in Mississippi (and Louisiana—*G. oculifera* only). Both are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). *Graptemys nigrinoda* is classified as endangered under Mississippi State law and *G. barbouri* is considered vulnerable to extirpation in Florida. A variety of less severe State restrictions on collecting or commercial use apply to various species. All map turtles inhabit freshwater systems, but habitat preferences vary among species. Most prefer streams or rivers with strong currents.

As with most turtle species, population data are very limited and equivocal, except for the species already considered endangered or threatened. Biologists who have studied seven of the species believe that populations have generally declined. At least four species are very popular in the pet trade, because of their bright colors: *G. barbouri, flavimaculata, pseudogeographica,* and *pulchra.* Data from Service's wildlife enforcement records suggest that international trade is substantial and may be increasing significantly. Exports of *Graptemys* spp. totalled 8,695 in 1991, 20,378 in 1992, and 37,233 in 1993.

As with softshell turtles, the Service is concerned about the level of international trade. However, most *Graptemys* species have more restricted distributions than *Apalone* species; and empirical evidence of population problems exists for several species, such as those listed under provisions of the ESA. The Service believes that the combination of population vulnerability and international trade may qualify at least *Graptemys* species for inclusion in Appendix II under provisions on Article II(2)(a). Other members of the genus might be appropriately listed under provisions of Article II(2)(b), due to similarity of appearance. Some of the species are extremely difficult to distinguish from one another on the basis of physical appearance. The Service solicits additional information and comment on this proposed listing.

7. Alligator Snapping Turtle (Macroclemys temminckii)

HSUS, supported by DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS, submitted a proposal to include the alligator snapping turtle (*Macroclemys temminckii*) in Appendix II and requested the Service to consider proposing it at COP10. The alligator snapping turtle, the largest freshwater turtle in North America, inhabits most river systems emptying into the Gulf of Mexico, including the Mississippi River as far north as Illinois. It also makes use of bodies of still water associated with river systems. Only one clutch of eggs is produced annually. Clutch size ranges from 9 to 52 eggs, with a mean of 25. From mostly anecdotal evidence, especially from turtle trappers, it is evident that the species has declined severely throughout much of its range, particularly in Georgia and Louisiana. The primary agents of population decline appear to be degradation and damming of river systems and widespread commercial harvest for its meat, which is marketed both domestically and internationally.

This species in the past has been the source of turtle meat in a national brand of soups and continues to be harvested both for personal use and commercially for human consumption on a locally large scale. It has been reported that Louisiana, because of depleted State populations, now imports much of its alligator snapper meat from surrounding States. A major source was Arkansas until commercial harvest was prohibited there in 1993. Louisiana now lists the species as a species of special concern. In the southeastern States comprising the bulk of the species' range, it appears that only Mississippi and Louisiana continue to permit commercial harvest. It is listed as rare, threatened, or endangered in many of the States on the periphery of the range, and in Georgia. There is a smaller market for pets (mainly smaller animals), and freeze-dried hatchlings are sold internationally as curios. Service wildlife enforcement records show an increase in the export of live turtles from 290 in 1989 to 4,477 in 1994, primarily to markets in Japan, Hong Kong, and Western Europe. There are also records of a much smaller trade in skins and skulls.

The Service is concerned about the status of this species. The reported level of international, commercial trade is cause for concern in light of the depleted population status of the species overall. As with most species not protected by federal law, export records in the wildlife enforcement database represent minimum estimates, as exports may not always be recorded at the species level. The Service seeks additional information bearing on the proposed listing of the alligator snapping turtle in Appendix II.

8. Gila Monster and Beaded Lizard (Heloderma spp.)

HSUS, supported by DOW, EIA, IWC, and NYTTS, submitted a proposal to transfer the Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*) and the beaded lizard (*H. horridum*) from Appendix II to Appendix I and requested the Service to consider submitting it at COP10. These unique lizards known for their poisonous bites are endemic to xeric habitats of Mexico and the southwestern United States. The Gila monster occurs from southwestern Utah and southern Nevada and California south through Arizona, southwestern New Mexico, and into northern Mexico. The beaded lizard is patchily distributed through Mexico from Sonora to northern Chiapas, and one isolated race occurs in eastern Guatemala. While the Gila monster prefers arid and semi-arid

gravelly and sandy habitats with some shrubs, the beaded lizard is more partial to tropical dry forests and is partly arboreal. The Gila monster has a clutch size of 2 to 12 eggs and may not breed every year; the beaded lizard is known to produce 15 eggs per clutch in captivity and probably has a one-year cycle.

Populations of both species are believed to be declining due to habitat degradation and local depletion by collectors for the pet trade and roadside zoos. Because both species are very secretive, however, there are no reliable data on populations in the wild. The prices of both species in the pet trade have risen from a few dollars in the 1930's to over $1,000 each and up to $2,800 for a pair today, suggesting both rarity and demand. Commercial collection from the wild is largely prohibited in all range States in the United States and by Mexican law. Although specimens have been bred in captivity, concern has been expressed over the potential and likelihood of illegal laundering of wild animals into the captive-bred trade. Reported international exports from the United States, as well as worldwide trade reported to CITES (1989–1993) have been very low, with annual exports of both species from the United States being fewer than 10 (except 52 in 1992) and annual worldwide figures averaging only 12 for *H. horridum* and 5 for *suspectum*. There is evidence, however, of a significant illegal trade, both within the United States, between the United States and Mexico, and otherwise internationally. Mexican authorities are in the process of considering whether *Heloderma* qualifies for inclusion in Appendix I. The Service continues to consider this proposal and solicits comments and new information.

9. Sail-fin Lizards (Hydrosaurus spp., *Hypsilurus* spp., and *Physignathus lesueurii*)

Gregory Watkins-Colwell, a biologist and expert on the genus Hydrosaurus, submitted a proposal for the inclusion of the two species in this genus (*H. amboinensis = weberi* and *H. pustulatus*) in Appendix II under provisions of Article II(2)(a), and the genus *Hypsilurus* (incorporating 11 species) and the species *Physignathus lesueurii* in Appendix II under provisions of Article II(2)(b) (similarity of appearance), and asked the Service to consider submitting the proposal to COP10. These species, also commonly known as sail lizards, sail-tail dragons, and water dragons, are native to the southwestern Pacific region, including Australia. *Hydrosaurus* lizards are endemic to the Philippines and eastern Indonesia, including western Irian Jaya. The species of *Hypsilurus* are *H. boydii, spinipes, nigrigularis, dilophus, auritus, binotatus, godeffroyi, geelvinkianus, modestus, papuensis,* and *schoedei.* Most *Hypsilurus* are found primarily in New Guinea, with *godeffroyi* extending to Fiji and Oceania. *Hypsilurus spinipes* and *boydii* are endemic to coastal New South Wales, Australia, and to coastal Queensland, Australia, respectively. *Physignathus lesueurii* appears to be confined to eastern Australia.

Hydrosaurus lizards occupy riparian forest habitat in the Philippines, a habitat being lost increasingly to commercial logging. It is suspected that the riparian forests are used only because primary forests have virtually disappeared from the islands. Although they appear to be somewhat adaptable to human-altered habitats, the extent to which survivorship is diminished when animals are forced into sub-optimal habitats is unknown. Virtually nothing is known about the current sizes or trends of populations. Clutch size ranges from 5 to 9 eggs, and reproduction occurs on an annual cycle.

In addition to habitat loss, collection for the pet trade, a practice facilitated by the loss of natural habitat, is perceived to be a potential threat to at least some populations. Price discounts for orders of 50 or more are known to have been offered in U.S. markets. Service wildlife enforcement records indicate imports of 2,732 *H. pustulatus* between September 1993 and February 1996. Only 20 *H. amboinensis* were reported, but it is likely that many are reported as *pustulatus* and that most of both species are not recorded in the database at all at the species or genus level at this time. The Service notes that, although specific population data are lacking, populations are undoubtedly severely reduced by habitat loss; and current levels of trade may be significant enough to warrant inclusion in Appendix II. Additional information and comments are sought.

10. Timber Rattlesnake, Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake, and Western Diamondback Rattlesnake (Crotalus horridus, C. adamanteus, and *C. atrox*)

EIA, supported by HSUS and IWC, submitted proposals for including the timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) and the eastern diamondback rattlesnake (*C. adamanteus*) in Appendix II and recommended that the Service consider submitting them at COP10. The timber rattlesnake occurs in 27 States, from New Hampshire and Minnesota south to Texas and Florida, having been extirpated from Maine and Rhode Island. They occupy a variety of habitats, particularly rugged, rocky outcroppings. Southern forms (''canebrake'' rattlesnakes) use a variety of lowland sites such as pine flatwoods, floodplains, and bottomland hardwoods. Eastern diamondbacks range through lowlands from North Carolina to extreme eastern Louisiana. One of its main preferred habitats is mature longleaf pine forest, more than 90 percent of which has been lost and often replaced with commercially managed pines. These snakes now survive in reduced numbers in a range of other natural and human-altered habitats. Reproductive potential is limited both by delayed sexual maturity (2–3 years in *C. adamanteus* and up to 9 years in northern populations of *horridus*) and long inter-birth intervals (2–3 years in *adamanteus* and 3–4 years in *horridus*).

Populations of timber rattlesnakes have declined greatly over much of their range to the extent that in many States only relict populations remain and large local populations are almost non-existent. They are listed as endangered in most northern States and commercial use is prohibited in most other States. Population declines have apparently not been quite as dramatic in the eastern diamondback, but substantial enough for the species to be classified as a species of special concern in South Carolina, Florida, and Alabama. Habitat degradation has been an important factor in population declines, as with most species. However, because rattlesnakes represent a potential threat to human health and life, both species have historically been killed intentionally in large numbers.

Commercial utilization of both species for the pet trade, and for meat, skins, and novelty jewelry is significant and represents cause for concern, given the limited biological resilience of these species to heightened levels of mortality. Records from Florida snake dealers indicate taking (mostly from other southeastern States) of nearly 5,000 *C. horridus* from 1992 to 1994 and nearly 43,000 *adamanteus* from 1990 to 1994. Most of these snakes enter the international skin trade for boots in particular. Service wildlife enforcement data for *C. horridus* show 753 and 450 leather pieces exported from the United States in 1992 and 1993 respectively. Comparable figures for the diamondback were 1,510 and 1,475. Numbers of novelty items were also quite high for the diamondback, but it is difficult to relate numbers of novelty items to numbers of snakes. Rattlesnake meat also shows up in the international trade, with records for 1992, 1993, and 1994 indicating 26.7, 119.8, and 2,419.7

pounds of eastern diamondback meat. The Service notes the apparently poor population status of the timber rattlesnake in particular, but also that of the eastern diamondback. Because the numbers appearing in trade statistics appear to be significant in some years and not in others, the extent to which international trade is impacting these species is unclear. International trade may be more significant for the eastern diamondback. Although no proposal was received for the western diamondback rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*), the Service believes that this species, which ranges from central Arkansas west to California and into Mexico, should be proposed for listing in Appendix II for reasons of similarity of appearance to the eastern diamondback, if a decision is made to propose the latter. This species is protected in Mexico. The Service solicits additional information and comments.

11. Requiem Sharks (Carcharhinidae spp.) (Western Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Populations of Species Meeting Appendix II Criteria)

The Service had received proposals for the listing of shark species in preparation for COP8 and COP9. In preparation for COP8 the Service had received a recommendation from the National Audubon Society to propose requiem sharks (Carcharhinidae spp.) and hammerhead sharks (Sphyrnidae spp.) for listing in Appendix II or III. Before COP9 the Service received from EIA a recommendation that the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) and the basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*) be considered for CITES listing. Although neither of these species nor the above-mentioned families were ultimately proposed for listing, the United States proposed inclusion of a discussion about the impact of international trade on shark populations on the COP9 agenda. As a consequence of this discussion, Resolution Conf. 9.17 was adopted. It called for the CITES Animals Committee to review all information on the biological status of sharks and the effects of international trade and to submit a report to COP10. It also requested that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations submit information on these topics to COP11. The United States, particularly NMFS, is presently working with other CITES Parties, intergovernmental fishery management organizations, and non-governmental organizations to assist the Animals Committee in its implementation of this resolution. Evaluation of sharks overall in the context of listing will be more feasible when this process is completed.

However, DOW, without providing specific suggestions or documentation, suggested that the Service consider proposing for listing at COP10 any species of sharks (Chondrichthyes) that meet the new listing criteria. OWC recommended that the Service propose listing in Appendix II populations of all shark species in the Carcharhinidae family that occur in the western Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. Some of the species are highly migratory. Several of these species are regularly targeted by commercial shark longline and gillnet fisheries, and they are also taken incidental to fisheries targeting other species and by sport fishing interests. Recent increases in world-wide catches of sharks for meat, fins, and medicinal purposes have been documented.

The Fishery Management Plan for Sharks of the Atlantic Ocean (FMP) produced by NMFS placed most of these sharks in the ''large coastal species'' group. In preparation for development of the FMP, a peer review group composed of NMFS personnel and other experts reviewed available information and determined that the ''large coastal species'' group of sharks was over-fished in the northwest Atlantic. As a consequence, annual quotas for commercial landings imposed for the large coastal shark species were set at levels 29 percent below the 1986–1991 average. A proposed increase in the 1995 quota was delayed indefinitely and the quota remains at 1994 levels. The initial stock rebuilding schedule has been determined to be overly optimistic. Because of their K-selected life history patterns (long-lived, slow-growing animals with a limited reproductive potential), these sharks are particularly vulnerable to over-exploitation. OWC has submitted information on the dusky shark (*Carcharhinus obscurus*) and the sandbar shark (*C. plumbeus*) and intends to submit full proposals for these species. The Service solicits additional data and comment relevant to the potential listing of these carcharhinid shark species.

12. Spiny Dogfish (Squalus acanthias)

Additionally, OWC proposed that the spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) population in western Atlantic waters be listed in Appendix II and intends to submit a full proposal for this species. The western Atlantic population ranges from Greenland to Florida. Like the sharks mentioned above, the spiny dogfish is an elasmobranch or cartilaginous fish. It shares with other elasmobranchs life history characteristics that make these species more vulnerable to over-exploitation than many bony fishes.

Once fished intensively for liver oil, fisheries for this species declined to lower levels once vitamin A could be synthesized. Since the late 1980s, however, demand for dogfish meat has increased. Between 1987 and 1993, spiny dogfish landings appear to have increased five-fold. The vast majority of this catch is exported, mainly to Europe, where dogfish is replacing the traditional species used for ''fish-and-chips.'' Recreational catches have also increased recently. Discards from other fisheries, especially from vessels targeting groundfish, contribute an unknown but substantial fraction to current mortality levels.

The National Marine Fisheries Service considers Atlantic coast spiny dogfish to be fully exploited. Given its particular life history characteristics, this species may not be able to sustain current levels of fishing. Mortality rates are considered to be in excess of reproductive rates. While current biomass estimates indicate spiny dogfish are abundant in the northwest Atlantic, mature females appear to be overexploited. Although all dogfish on the Atlantic coast are included for data collection purposes in the FMP, currently none of the dogfish species is managed for conservation purposes. The Service solicits information and comment relative to this recommendation.

13. Sawfishes (Pristiformes spp.)

Sid F. Cook and Madeline Oetinger, two members of the Northeast Pacific Region of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group, submitted a proposal to include all species of the order Pristiformes (sawfishes) in Appendix I. The order consists of only one family, Pristidae, incorporating seven species (although the taxonomy of the group is debated). These are: *Pristis pectinata* (smallmouth sawfish), inhabiting marine habitats in selected parts of the eastern Pacific Ocean, western and eastern Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Indo-Pacific, and Red Sea, and freshwater habitats in North, Central and South America, Africa, and India; *P. clavata* (dwarf or Queensland sawfish), inhabiting nearshore and estuarine waters of northern Australia; *P. zijsron* (green sawfish), inhabiting marine habitats of the Indo-West Pacific from South Africa to the Persian Gulf, the Indian subcontinent, Indonesia, Australia, and Viet Nam, and throughout the Indo-Australian Archipelago, and also freshwater habitats in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Australia; *P. pristis* (common sawfish), inhabiting marine habitats in the western

Mediterranean and eastern Atlantic, possibly Africa; *P. microdon* (freshwater, Leichhardt's, great-tooth, largetooth sawfish), inhabiting marine habitats in the Indo-West Pacific and freshwater habitats in Africa, Asia, Pacific Islands, and Australia; *P. perotteti* (largetooth sawfish), inhabiting warm-temperate to tropical-marine waters in the Atlantic and eastern Pacific, possibly in the eastern Mediterranean, and freshwater habitats in Central and South America and Africa; and *Anoxypristis cuspidata* (knifetooth, pointed or narrow sawfish), inhabiting marine habitats in the Indo-West Pacific from the Red Sea and Persian Gulf to Australia and China, and brackish waters in Papua New Guinea, India, Myanmar, and Thailand. Of these species, *P. perotteti* and *P. pectinata* occur in U.S. waters.

Sawfishes are a very small group of cartilaginous fishes related to sharks, rays and chimeras (class Chondrichthyes). They share with those species several life history characteristics (e.g., slow growth, low fecundity, late sexual maturity, long life-span, long gestational period) that render them more vulnerable to reduced survivorship than many bony fishes. Other factors increasing the potential vulnerability of these species are restriction to a narrow depth range and disjunct distribution patterns. Threats to sawfishes include collection for the curio trade, habitat degradation, direct and incidental take in fisheries, destructive fishing practices (such as cyanide and dynamite fishing), and acquisition for live displays in public aquaria. Most species have exhibited either severe population declines or have an extremely localized distribution. Although data on international trade and other forms of exploitation of sawfishes are sketchy, localized effects can be seen in individual populations.

Although the proposal received was very detailed and appears to demonstrate that the family qualifies for inclusion in Appendix I, the Service seeks additional information bearing on this recommendation, especially information on biology and human-induced mortality of sawfish.

14. Freshwater Mussels

The 10-year Review Working Group of the CITES Animals Committee has repeatedly questioned the listing of six freshwater mussels in Appendix II since no trade in these species has been reported. Recognizing that as many as 20 percent of the approximately 300 species and subspecies of freshwater mussels may be threatened or endangered, the Service has been reluctant to propose that any of these species be delisted, at least until inspection opportunities have been improved which could confirm that there was in fact no trade in these species. The United States submitted a proposal to COP9 to place all freshwater mussel species in Appendix II, except for those already in Appendix I and those more identifiable, thick-shelled, white-nacred, non-endangered species exported for pearl blanks. That proposal was withdrawn because of identification and inspection concerns.

Effective August 1, 1996, the Service's regulations on importation, exportation, and transportation of wildlife were revised to require that wildlife exports, including freshwater mussels, be made available for inspection and cleared for export prior to being exported from the United States. This provision should enable the Service to better ensure that endangered mussels are not exported, and therefore reduce the need for the application of CITES for non-endangered mussels, especially for those that do not appear to be traded.

Therefore, the Service is considering proposing to remove *Cyprogenia aberti, Fusconaia subrotunda, Lampsilis brevicula* (=*Lampsilis reeviana brevicula*), and *Lexingtonia dolabelloides* from Appendix II. However, the Service does not propose any change in the status of *Epioblasma torulosa rangiana* and *Pleurobema clava*, which are listed as endangered under the ESA. Comments and additional information are solicited.

15. Bigleaf Mahogany (Swietenia macrophylla)

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Defenders of Wildlife, and individuals have requested that the United States propose this species for inclusion in Appendix II. The United States is the largest importer of the wood of this species, which occurs from Mexico to Brazil and Bolivia. Bigleaf mahogany from the Americas was listed in Appendix III by Costa Rica in 1995, including its saw-logs, sawn wood, and veneer sheets only—i.e., no other parts or derivatives such as furniture (see the Federal Register of February 22, 1996 [61 FR 6793]). Species listed in Appendix II or Appendix III can be traded commercially, whereas trade for primarily commercial purposes is prohibited for the species included in Appendix I.

Proposals to include this species in Appendix II were separately submitted to COP9 or COP8 by three governments. At COP9, 50 of 83 Parties voted in favor of including this species and its logs, sawn wood, and veneer sheets in Appendix II, which fell 6 votes short of the two-thirds majority needed for adoption (see the Federal Register notices of November 8, 1994 [59 FR 55617] and January 3, 1995 [60 FR 73]). At COP9 (as well as COP8), the majority of the range States were in support of including this species in Appendix II.

The United States is reviewing all pertinent information related to a proposal. In particular, the Service seeks new information to supplement the information summarized in the COP9 and COP8 proposals or otherwise available to the Parties at those meetings. Comments should be submitted in relation to the listing criteria as outlined above and delineated in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (cf. Federal Register of March 1, 1996 [61 FR 8019]). The Service also seeks details on implementation from the inclusion of this species in Appendix III, which entered into force on November 16, 1995.

16. Pacific Yew (Taxus brevifolia)

The Oregon Natural Resources Council has recommended that the United States propose the Pacific yew for inclusion in Appendix II. This slow-growing species occurs in a limited range in the western United States and Canada. An effective anti-cancer compound (paclitaxel or taxol) is obtained especially from its bark, as well as to an increasing but unknown extent from other species of *Taxus*. Some companies are working on methods of obtaining paclitaxel from *Taxus* needles and branches (which could avoid loss of the whole plant). Laboratory substitutes for the natural compound are either not available or not available in adequate commercial quantity, but there is some semi-synthetic production. The species is not grown commercially in large quantity for medicinal use, but there is some ornamental cultivation. There is some export of Pacific yew biomass for manufacture of paclitaxel in other countries. The Himalayan yew (*Taxus wallichiana*) was listed in Appendix II at COP9, excluding the finished pharmaceutical products (i.e., the end-product medicine).

The Service seeks information regarding: (1) The intensity and purposes of removal of the several parts of this species from the wild in various areas, the characteristics of the populations impacted by these extractions, and the trends in those populations; (2) the location, characteristics, and safety of populations that will not be available for extraction; (3) the extent to which biomass from the wild (i.e., materials

other than the end-point medicine) is exported from either country; and (4) the degree to which the medicinal trade involves other wild species, and/or non-wild sources of the compound (e.g., from cultivated Pacific yew or other species, or from laboratory synthesis).

17. Goldenseal (Hydrastis canadensis)

WWF has recommended that the United States propose this species for inclusion in Appendix II. This is a herbaceous species of the eastern deciduous forest of the United States and Canada (southern Ontario). Before European settlement and exploitation of this species, it was thought to be abundant only in the central part of its range (Indiana to West Virginia and Kentucky), and it is now considered uncommon to critically imperilled in at least 16 of the 28 States where it is found.

Goldenseal is a well-known medicinal in the herbal products industry, with a wholesale price in 1995 of over $50 but less than $100 per pound dry weight, mostly for rhizomes or roots (with 200–300 roots per pound). It has been estimated that 150,000 pounds of goldenseal root are collected annually from the wild. The species is cultivated to a limited but unknown extent. Both the internal trade and export are believed to be escalating, with the international trade (primarily to Europe) being considered well below a quarter of the market.

The Service is interested in information especially regarding: (1) The biological status and life history of this species; (2) the extent to which it is cultivated (i.e., artificially propagated without use of seeds or other parts from the wild); and (3) the extent to which it is collected for trade, and in particular, the extent to which it is exported and the forms in which it is exported.

18. Aloe Vera (Aloe vera var. vera)—Wild Population

At its meeting in June 1995, the CITES Plants Committee recognized that this taxon may be endangered rather than extinct within its native range, which is increasingly considered to be on the Arabian Peninsula (or possibly the adjacent horn of Africa). At COP9, the wild population was delisted along with the artificially propagated population. All other aloes are listed in Appendix II or Appendix I, but the cultivated specimens of *Aloe vera* var. *vera* (and products derived from them) are very common in international trade.

A succulent specialist has recommended that the United States submit a proposal to return this wild population to Appendix II. The United States is considering this subject, in coordination with the North Africa representative to the Plants Committee (as agreed upon at the June 1995 meeting of the Plants Committee). Because the focus would be on protecting the plants of this taxon in its isolated native range, such a listing would not interfere with the unregulated trade in the very common artificially propagated specimens. Comments are requested on the status of this taxon in the wild.

19. Tweedy's Bitterroot (Lewisia tweedyi or Cistanthe tweedyi)

The recommendation to remove this species from Appendix II was initiated by the CITES Plants Committee, as part of the ongoing process of reviewing listed taxa at 10-year intervals. This herbaceous mountain species is native in the State of Washington and nearby in the Province of British Columbia (Canada). Because it was found to be sufficiently secure within its range, this species was removed from consideration for the U.S. Endangered Species Act in a 1985 Federal Register notice on many taxa (50 FR 39526). Moreover, this species is believed to be sufficiently easy to propagate and available in cultivation to supply rock-garden enthusiasts.

Since the biological status of the species is considered less vulnerable than when it was listed in 1983, and since there have been no applications to export it from the wild in the last decade (and almost none to export it from cultivation as artificially propagated specimens), removal of the species from Appendix II seems appropriate. Information is sought on the status of the species in the wild, and the likelihood and extent of international trade in wild specimens of this species.

Future Actions

The Service will consider all available information, including that presented at the public meeting (see DATES above) or received in writing during the comment period, in deciding which proposals warrant consideration by the Parties. The proposals decided upon will be submitted to the CITES Secretariat by January 10, 1997, for consideration at the June 1997 meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Harare, Zimbabwe. In February 1997, the Service will publish a Federal Register notice announcing the proposals submitted to the Secretariat. Persons having current biological or trade information about the species being considered are invited to contact the Service's Office of Scientific Authority (see **ADDRESSES** above).

The primary authors of this notice are Dr. Marshall A. Howe, Zoologist, and Dr. Bruce MacBryde, Botanist, Office of Scientific Authority, under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Lists of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 23

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Treaties.

Dated: August 22, 1996.

J.L. Gerst,

Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; Tenth Regular Meeting; Provisional Agenda; Proposed Resolutions and Agenda Items Being Considered; Public Meeting

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States, as a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), may submit proposed resolutions and/or agenda items for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The United States may also propose amendments to the CITES Appendices for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The tenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP10) will be held in Harare, Zimbabwe, June 9–20, 1997.

With this notice the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service): (1) Publishes the provisional agenda for COP10; (2) lists potential proposed resolutions and/or agenda items that the United States is considering submitting for discussion at COP10; (3) invites comments and information from the public on these potential proposals; (4) announces a public meeting to discuss species proposals and proposed resolutions and agenda items that it is considering submitting for discussion at COP10; and (5) provides information on how non-governmental organizations based in the United States can attend COP10 as observers. A separate, concurrent Federal Register notice invites comments and information from the public on possible candidate species for U.S. proposals to amend the CITES Appendices at COP10.

DATES: The public meeting will be held on at October 3, 1996 at 2:00 PM. The Service will consider information and comments from the public concerning