telephone at (804) 693–6694 or by letter to the VAFO (see ADDRESSES).

Background

Section 9 of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and its implementing regulations prohibit the “take” of animal species listed as endangered or threatened. Take is defined under the ESA as to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect listed animal species, or to attempt to engage in such conduct” (16 U.S.C. 1538). However, under section 10(a) of the ESA, we may issue permits to authorize incidental take of listed species. “Incidental take” is defined by the ESA as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity. Regulations governing ITPs for threatened and endangered species are found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 50 CFR 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.32, respectively.

Dominion Virginia Power is seeking a permit for the incidental take of the federally listed threatened Madison Cave isopod during construction activities and post-construction monitoring period extending for a total term of 9 years, until 2020. Permit coverage does not include plant operational activities, as these are not anticipated to cause take of the Madison Cave isopod. Dominion Virginia Power proposes to construct a natural gas-fired combined-cycle power plant at that is anticipated to be one of the most efficient power plants in the nation once operational. Incidental take of the Madison Cave isopod may occur from disturbance of the subterranean karst, which is habitat the species occupies, during construction. Additional information can be found in the proposed LEHCP and on our Web site.

The LEHCP’s proposed conservation strategy is designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of covered activities on the covered species. The biological goals and objectives are to protect high-quality habitat for a known Madison Cave isopod population. The proposed Action consists of the issuance of an ITP and implementation of the proposed LEHCP. Three alternatives to the proposed action were considered in the LEHCP: A no-project alternative, alternative sites, and alternative construction procedures. These three alternatives were deemed impracticable by Dominion Virginia Power because of logical, law enforcement, and wildlife management reasons.

The plant will be fueled by natural gas delivered to the site through gas pipelines regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. These pipelines are undergoing independent analysis under the ESA, NEPA, and other environmental regulations.

National Environmental Policy Act

We have made a preliminary determination that the Dominion Virginia Power’s proposed LEHCP, including the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, will have a minor or negligible effect on the species covered in the HCP, and that the HCP qualifies as a “low-effect” HCP as described in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook (November 1996).

As further explained in our preliminary EAS, included for public review, we preliminarily determine that the HCP qualifies as a LEHCP based on the following three reasons:

1. Implementation of the HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and their habitats;
2. Implementation of the plan would result in minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources; and
3. Impacts of the plan, considered together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects, would not result, over time, in cumulative effects to environmental values or resources that would be considered significant.

Based on these reasons, the incidental take permit also, therefore, qualifies for a categorical exclusion under NEPA, as provided by the Department of the Interior’s NEPA implementing regulations (43 CFR 46.205, 46.210 and 46.215) and the Departmental Manual (516 DM 2 Appendix 1 and 516 DM 8). Based on our review of public comments that we may receive in response to this notice, we may revise this preliminary determination.

Next Steps

We will evaluate the draft HCP and preliminary LEHCP Screening Form/ EAS and comments we receive to determine whether the permit application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA and qualifies as a “low-effect” HCP and for a categorical exclusion under NEPA. We will also evaluate whether issuance of a section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would comply with section 7 of the ESA by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. We will use the results of this consultation, in combination with the above findings, in our final analysis to determine whether to issue an ITP. If the requirements are met, we will issue the ITP to the applicant.

Public Comments

The Service invites the public to comment on the proposed HCP and preliminary EAS during a 30-day public review period (see DATES). Comments can be submitted to VAFO (see ADDRESSES). All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record and may be made available to the public. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may request at the top of your document that we withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: August 10, 2011.

Kenneth D. Elowe,
Acting Regional Director, Northeast Region.

[FR Doc. 2011–21425 Filed 8–19–11; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service


Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group (TAMWG) affords stakeholders the opportunity to give policy, management, and technical input concerning Trinity River (California) restoration efforts to the Trinity Management Council (TMC). The TMC interprets and recommends policy, coordinates and reviews management actions, and provides organizational budget oversight. This notice announces a TAMWG meeting, which is open to the public.

DATES: TAMWG will meet from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, September 12, 2011.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Trinity County Library, 351 Main Street, Weaverville, CA 96093.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Meeting Information: Randy A. Brown, TAMWG Designated Federal Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1655 Heindon Road, Arcata, CA 95521; telephone: (707) 822–7201. Trinity River...
SUMMARY: This order extends the duration of the withdrawal created by Public Land Order No. 6870 for an additional 20-year period. The extension is necessary to continue protection of the scientific and ecological research values at the Steamboat Mountain Research Natural Area, which would otherwise expire on August 27, 2011.

DATES: Effective Date: August 28, 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles R. Roy, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon/Washington State Office, 503–808–6189, or Dianne Torpin, United States Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region, 503–808–2422. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to reach the BLM contact during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose for which the withdrawal was first made requires this extension to continue protection of the scientific and ecological research values at the Steamboat Mountain Research Natural Area. The withdrawal extended by this order will expire on August 27, 2031, unless as a result of a review conducted prior to the expiration date pursuant to Section 204(f) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714(f), the Secretary determines that the withdrawal shall be further extended.

Order

By virtue of the authority vested in the Secretary of the Interior by Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1714, it is ordered as follows:

Public Land Order No. 6870 (56 FR 42541 (1991)), which withdrew approximately 1,400 acres of National Forest System land from location and entry under the United States mining