

(16 U.S.C. 1539). Regulations governing incidental take permits for endangered and threatened species, respectively, are found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 50 CFR 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.32. Impacts to plants do not fall under the definition of “take”; therefore, the Service cannot authorize incidental take of plants. However, the Service cannot issue an ITP that would jeopardize the continued existence or adversely modify the designated critical habitat of any listed species.

Applicant’s Proposed Project

The applicant requests a 50-year ITP to take the five bat species. The applicant determined that take is reasonably certain to occur incidental to enactment of forest and habitat management activities statewide on 42 million acres of covered species habitat. The proposed conservation strategy in the applicant’s proposed HCP is designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of habitat and forest management on the covered species. The biological goals and objectives are to minimize potential take of the five covered species through minimization measures and to provide habitat conservation measures for the covered species to offset any impacts from implementation of habitat and forest management activities. The estimated level of take from the project is 20.38 adult Indiana bats, 0.02 northern long-eared bats, 0.11 little brown bats, and 1.81 tricolored bats on an annual basis. As a result of proposed avoidance measures, the likelihood of take for gray bat has been greatly reduced such that a measurable level of take is not anticipated to occur. To offset the impacts of the taking of the five covered bat species, the applicant proposes to avoid habitat loss-related impacts from habitat and forest management, by instituting avoidance measures during the management process, such as avoiding certain activities during the active maternity season, and implement species habitat protection, enhancement, or restoration on 28,000 acres. Beneficial and net effects of the conservation strategy include the successful management of forests, which protect potential habitat for bats; site-level maintenance and promotion of roost trees and foraging habitat; the protection and management of 28,000 acres of priority bat management zones targeted at tree-roosting covered species; the protection and enhancement of caves; and other specific measures that minimize or avoid effects to the covered species.

National Environmental Policy Act

The issuance of an ITP is a Federal action that triggers the need for compliance with NEPA. We prepared a draft EA that analyzes the environmental impacts on the human environment resulting from three alternatives: A no-action alternative, a no take alternative, the applicant’s proposed action, and an early planning mitigation alternative.

Next Steps

The Service will evaluate the permit application and the comments received to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA. We will also conduct an intra-Service consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA to evaluate the effects of the proposed take. After considering the above findings, we will determine whether the permit issuance criteria of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA have been met. If met, the Service will issue the requested ITP to the applicant.

Request for Public Comments

The Service invites comments and suggestions from all interested parties on the proposed HCP, draft EA, and supporting documents during a 30-day public comment period (see **DATES**). In particular, information and comments regarding the following topics are requested:

1. The effects that implementation of any alternative could have on the human environment;
2. Whether or not the significance of the impact on various aspects of the human environment has been adequately analyzed; and
3. Any other information pertinent to evaluating the effects of the proposed action on the human environment including Indiana, gray, northern long-eared, little brown, and tricolored bats.

Availability of Public Comments

You may submit comments by one of the methods shown under **ADDRESSES**. We will post on <http://regulations.gov> all public comments and information received electronically or via hardcopy. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record associated with this action. 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 can request in your comment that we withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we

cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10(c) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22) and the NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1506.6; 43 CFR 46).

Lori Nordstrom,

Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[GX21DK20H2S0000; OMB Control Number 1028–0114]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; National Ground-Water Monitoring Network Cooperative Funding Application

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Information Collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) are proposing to renew an information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before October 15, 2021.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting “Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments” or by using the search function. U.S. Geological Survey, Information Collections Officer, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive MS 159, Reston, VA 20192; and by email to gs-info_collections@usgs.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 1028–0114 in the subject line of your comments. Individuals who are hearing or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay

Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY assistance.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this ICR, contact Daryll Pope by email at dpope@usgs.gov, or by telephone at (804) 261-2630. You may also view the ICR at <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the PRA and 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1), we provide the general public and other Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on new, 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.

A **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day public comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on April 20, 2021. (**Federal Register**/Vol. 86, No. 74, 20515). No comments were received.

As part of our continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burdens, we are again soliciting comments from the public and other Federal agencies on the proposed ICR that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following:

(1) Whether or not the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;

(2) The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) How might the agency minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of response.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. 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 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.

Abstract: The USGS administers the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network which was developed through work with the Federal Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI) and its Subcommittee on Ground Water (SOGW). This network is required as part of Public Law 111-11, Subtitle F-Secure Water: Section 9507, 42 U.S.C. 10367, "Water Data Enhancement by United States Geological Survey." The NGWMN consists of an aggregation of wells and spring from existing Federal, State, Tribal, and local groundwater monitoring networks. To support data providers for the NGWMN, the USGS will be providing funding through cooperative agreements to water-resource agencies that collect groundwater data. The USGS will be soliciting applications for funding that will request information from the Agency collecting the data. Elements will include contact information (phone number and email address), and a proposal describing their proposed work in support of the NGWMN. The proposal will describe the groundwater networks to be included in the NGWMN, the purpose of the networks, and the Principal aquifers that are monitored. Proposals may include work to become a new data provider to the NGWMN, support for maintaining connections to agency databases, and work to enhance NGWMN sites (updating metadata, well maintenance, well drilling, and support for continuous water-level monitoring equipment). The proposal would require estimates of costs to complete the above tasks and a timeline for planned completion. The proposal will be reviewed by the USGS and the NGWMN Program Board who will make funding recommendations.

Title of Collection: National Ground-Water Monitoring Network Cooperative Funding Application.

OMB Control Number: 1028-0114.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents/Affected Public: Multi-state, state or local water-resources agencies who operate groundwater monitoring networks.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 60.

Estimated Completion Time per Response: 2 hours to read 40 hours to complete application.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 880.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory to be considered for funding.

Frequency of Collection: Annually.

Total Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost: None.

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

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

Janice Fulford,

Director, USGS WMA Observing Systems Division.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

[212A2100DD/AAKC001030/
AOA501010.999900253G]

Indian Gaming; Approval of Tribal-State Class III Gaming Compact in the State of Connecticut

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice publishes the approval of the Agreement Between the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (Tribe) and the State of Connecticut (State) to amend the Tribe's Class III Gaming Compact (Amendment) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

DATES: The Amendment takes effect on September 15, 2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Paula L. Hart, Director, Office of Indian Gaming, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary—Policy and Economic Development, Washington, DC 20240, paula.hart@bia.gov, (202) 219-4066.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under section 11 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), Public Law 100-497, 25 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.*, the Secretary of the Interior shall publish in the **Federal Register** notice of approved Tribal-State compacts for the purpose of engaging in Class III gaming activities on Indian lands. As required by 25 CFR 293.4, all compacts and amendments are subject to review and approval by the Secretary. The Amendment, the MOU and the State of Connecticut House Bill No. 6451 (State Gaming Act) work in unison to provide the Mohegan Tribe and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe