nest trees. The RCW is unique among the North American woodpeckers in that it is the only woodpecker that excavates its roost and nest cavities in living pine trees. Each group member has its own cavity, although there may be multiple cavities in a single pine tree. The aggregate of cavity trees is called a cluster. RCWs forage almost exclusively on pine trees and they generally prefer pines greater than 10 inches diameter at breast height. Foraging habitat is contiguous with the cluster. The number of acres required to supply adequate foraging habitat depends on the quantity and quality of the pine stems available.

The RCW is endemic to the pine forests of the Southeastern United States and was once widely distributed across 16 States. The species evolved in a mature fire-maintained ecosystem. The RCW has declined primarily due to the conversion of mature pine forests to young pine plantations, agricultural fields, and residential and commercial developments, and to hardwood encroachment in existing pine forests due to fire suppression. The species is still widely distributed (presently occurs in 13 Southeastern States), but remaining populations are highly fragmented and isolated. Presently, the largest known populations occur on federally owned lands such as military installations and national forests.

Based upon a range-wide assessment and estimate conducted in 1994, the State of Florida contains about 1,285 RCW groups; 1,063 occurring on Federal lands, 128 occurring on State lands, and an estimated 94 on private lands.

There has not been a complete inventory of RCWs in Florida so it is difficult to precisely assess the species' overall status in the State. However, the known populations on Federal properties are regularly monitored and generally considered stable. While several new active RCW clusters have been discovered on private lands over the past few years, many previously documented RCW clusters have been lost. It is expected that the RCW population on private lands in Florida will continue to decline, especially those from small tracts isolated from other RCW populations.

The RCW population on the Applicant's property currently consists of 15 birds (8 breeding adults, 1 female helper, and 6 fledglings). The nearest known RCW groups to the Ocala Sandhills population are found greater than 15 miles away; several single family/bird groups on private lands west and northwest; large populations on both the Goethe and Withlacoochee State Forests northwest and southwest, respectively from the site; and a small population of about 7 groups on the Ocala National Forest east of the Applicant's property.

The Applicants propose to harvest the timber at Ocala Sandhills in association with land development and alteration activities associated with construction of a mixed use residential, commercial, and golf course community.

The EA considers the environmental consequences of three alternatives, including the proposed action. The proposed action alternative is issuance of the ITP and implementation of the HCP as submitted by the Applicant. The HCP provides for an off-site mitigation strategy focusing on enhancing clusters in designated recruitment stands in the Ocala National Forest over a 5-year period. During the first 5 years of the permit/HCP, the Applicant would conserve the habitat necessary to support/stabilize the existing RCW population. Juvenile RCWs produced by the Applicant's population will be translocated to these sites and monitored. At the completion of the translocation efforts for the juveniles, any remaining adults would also be moved to the Ocala National Forest. In addition, the Applicant will assist the Ocala National Forest by financially supporting selected hardwood control efforts at the recipient sites. The HCP will involve monitoring the mitigation clusters for a specified time period to determine success of the habitat enhancement efforts. The HCP provides a funding source for the above-mentioned mitigation measures.

As stated above, the Service has made a preliminary determination that the issuance of this ITP is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA and will result in the FONSI. This preliminary information may be revised due to public comment received in response to this notice and is based on information contained in the EA and HCP. An appropriate excerpt from the FONSI reflecting the Service's finding on the application is provided below:

Based on the analysis conducted by the Service, it has been determined that:

1. Issuance of an ITP would not have significant effects on the human environment in the project area.

2. The proposed take is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity.

3. The Applicants have ensured that adequate funding will be provided to implement the measures proposed in the submitted HCP.

4. Other than impacts to endangered and threatened species as outlined in the documentation of this decision, the indirect impacts which may result from issuance of the ITPs are addressed by other regulations and statutes under the jurisdiction of other government entities. The validity of the Service's ITPs are contingent upon the Applicants' compliance with the terms of their permits and all other laws and regulations under the control of State, local, and other Federal governmental entities.

The Service will also evaluate whether the issuance of either Section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP complies with Section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service Section 7 consultation. The results of the biological opinion, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue either ITP.

Dated: November 18, 1996.

Jerome M. Butler,

Acting Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 96–30099 Filed 11–25–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

Geological Survey

Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC): Notice Establishing the Closing Date for Submission of the Project Summary Under the FGDC Framework Demonstration Projects Program

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice inviting organizations to submit project summaries for competitive cooperative agreements for fiscal year 1997.

SUMMARY: This is a notice of phase one of a two phase approach in connection with the Framework Demonstration Projects Program (FDPP). On behalf of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) plans to issue a program announcement to request proposals for the FDPP later this fiscal year. Organizations interested in the program have asked for the ability to provide project summaries to the FGDC for comment in advance of the program announcement. Therefore, the first phase of this two phase approach invites organizations interested in the program to provide a project summary to the FGDC for comment. Participation in phase one is voluntary. Organizations who submit a project summary in phase one are not obligated to apply for the program announcement. Organizations who do not submit a summary for phase one are eligible to request the program announcement in phase two. The FGDC

will provide comments to the organization describing how a project can be strengthened. The FGDC will use insights gained from the review of summaries to guide the development of the FDPP request for proposals announcement.

DATES: The project summary is due January 17, 1997, at 3:00 p.m. EST.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the FGDC report ''Development of a National Digital Geospatial Data Framework'' may be obtained by writing to Tammy Fanning, U.S. Geological Survey, Office of Acquisition and Federal Assistance, Mail Stop 205B, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 20192, or by sending a request by facsimile to (703) 648–7901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tammy Fanning, U.S. Geological Survey, Office of Acquisition and Federal Assistance, Mail Stop 205B, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 20192; voice telephone number (703) 648–7363; facsimile telephone number (703) 648–7901.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the FDPP is to facilitate and provide resources for the development and implementation of the framework for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The framework concept, outlined in the report ''Development of a National Digital Geospatial Data Framework'' (April 1995), proposes a means by which the geospatial data community can work together to produce and maintain commonly needed themes of data for national, regional, state, and local analyses. Included in this report is the definition of a basic information content, and the technical, institutional, and business contexts by which a distributed, collaborative data collection and maintenance effort for the nation would operate.

Project Summary Narrative: Project summaries will be reviewed by the factors set forth below (see items 1–5). The project summary should address each of the following factors in the sequence as they are listed. (1) Relevance to the NSDI Framework: Describe the degree to which the project contributes to the development of the NSDI framework concept, its potential application to other institutions, and the extent to which the proposed project may stimulate growth of similar efforts. Describe the relationship of the proposed effort to related and similar ongoing projects. Narrative should not include reiterations of text from FGDC/NSDI fact sheets and other committee publications. (2) Information Content: Identify which of the framework themes (geodetic control, digital orthoimagery, elevation and bathymetry data, transportation, hydrography, governmental units, cadastral) will be addressed in the proposed project. Summary should describe the geographic area to be addressed, and the scale and resolution of data. (3) Technical/Operational Context: Briefly summarize the key unique technical and operational activities to be implemented in the proposed project that address the framework goals of: Integration of high-resolution, locally-produced data; providing geospatial data at varying resolutions for any given location; enabling users to integrate new framework data into their data holdings without endangering their existing investments in spatial data and attribute information; and vertically integrating data between themes, and horizontally within themes. (4) Business Context: Describe the approach proposed to ensure that the project will result in framework data that are widely used and useful. Project summary should describe the approach to: Avoiding restrictive practices that would inhibit use of the framework; providing information about the data limitations, optimal uses, and liability; providing data in public, non-proprietary format(s); conforming to approved standards; and containing data that are certified to ensure that they meet the minimal standard for all framework criteria. (5) Institutional Organization Process: Identify the participating organization and briefly describe each organization's tasks and responsibilities.

Background Material: The FGDC report ''Development of a National Geospatial Data Framework'' will be helpful in developing project summaries. It may be obtained by writing to Ms. Tammy Fanning at the address above. Requests may also be made by facsimile to (703) 648–7901. Confirmation by telephone at (703) 648–7372 is recommended. No telephone request for this report will be accepted. An electronic version of the report and additional background information about the framework is available through the World Wide Web at http://www.fgdc.gov/Fram/index.html. Unsuitable Project Summaries: Project summaries will not be considered for projects on topics not being sought under this program. Data collection is not considered an appropriate activity for funding under this program. Project summaries focused on metadata and clearinghouse development will not be considered (the FGDC encourages these activities to seek support through the NSDI Competitive Cooperative Agreements Program (1434–HQ–97–PA–00022)). Additionally, project summaries will not be considered for the following: from Federal agencies or Federally Funded Research and Development Centers where the agency or center is identified as the lead on the proposed project, from and work in foreign countries, from projects in which there is a real or the appearance of a conflict of interest, and from projects solely involving the direct procurement of a product or service. Project Summary Preparation Instructions: Organizations wishing to participate in the first phase should submit an unbound, signed original and one copy of the project summary. The project summary shall not exceed 3 single-spaced pages (including any figures or tables), and the type size shall not be smaller than 12 pitch/10 point type. Pages shall be numbered. Please note, that regardless of how many pages are submitted, only the first 3 pages of the Project Summary will be reviewed.

Project Summary Delivery Instructions: Project summaries must be received on or before January 17, 1997, at 3:00 p.m. EST. Project summaries delivered by mail should be sent to Ms. Tammy Fanning, U.S. Geological Survey, Office of Acquisition and Federal Assistance, MS 205B, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 20192. Project summaries delivered by hand, during the work week, should be taken to the USGS, Office of Acquisition and Federal Assistance, Room 6A331, Attention: Ms. Tammy Fanning, MS 205B, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia, office business hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Project summaries received after 3:00 p.m. EST on January 17, 1997 will be returned to the applicant. Planned Terms and Conditions for the FDPP to be issued later this fiscal year: At the completion of phase two, the USGS intends to award cooperative agreements with funds totaling $260,000 during fiscal year 1997. Funds requested for a project shall not exceed $65,000. One year project periods are anticipated. This estimate does not bind the USGS to a specified number of awards. Each project must be collaborative and involve two or more organizations. Please Note: The project summaries submitted in response to this notice for phase one will not be used to make award selections, and will not be provided to the selection panels. No special consideration in the phase two FDPP selection process will be given to applications provided by organizations that submitted a program summary in response to phase one. The USGS

anticipates that it will announce phase two in late winter. The Government does not intend to award a cooperative agreement on the basis of this notice or to otherwise pay for the information solicited as a direct cost. The subsequent program announcement to be released in phase two will be synopsized in both the Commerce Business Daily and the Federal Register prior to release.

Dated: November 15, 1996.

Richard E. Witmer,

Acting Chief, National Mapping Division.

[FR Doc. 96–30082 Filed 11–25–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–31–M

Bureau of Land Management Alaska

[AK–962–1410–00–P]

Notice for Publication; Alaska Native Claims Selection

[AA–6646–A AA–6672–A]

In accordance with Departmental regulation 43 CFR 2650.7(d), notice is hereby given that decisions to issue conveyances under the provisions of Sec. 14(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of December 18, 1971, 43 U.S.C. 1601, 1613(a), will be issued to Akhiok-Kaguyak, Incorporated, successors in interest to Natives of Akhiok, Inc. and Kaguyak, Inc., for 6,629 acres and 3,397.07 acres, respectively. The lands involved are located on and in the vicinity of Kodiak Island, Alaska, as follows:

Seward Meridian, Alaska

T. 36 S., R. 28 W., T. 39 S., R. 28 W., T. 35 S., R. 29 W., T. 39 S., R. 29 W.,
T. 40 S., R. 29 W., T. 39 S., R. 30 W., T. 35 S., R. 31 W., T. 38 S., R. 31 W., and
T. 38 S., R. 32 W.

A notice of the decision will be published once a week, for four (4) consecutive weeks, in the *Kodiak Daily Mirror.* Copies of the decision may be obtained by contacting the Alaska State Office of the Bureau of Land Management, 222 West Seventh Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513–7599 ((907) 271–5960).

Any party claiming a property interest which is adversely affected by the decision, an agency of the Federal government or regional corporation, shall have until December 26, 1996 to file an appeal. However, parties receiving service by certified mail shall have 30 days from the date of receipt to file an appeal. Appeals must be filed in the Bureau of Land Management at the address identified above, where the requirements for filing an appeal may be obtained. Parties who do not file an appeal in accordance with the requirements of 43 CFR Part 4, Subpart E, shall be deemed to have waived their rights.

Gary L. Cunningham,

Land Law Examiner, ANCSA Team, Branch of 962 Adjudication.

[FR Doc. 96–30118 Filed 11–25–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–$$–P

[NV–060–1990–01; N64–93–001P (96–2A)]

Notice of intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the South Pipeline Mining Plan of Operations

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Cortez Gold Mines (Cortez) South Pipeline Project for mining in Lander County, Nevada, and notice of scoping period and public meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended, and to 43 Code of Federal Regulations Part 3809, the Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain Field Office (BLM) will be directing the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed expansion and development of an open pit gold mine and associated facilities, in Lander County, Nevada. The EIS will be prepared by a third party consultant and funded by the proponent, Cortez. The BLM invites comments and suggestions on the scope of the analysis.

DATES: There will be two public scoping meetings hosted by the BLM in order to solicit input from the public about the South Pipeline Project. The first meeting will be held at the BLM Battle Mountain Field Office, at 50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, Nevada on Tuesday evening, December 10, 1996 from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. The second meeting will be held at the Crescent Valley Senior Center, 6024 Ruby Way, Crescent Valley, Nevada on Wednesday evening, December 11, 1996, from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. The purpose of these meetings is to identify issues to be addressed in the EIS, identify viable possible alternatives, and to encourage public participation in the NEPA process. BLM representatives will present an overview of the NEPA process, public involvement, and anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the project. Cortez representatives will be summarizing the Plan of Operations. Additional briefing meetings will be held as necessary. Written comments on the scope of the EIS will be accepted through January 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Scoping comments may be sent to: BLM, Battle Mountain District Manager, 50 Bastian Rd., P.O. Box 1420, Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820 ATTN: Dave Davis.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dave Davis, Project Manager, or Helen Mary Johnson, Geologist, at (702) 635–4000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Cortez has recently submitted a proposal to expand their Pipeline mining facility located in southern Crescent Valley, Lander County, Nevada. The project will consist of an expansion of the current Pipeline Gold Mine Project. The South Pipeline Expansion will consist of a new open pit and associated dewatering facilities, new haul roads, expansion of the permitted Pipeline waste rock facility, a new heap leach facility, and soil stockpiles. Existing facilities will also be used. These facilities include the permitted reinfiltration ponds and conveyance systems, either the Cortez or Pipeline mills (or both), existing haul roads, the Pipeline tailings/heap leach facility, the Cortez tailings facility, and ancillary facilities such as offices, shops, power lines, water lines, etc. Total disturbance for the South Pipeline Plan Amendment as currently proposed is estimated to be 3,162 acres.

Potentially significant and significant direct, indirect, cumulative and residual impacts from the proposal will be analyzed in the EIS. Significant issues to be addressed in the EIS include those relating to: surface and ground water issues, air quality, cultural resources, and social and economic values. A significant issue that will be one of the focuses of the EIS will be the formation of a pit lake or pit lakes at the end of mining. Currently two large pit lakes separated by a common highwall or one large pit lake encompassing both the Pipeline and South Pipeline pits are possible post-mining scenarios. Partial backfilling of the Pipeline open pit with material from the South Pipeline Pit will also be evaluated. Additional significant issues to be addressed may arise during the scoping process. Federal, state, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the BLM's decision on this plan of operation are invited to participate in the scoping process.

Dated: November 19, 1996.

Wayne King,

Acting District Manager.

[FR Doc. 96–30143 Filed 11–25–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–HC–P