

Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are charged with implementing the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (ESA or Act); among the purposes of the ESA are to provide a means to conserve the ecosystems upon which species listed as endangered or threatened depend and a program for listed species conservation. Through its Candidate Conservation program, one of the FWS's goals is to encourage the public to voluntarily develop and implement conservation agreements for declining species prior to them being listed under the ESA. The benefits of such conservation actions may contribute to not needing to list a species, to list a species as threatened instead of endangered, or to accelerate the species' recovery if it is listed. The Services put in place a voluntary conservation program to provide incentives for non-Federal property owners to develop and implement conservation agreements for unlisted species: Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAAs). The policy for this type of agreement was finalized on June 17, 1999 (64 FR 32726), along with implementing regulations for FWS in part 17 of title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (64 FR 32706). The Services finalized a revision of the CCAA policy on December 27, 2016 (81 FR 95164). The FWS revised the CCAA regulations in 2004 (69 FR 24084; May 3, 2004), to make them easier to understand and implement by, among other things, defining "property owner" and clarifying several points, including the transfer of permits, permit revocation, and advanced notification of take. On December 27, 2016 (81 FR 95053), the FWS again revised the CCAA regulations to make the regulations consistent with the 2016 revisions to the policy.

To participate in a CCAA, non-Federal property owners agree to implement on their land the CCAA's specific conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to the species that are covered under the agreement. An ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) enhancement-of-survival permit is issued to the agreement participant providing a specific level of incidental take coverage should the property owner's agreed-upon conservation measures and routine property-management actions (e.g., agricultural, ranching, or forestry activities) result in take of the covered species, if it is listed. Property owners receive assurances that

they will not be required to undertake any other conservation measures than those agreed to, even if new information indicates that additional or revised conservation measures are needed for the species, and they will not be subject to additional resource use or land-use restrictions.

Under the 1999 policy, to approve a CCAA we had to "determine that the benefits of the conservation measures implemented by a property owner under a CCAA, when combined with those benefits that would be achieved if it is assumed that conservation measures were also to be implemented on other necessary properties, would preclude or remove any need to list the covered species." This language had led some property owners to believe that the Services expected each individual CCAA to provide enough conservation benefits to the species to remove any need to list the species. The confusion created by the hypothetical concept of conservation measures that need to be implemented on "other necessary properties" lead us to revise the CCAA standard to require a net conservation benefit to the covered species, specifically on the property to be enrolled, and eliminated references to "other necessary properties." Although the policy states that this revision does not increase the conservation standard (but rather makes it easier to understand how we determine our standard), we are aware there has been some concern that this change is considered by some members of the public to be a higher standard while others considered it to be a lower standard than the previous standard. The Services are committed to strengthening the delivery of our voluntary conservation tools, such as CCAAs, by making it easier to work with us on conservation efforts, thus we are soliciting public review and comment on whether to revise the 2016 CCAA policy (and accompanying regulation).

Request for Information

During the comment period (see **DATES**), we will accept written comments and information on our 2016 CCAA policy (81 FR 95164; December 27, 2016). You may submit your comments and materials by one of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**. 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—will be posted on <http://www.regulations.gov>. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your

personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All comments and recommendations, including names and addresses, will become part of the record for this review.

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: October 4, 2017.

Gregory J. Sheehan,

Principal Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Dated: October 4, 2017.

Samuel D. Rauch III,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2017-25267 Filed 11-21-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[GX14EB00A181100; OMB Control Number 1028-0101]

Agency Information Collection Activities: The William T. Pecora Award; Application and Nomination Process

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the USGS is proposing to renew an information collection (IC).

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 22, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive MS 159, Reston, VA 20192 (mail); or gs-help_infocollections@usgs.gov (email). Please reference "Information Collection 1028-0101, Pecora Award" in all correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Holm, USGS, EROS Center, 47914 252nd Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57198 (mail), by telephone (605)-594-6127, or holm@usgs.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We, the USGS, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, provide the general public and other Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information.

This helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are soliciting comments on the proposed IC that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is the collection necessary to the proper functions of the USGS; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the USGS enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the USGS minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this IC. 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 ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Abstract: The William T. Pecora Award is presented annually to individuals or teams using satellite or aerial remote sensing that make outstanding contributions toward understanding the Earth (land, oceans and air), educating the next generation of scientists, informing decision makers or supporting natural or human-induced disaster response. The award is sponsored jointly by the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The award was established in 1974 to honor the memory of Dr. William T. Pecora, former Director of the USGS and Under Secretary, Department of the Interior. Dr. Pecora was a motivating force behind the establishment of a program for civil remote sensing of the Earth from space. His early vision and support helped establish what we know today as the Landsat satellite program. The purpose of the award is to recognize individuals or groups working in the field of remote sensing of the earth. National and international nominations are accepted from the public and private

sector individuals, teams, organizations, and professional societies.

Nomination packages include three sections: (A) Cover Sheet, (B) Summary Statement, and (C) Supplemental Materials. The cover sheet includes professional contact information. The Summary Statement is limited to two pages and describes the nominee's achievements in the scientific and technical remote sensing community, contributions leading to successful practical applications of remote sensing, and/or major breakthroughs in remote sensing science or technology. Nominations may include up to 10 pages of supplemental information such as resume, publications list, and/or letters of endorsement.

Title: The Pecora Award; Application and Nomination Process

OMB Control Number: 1028-0101.

Form Number: NA.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; Businesses and other academic and non-profit institutions; State, local and tribal governments.

Respondent's Obligation: None. Participation is voluntary.

Frequency of Collection: Annually.

Estimated Total Number of Annual Responses: 10-15.

Estimated Time per Response: 6 hours.

Estimated Annual Burden Hours: 90.

Total Estimated Annual Non-hour Burden Cost: There are no "non-hour cost" burdens associated with this IC.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The authorities for this action are the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*).

Frank Kelly,

Director, Earth Resources Observation and Science Center, U.S. Geological Survey.

[FR Doc. 2017-25314 Filed 11-21-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4311-AM-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNVS00560 L58530000 EU0000 241A; 14-08807; MO#4500109372; TAS: 17X]

Notice of Realty Action: Competitive Sale of 40 Parcels of Public Land in Clark County, NV

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Realty Action.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to offer 40 parcels of public land totaling 754.78 acres in the Las Vegas Valley by competitive sale, sealed-bid and oral auction, at not less than the appraised fair market values (FMV) pursuant to the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998 (SNPLMA), as amended. The proposed sale will be subject to the applicable provisions of Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and BLM land sale regulations. The BLM has also completed a Determination of National Environmental Policy Act Adequacy (DNA).

DATES: Interested parties may submit written comments regarding the proposed sale until January 8, 2018. The proposed sale is to occur by sealed bid and oral public auction on January 24, 2018, at 10 a.m., Pacific Time. The FMV for the parcels, the period to submit sealed-bids, and the sale date will be announced in local and online media at least 30 days prior to the sale. The BLM will start accepting sealed bids beginning on January 8, 2018. Sealed bids must be received by the BLM, Las Vegas Field Office (LVFO) by no later than 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time on January 19, 2018. The BLM will open the sealed bids on the day of the sale just prior to the oral bidding.

ADDRESSES: The proposed sale will occur at the City of Henderson Council Chambers, 240 Water Street, Henderson, Nevada 89009. Mail written comments and submit sealed bids to the BLM Las Vegas Field Office, Assistant Field Manager, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89130.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joe Fields, Realty Specialist, BLM Las Vegas Field Office at email: jfields@blm.gov, or telephone: 702-515-5194. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FRS 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. General information on previous BLM public land sales go to: <https://www.blm.gov/snplma>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM proposes to offer 40 parcels of public land within the Clark County jurisdiction. Twenty-eight of the parcels are located in the northwest part of the valley, near Highway 95 and Interstate 215. Nine parcels are located in the southwest part of the valley, south of