

a tortoise is found within the construction area, activities would cease until the desert tortoise moves out of harm's way or is moved out of harm's way by an authorized desert tortoise biologist. Relocation would be the minimum distance possible (with a maximum of 500 meters) within appropriate habitat to ensure its safety from death, injury, or collection associated with the Project or other activities. Other measures would be implemented to minimize impacts to desert tortoise as listed in Appendix D in the HCP and in accordance with the most current Service-approved protocols (currently the Service's 2009 Desert Tortoise Field Manual).

All employees and contractors involved with the project would be required to complete a sensitive resources education program approved by the Service. The program would cover the distribution, general behavior, and ecology of listed species; sensitivity to human activities; legal protections; penalties for violation of state and Federal laws; reporting requirements; and minimization measures.

The project proponent would use qualified third-party contractors to design and implement research and monitoring studies to evaluate the impact of the two solar panel configurations on vegetation and migratory birds. Specific to desert tortoise, the studies would be designed to address questions related to effects of solar panels on vegetation growth, ability to seed underneath solar panels with desert tortoise forage species, and effects of solar panels on soil conditions such as temperature, water balance, microbial community, and biotic crust.

#### *Proposed Action and Alternatives*

The Proposed Action consists of the issuance of an incidental take permit and implementation of the proposed HCP, which includes measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to the Mojave desert tortoise. If we approve the permit, take of the Mojave desert tortoise would be authorized for the applicant's activities associated with the Valley Electric Association's Community Solar Project. An estimated 2 to 4 adult desert tortoises may occupy the project site, and would be temporarily moved to a site close to the project area during construction activities and returned to the project site after construction is completed to ensure resident tortoises are not harmed. In the proposed HCP, the applicant considers alternatives to the taking of the Mojave desert tortoise under the proposed action. The Traditional Solar Project Alternative

would involve blading and grading the 80-acre project site prior to installation of the PV array. The project site would be fenced with tortoise-proof fencing and cleared of all tortoises, resulting in long-term displacement of resident tortoises and long-term loss of all habitat in the project site. The applicant also considers a no-action alternative under which the project would not be constructed and incidental take of the Mojave desert tortoise would not be authorized. However, the no-action alternative would not meet the needs of the applicant to provide clean energy to residents within their service area.

#### **Our Preliminary Determination**

The Service has made a preliminary determination that approval of the proposed HCP qualifies as a categorical exclusion under NEPA, as provided by the Department of the Interior Manual (516 DM 2 Appendix 1, 516 DM 6 Appendix 1, and 516 DM 8.5(c)(2)) and as a "low-effect" plan as defined by the Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook (November 1996).

We base our determination that a HCP qualifies as a low-effect plan on the following three criteria:

(1) Implementation of the HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and their habitats, including designated critical habitat;

(2) Implementation of the HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources; and

(3) Impacts of the HCP, 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 upon this preliminary determination, we do not intend to prepare further NEPA documentation. We will consider public comments in making the final determination on whether to prepare such additional documentation.

#### **Next Steps**

We will evaluate the permit application, associated documents, and comments we receive to determine whether the permit application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the Act, NEPA, and implementing regulations. If we determine that all requirements are met, we will issue a permit to the applicant for the incidental take of the Mojave desert tortoise from the implementation of the covered activities described in the Habitat Conservation Plan for Valley

Electric Association's Community Solar Project, Pahrump, Nye County, Nevada. We will not make our final decision until after the end of the 30-day public comment period, and we will fully consider all comments we receive during the public comment period.

#### **Public Availability of Comments**

All comments we receive become part of the public record. Requests for copies of comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, NEPA, and Service and Department of Interior policies and procedures. 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 to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so.

#### **Authority**

We provide this notice under section 10(c) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22 and 17.32), and the NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508).

Dated: August 31, 2015.

**Michael J. Senn,**

*Field Supervisor, Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, Las Vegas, Nevada.*

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## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **National Park Service**

**[NPS–WASO–NRNHL–19054;PPWOCRADP2, PCU00RP14.R50000]**

### **National Historic Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board Meeting**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

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**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given in furtherance of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, (5 U.S.C. Appendix 1–16), and Part 65 of title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, that a meeting of the National Historic Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board will be held beginning at 10:00 a.m. on November 16, 2015, at the Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives. The meeting will

continue beginning at 9:30 a.m. on November 17, 2015.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Monday, November 16, 2015, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; and Tuesday, November 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EASTERN).

*Location:* The Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, 3rd Floor, The Richard L. Hurlbut Memorial Hall, 1201 17th Street NW., Washington, DC 20036.

*Agenda:* The National Park System Advisory Board and its National Historic Landmarks Committee may consider the following nominations:

#### Connecticut

JAMES MERRILL HOUSE, Stonington, CT  
THE STEWARD'S HOUSE, FOREIGN MISSION SCHOOL, Cornwall, CT

#### Florida

NORMAN STUDIOS, Jacksonville, FL

#### Indiana

ATHENAEUM (DAS DEUTSCHE HAUS), Indianapolis, IN

#### Michigan

GAUKLER POINTE (ESEL AND ELEANOR FORD HOUSE), Macomb County, MI

#### Mississippi

MISSISSIPPI STATE CAPITOL, Jackson, MS

#### New York

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH AND COMMUNITY HOUSE, New York, NY

#### Ohio

ZOAR HISTORIC DISTRICT, Zoar, OH

#### Wisconsin

MAN MOUND, Sauk County, WI

#### Wyoming

AMES MONUMENT, Albany County, WY  
HELL GAP PALEOINDIAN SITE, Goshen County, WY

Proposed Amendments to Existing Designations:

#### Maryland

MONOCACY BATTLEFIELD, City of Frederick and Frederick County, MD (updated documentation and boundary revision)

#### Ohio

JAMES A. GARFIELD HOME, Mentor, OH (updated documentation)  
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT HOME, Cincinnati, OH (updated documentation and name change)

The committee may also consider the following historic trail:

#### LEWIS AND CLARK EASTERN LEGACY NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

##### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patricia Henry, Historian, National Historic Landmarks Program, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, DC 20240, telephone (202) 354-2216 or email: [Patty\\_Henry@nps.gov](mailto:Patty_Henry@nps.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The purpose of the meeting of the National Historic Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board is to evaluate nominations of historic properties in order to advise the National Park System Advisory Board of the qualifications of each property being proposed for National Historic Landmark designation, and to make recommendations regarding the possible designation of those properties as National Historic Landmarks to the National Park System Advisory Board at a subsequent meeting at a place and time to be determined. The Committee also makes recommendations to the National Park System Advisory Board regarding amendments to existing designations and proposals for withdrawal of designation. The members of the National Historic Landmarks Committee are:

Dr. Stephen Pitti, Chair  
Dr. James M. Allan  
Dr. Cary Carson  
Dr. Yong Chen  
Mr. Douglas Harris  
Ms. Mary Hopkins  
Mr. Luis Hoyos, AIA  
Dr. Sarah A. Leavitt  
Dr. Barbara J. Mills  
Dr. Michael E. Stevens  
Dr. Amber Wiley  
Dr. David Young

The meeting will be open to the public. Pursuant to 36 CFR part 65, any member of the public may file, for consideration by the National Historic Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board, written comments concerning the National Historic Landmarks nominations, amendments to existing designations, or proposals for withdrawal of designation.

Comments should be submitted to J. Paul Loether, Chief, National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Program, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, DC 20240, email: [Paul\\_Loether@nps.gov](mailto:Paul_Loether@nps.gov).

Before including your address, telephone 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.

Dated: August 31, 2015.

**Alma Rippis,**

*Chief, Office of Policy.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

[MMAA104000]

#### Outer Continental Shelf, Gulf of Mexico, Oil and Gas Central Planning Area Lease Sales 241 and 247 and Eastern Planning Area Lease Sale 226

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** BOEM is announcing the availability of a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Central Planning Area Lease Sales 241 and 247 and Eastern Planning Area Lease Sale 226. The Final Supplemental EIS provides a discussion of potential significant impacts of the proposed actions, provides an analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed actions, and identifies the Bureau's preferred alternatives. This Final Supplemental EIS updates the environmental and socioeconomic analyses for proposed CPA and EPA sales evaluated in the following EISs:

- Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales: 2012–2017; Western Planning Area Lease Sales 229, 233, 238, 246, and 248; Central Planning Area Lease Sales 227, 231, 235, 241, and 247, Final Environmental Impact Statement (OCS EIS/EA BOEM 2012–019) (2012–2017 WPA/CPA Multisale EIS);
- Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales: 2013–2014; Western Planning Area Lease Sale 233; Central Planning Area Lease Sale 231, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (OCS EIS/EA BOEM 2013–0118) (WPA 233/CPA 231 Supplemental EIS);
- Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sale: 2015–2017; the Gulf of Mexico OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales: 2014 and 2016, Eastern Planning Area