

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

RECORD OF DECISION

**SOUTH TONGUE POINT LAND EXCHANGE AND
MARINE INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
CLATSOP COUNTY, OREGON**

This Record of Decision (ROD) has been developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in compliance with the agency decision-making requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The purpose of this ROD is to document the decision of the Service for the selection of an alternative for implementing the South Tongue Point Land Exchange and Marine Industrial Park Development Project (Project). Alternatives have been fully described and evaluated in the May 1994, Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project.

This ROD is designed to : a) state the Service's decision, present the rationale for its selection, and portray its implementation; b) identify the alternatives considered in reaching the decision; and c) state whether all means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from implementation of the selected alternative have been adopted (40 CFR 1505.2).

Based upon the review of the alternatives and their environmental consequences described in the Final EIS for the Project, the decision of the Service is to implement Alternative A, the Preferred Alternative. The selected action entails the transfer of lands under Federal administration for lands under Oregon State administration. Former State lands will be conveyed to the Service's Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). The State of Oregon will sponsor the development of a marine industrial park by on the former Federal lands.

Timing of implementation of various components of the project will occur based on funding and the availability of personnel and other resources. The Project's land exchange component is expected to enhance habitat and wildlife protection on the Refuge. The Project's development component is expected to create real property assets and associated income for the Common School Fund of the State of Oregon, encourage new industrial employment within the South Tongue Point area.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is proposing to convey approximately 130 acres of upland and submerged lands administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to the Division of State Lands (Division), an agency of the State of Oregon. In exchange for the Federal land, the Division is proposing to convey approximately 3,930 acres of State-owned land within the administrative boundary of the Refuge to GSA, which will in turn transfer those lands to the Service.

Under the proposed land exchange, the Service would gain fee title ownership to certain lands within the administrative boundary of the Refuge which would provide a more substantial and durable means of protecting wildlife resources from incompatible uses. Other State administered lands within the Refuge will be managed by the Service under a long-term cooperative management agreement with the Division. The Division has proposed to develop a multi-tenant marine industrial park on the property conveyed to it.

KEY ISSUES

Through public scoping and with input from various agencies and publics, key issues were identified. These focused on the following subject areas: 1) certain aspects of the physical environment, especially the potential for hazardous materials to be released from local sediments; 2) certain aspects of the biological environment, especially wetlands and threatened and endangered species; and 3) certain aspects of the cultural and social environment, especially the local and regional economy. These factors were also examined for the State-owned islands proposed as additions to the Refuge. These issues were thoroughly examined in the Draft and Final EIS.

ALTERNATIVES

More than 20 alternatives were considered before limiting the alternatives to be advanced for further study. Alternatives considered but not advanced for detailed analysis included alternative development concepts, alternative sites, and single versus multi-tenant developments. Alternatives advanced for detailed analysis include (A) the proposed land exchange and development of a multi-tenant marine industrial development; (B) the proposed land exchange and multi-tenant marine industrial development with connecting road to North Tongue Point; and (C) a No Action Alternative. Adverse and beneficial impacts of each alternative are considered.

Alternative A

Alternative A comprises two elements: (1) the land exchange, and (2) the multi-tenant marine industrial development.

(1) Approximately 3,930 acres of State-owned land within the administrative boundary of the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge would be exchanged through GSA to the

Service for the 130 acres on South Tongue Point. The remaining 950 acres would be managed under a long-term cooperative agreement between the Division and the Service.

(2) Development of the multi-tenant marine industrial site would occur in two phases. Phase 1 would involve site infrastructure developments and construction of marine industrial facilities. Construction would begin in 1994 and occur at a rate supported by market conditions.

Alternative B

Alternative B comprises the same two elements as Alternative A with the addition, in Phase 2, of a road connecting South Tongue Point to North Tongue Point. Construction of the connecting road would be dependent upon the need for additional land to support marine industrial development and increased port activities at North Tongue Point.

Alternative C

With the No Action Alternative, South Tongue Point would remain in its present undeveloped condition except for the existing Corps Field Station. There would be no land exchange. The No Action Alternative would not have direct adverse impacts to the physical and biological environment. However, the No Action Alternative would not have direct economic benefits from job creation and tax revenues.

DECISION

The Service's decision is to implement the Preferred Alternative, Alternative A, as it is described in the Final EIS for the South Tongue Point Land Exchange and Marine Industrial Development Project. This decision is based on a thorough review of the alternatives and their environmental consequences.

Other Agency Decisions

A Record of Decision will be produced by the Corps. The responsible officials at the Corps will adopt the Final EIS as part of the permit process required by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

A Record of Decision will be produced by GSA. The responsible officials at GSA will adopt the EIS in order to comply with National Environmental Policy Act requirements for the disposal and exchange of Federal properties.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION

The Preferred Alternative has been selected for implementation based on consideration of a number of environmental and social factors. Alternative A has been selected as the preferred alternative because: 1) the land exchange provides the most durable means for protecting wildlife habitats and enhancing wildlife populations; 2) the development component avoids

significant adverse environmental impacts; and 3) the project will result in significant economic benefits in a economically depressed area.

Alternative A was selected because it balances resource protection with water dependent development. The preferred alternative provides a net benefit for wildlife and benefits for the local economy. The land exchange is the most practical means available to secure and protect additional lands from incompatible uses within the administrative boundary of the Refuge. Migratory bird and resident wildlife populations will benefit from additional secure habitat and be enhanced through wildlife management programs which could not be implemented without fee title ownership. The development component has been carefully designed to minimize adverse environmental effects. Wintering bald eagles will benefit from compensatory measures designed to enhance foraging opportunities. A net gain in wetlands will be realized through successful implementation of mitigation measures.

Implementation of the Preferred Alternative extends the protection of the environmental resources and maintenance of environmental quality beyond what would be achieved under either of the other two alternatives. Alternative B was not selected as the preferred alternative due to the significant impacts expected to resident bald eagles. Alternative C, the No Action Alternative, was not selected as the preferred alternative because it would not result in the Service increasing habitat protection within the Refuge.



Marvin L. Plenert, Regional Director

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Date