applicant's qualifications for service on panels, including applicant's familiarity with international trade laws, character, reputation, reliability, and judgment.

Note: Information provided by applicants in response to the above questions will be used by the interagency group for the purpose of initial screening of candidates. Further information regarding financial interests and affiliations may be requested from prospective candidates at a later stage of the selection process for purposes of assessing conflicts of interest, and the appearance of such conflicts, in respect to service on panels.

Individuals selected for inclusion on the list of candidates may be required to make additional, specific disclosures in regard to conflicts and appearances of conflicts in connection with their appointment to particular panels. Individuals who have applied previously, including those individuals currently included on the list of candidates eligible to serve on chapter 19 binational panels, must apply pursuant to this notice in order to be considered for inclusion on the list of candidates eligible to serve beginning April 1, 1992.

False Statements

By virtue of section 405(a)(2)(C) of the Act, false statements made to the interagency group or the USTR by applicants regarding their personal or professional qualifications, or financial or other relevant interests, that bear on applicant's suitability for placement on rosters and appointment to panels, are punishable under the provisions of 18 U.S.C. 1001.

James R. Holbein,

United States Secretary, FTA Binational Secretariat.

[FR Doc. 91-24778 Filed 10-11-91; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-GT-M

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Endangered and Threatened Species; Critical Habitat Designation for Snake River Sockeye, Spring/Summer Chinook, and Fall Chinook Salmon

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Request for economic information on critical habitat.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposed to list Snake River sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) as Endangered (April 5, 1991; 56 FR 14055), and Snake River spring/summer and fall chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) as threatened (June 27, 1991; 56 FR 28542) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.* (ESA). As stated in the proposals to list, designation of critical habitat for these species is being undertaken in a separate proceeding. By this notice, NMFS is requesting information on the economic impacts of a critical habitat designation. Scientific information on the areas qualifying as critical habitat is requested in a separate notice (see notice of request for scientific data on critical habitat published in this issue of the Federal Register).

DATES: Information must be received by November 14, 1991.

ADDRESSES: Information should be sent to the Environmental and Technical Services Division, NMFS, Northwest Region, 911 NE 11th Avenue, room 620, Portland, OR 97232.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rob Jones, Environmental and Technical Services Division, NMFS, Portland, OR, 503/230-5429 or FTS/429-5429.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The definition of critical habitat, the designation process, and examples of potential critical habitat for Snake River sockeye, spring/summer chinook, and fall chinook salmon are contained in the notice of request for scientific data on critical habitat. Persons considering responding to this notice are encouraged to read first that notice, which is published in this issue of the Federal Register.

Economic Information Solicited

For areas potentially qualifying as critical habitat, NMFS is requesting information describing (1) the activities that could be affected by the designation, and (2) the economic costs and benefits of additional requirements or management measures likely to result from the designation. Those responding to this request should first project specified areas as potential critical habitat for proposed Snake River salmon and then project the economic consequences of designating those areas as critical habitat. With these stated assumptions, the corresponding economic information and analysis will be of maximum use to NMFS in carrying out its economic impact analysis for proposing critical habitat.

The economic cost to be considered in critical habitat designations under the ESA is the probable economic impact "of the (critical habitat) designation upon proposed or ongoing activities" (50 CFR 424.19). Therefore, NMFS must consider the incremental net costs specifically resulting from a critical habitat designation, above the economic effects attributable to listing the species. Economic impacts attributable to listing include actions resulting from section 7 consultations under the ESA to avoid jeopardy to the species and from the taking prohibitions under section 9 of the ESA. As a consequence, although information estimating the total economic impact of listing a species is welcome, comments most useful in determining critical habitat must clearly distinguish the incremental costs directly attributable to the designation of specified areas as critical habitat.

Dated: October 8, 1991.

William W. Fox, Jr.

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries.

[FR Doc. 91-24676 Filed 10-11-91; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-M

Endangered and Threatened Species; Critical Habitat Designation for Snake River Sockeye, Spring/Summer Chinook, and Fall Chinook Salmon

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Request for scientific data on critical habitat.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposed to list Snake River sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) as endangered (April 5, 1991; 56 FR 14055), and Snake River spring/summer and fall chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) as threatened (June 27, 1991; 56 FR 28542) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.* (ESA). As stated in the proposals to list, designation of critical habitat for these species is being undertaken in a separate proceeding. By this notice, NMFS is requesting scientific information on the areas qualifying as critical habitat. Information regarding the economic impacts of any critical habitat designation is requested in a separate notice (see notice of reques' for economic information on critical habitat published in this issue of the Federal Register).

DATES: Information must be received by November 14, 1991.

ADDRESSES: Information should be sent to the Environmental and Technical Services Division, NMFS, Northwest Region, 911 NE. 11th Avenue, room 620, Portland, OR 97232.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rob Jones, Environmental and Technical Services Division, NMFS, Portland, OR, 503/230-5429 or FTS/429-5429.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The proposed Snake River sockeye and chinook salmon all have declined to low numbers, and all inhabit the Snake River Basin. Snake River sockeye salmon production occurs in Redfish Lake, in the Salmon River Basin. Spring/summer chinook salmon are sparsely distributed over the Salmon River Basin and four other subbasins of the Snake River. Fall chinook salmon production is primarily limited to the mainstem Snake River downstream of the Hells Canyon Dam complex. All of these salmon share the same migration route through the Snake and Columbia Rivers and the Columbia River estuary. Each species also resides in the Pacific Ocean.

The geographic areas occupied by Snake River sockeye, spring/summer chinook, and fall chinook salmon throughout their life history overlap, and as a result, management considerations essential to the conservation of any one of these species may be mutually beneficial or contrary to the conservation of the others. Therefore, to ensure that any designation of critical habitat is comprehensive and of maximum benefit to the complex of proposed species, NMFS will consider critical habitat for all the proposed Snake River salmon species in a single proceeding.

Section 4(a)(3)(A) of the ESA requires that, to the extent prudent and determinable, NMFS designate critical habitat concurrently with a determination that a species is endangered or threatened. Determining critical habitat for proposed Snake River salmon has not been possible because information is lacking to identify areas qualifying as critical habitat and to consider the economic impact of specifying particular areas as critical habitat. Considering that critical habitat must ordinarily be designated concurrently with listing a species, NMFS must proceed with critical habitat designation in an accelerated manner. NMFS' efforts to obtain and evaluate scientific and economic information relevant to such designation must, therefore, proceed concurrently.

Definition of Critical Habitat

Critical habitat includes (1) those areas currently occupied by a species that contain those physical and biological features essential to the conservation of the species and that may require special management considerations or protection, and (2) those areas outside the current range of the species that are essential for the conservation of the species. Areas outside the current range of a species can only be designated if a designation limited to the species' existing distribution would be inadequate to ensure its recovery. See 50 CFR 424.01, 424.12, and 424.19.

Designating critical habitat is a three-step process. The initial step is to determine what areas are key to the species' recovery. This requires identifying the physical and biological features and principal constituent elements required by the species, and determining if these features and elements require special management or protection to achieve recovery.

The second step is an economic analysis of the consequences of designating particular areas as critical habitat. This begins with identifying those activities that are likely to affect the area being considered, and evaluating how those activities may appreciably diminish the value of the habitat for the recovery of the species. NMFS then analyzes the probable economic and other impacts of additional requirements or management measures likely to result from designating the areas as critical habitat.

Finally, potential critical habitat may be excluded from designation if NMFS determines that the benefits of excluding the area outweigh the benefits of designation. However, an area cannot be excluded if NMFS determines that failure to designate that area will result in the extinction of the species.

Critical habitat is a useful tool for reviewing Federal actions by designating specific boundaries within which activities may require special consideration during planning and development. It does not regulate activities in and of itself, and is not a sanctuary for a listed species where all human activities are prohibited. Critical habitat focusses attention on problems that hinder or preclude a species' recovery. Critical habitat designation involves a judgment as to which areas have features of particular significance to a species' recovery and that warrant special management attention. Important considerations include:

(1) The uniqueness of an area in a species' life history, e.g., emphasis may be directed to correct an obstacle to migration that limits escapement and production of a species, before addressing factors that may at present not be limiting a species' production.

(2) The biological status of the species, i.e., its vulnerability to continued decline in abundance and resulting recovery requirements.

(3) The significance of an area's potential contribution to recovery of a species, and its amenability to management and protection under the ESA.

Scientific Information Solicited

NMFS is requesting information on areas that may qualify as critical habitat for the proposed Snake River sockeye and chinook salmon. Areas that include physical and biological features essential to the recovery of the species should be identified, and areas outside the present distribution should be identified if such areas are essential to the recovery of the species. Areas must be defined by precise topographic boundaries or map coordinates. Essential features include, but are not limited to:

(1) Space for individual and population growth, and for normal behavior;

(2) Food, water, air, light, minerals, or other nutritional or physiological requiremehnts;

(3) Cover or shelter;

(4) Sites for breeding, reproduction, rearing of offspring; and, generally,

(5) Habitats that are protected from disturbance or are representative of the historic geographical and ecological distributions of the species.

Examples of features essential to the recovery of Snake River sockeye and chinook salmon may include: Redfish Lake spawning areas; migratory areas in the Snake and Columbia Rivers; previous spawning areas in the Stanley Basin of the Salmon River or in the Snake River upstream from Hells Canyon Dam complex; feeding areas of the Pacific Ocean; or any combination of these features.

Known principal constituent elements must be listed with any critical habitat description. Constituent elements are the physical characteristics of an area that are essential to the recovery of the species. Principal constituent elements may include, but are not limited to, spawning substrates, food resources, water quality or quantity, and vegetation and specific soil types. Examples of principal constituent elements for Snake River sockeye and chinook salmon may include: The percent of preferred substrates in spawning areas of the Stanley Basin of the Salmon River; water temperatures in the Snake River; water quantity and velocity in the Snake and Columbia Rivers during various periods; downstream and upstream passage facilities at Snake and Columbia River dams; riparian vegetation of spawning and rearing areas; and shallow-water nearshore feeding areas in the Snake and Columbia Rivers.

Together with identifying those areas possessing essential features, and listing principal constituent elements, it is also necessary to identify human activities or natural events subject to Federal action or approval that pose a threat to essential features, and determine where improvements in constituent elements are needed to achieve recovery of a species.

Dated: October 8, 1991.

William W. Fox, Jr.,

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries.

[FR Doc. 91-24677 Filed 10-11-91; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-M

Intent To Conduct Public Scoping Meetings on the Proposed Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Intent To Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan

AGENCY: Sanctuaries and Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of intent to hold public scoping meetings and prepare draft environmental impact statement and management plan.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Sanctuaries and Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce is considering Thunder Bay, Michigan, for designation as a national marine sanctuary. NOAA will hold public scoping meetings to gather information to determine the range and significance of issues related to sanctuary designation and mangement. The meetings will be held:

Tuesday, October 29, 1991, at 7 p.m. in room 103A of the Kellogg Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, and Wednesday, October 30, 1991, at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Alpena City Hall, 208 North First Street, Alpena, MI 49707. All interested persons are invited to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patmarie S. Maher or Susan E. Durden, NOAA Sanctuaries and Reserves Division, 1825 Connecticut Avenue NW., room 714, Washington, DC 20235, (202) 606-4122.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title III of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.* (the Act), authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to designate areas of coastal and ocean waters, the Great Lakes and their connecting waters, and submerged lands over which the United States exercises jurisdiction, consistent with international law, as national marine sanctuaries. The purpose of designating national marine sanctuaries is to protect and manage distinctive areas of the marine environment for those conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, research, educational or aesthetic values which give these areas special national significance. The Act is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the National Ocean Service (NOS) Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), Sanctuaries and Reserves Division (SRD).

Natural Resources: The highly sculptured limestone bedrock, the undulatory pattern of the submerged terraces and scarps, and the extreme gradations in sediment size composition create a variety of biological niches in the Tunder Bay area. Marsh vegetation along the edges of the Michigan Islands provides a habitat and breeding area for thousands of colonial nesting birds such as ring-billed gulls, common terns, and herring gulls. Thunder Island alone hosts 11,000 breeding pairs of shorebirds.

Scarecrow Island, part of the Michigan Islands National Wildlife Refuge, has the greatest variety of nesting birds in the National Wildlife Refuge. The gravel shoreline is heavily used by herring and ring-billed gulls, while many waterfowl (including great blue herons and cormorants) are observed nesting along the shores and within the bays. The American osprey and the American bald eagle, endangered species, have also been observed within the area as well as the rare sandhill crane.

The various geologic sites, including the Misery Bay Sinkhole and the Thunder Bay Island Rock Wall as well as the numerous shipwreck sites, serve as a habitat for 20 species of gamefish. Alewives, carp, black bass, smallmouth bass, catfish, brown trout, steelhead, splake, northern pike, and yellow perch can be observed within and around these sites. Chinook salmon, rainbow trout, brown trout, splake, and steelhead are annually stocked by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in the inland rivers that feed Thunder Bay.

Human Uses: Situated in an area of medium population density, the area is primarily used for recreational boating, diving, and nature appreciation. Three interesting underwater geological sites (Rock Wall, Misery Bay Sinkhole, and the North Point Reef forming the northern boundary of Thunder Bay) and 83 identified shipwrecks attract large numbers of gamefish, anglers, and recreational divers to the area. The shipwrecks include wood-hulled schooners, steamers, barges, Great Lakes tugboats, a steel-hulled steamer, and an oceangoing freighter. Much of the area is not easily accessible, though some is visited by the more serious naturalists and birdwatchers.

The State of Michigan owns the waters, lake bed, islands, and much of the shore adjacent to Thunder Bay. The area is presently included in Michigan's Underwater Preserve System administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with the Department of State, Division of History. The Underwater Preserve System seeks to prevent damage to sunken ships by regulating the salvage of historical or cultural resources in the Preserves.

Four islands within this site are nature preserves. Two islands are managed, primarily to protect migratory and nesting birds, as part of the Michigan Island National Wildlife Refuge; two are owned by the Michigan Nature Association.

The Designation Process: Selection of a site as an Active Candidate formally initiates the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (Notice of Active Candidacy appeared in the Federal Register on Monday, July 15, 1991); NOAA will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan (DEIS/MP) to examine management, boundary and regulatory alternatives associated with Sanctuary designation.

The management plan to be prepared for the proposed Sanctuary will specify the goals and objectives of Sanctuary designation and will describe programs for resource protection. The plan will identify specific needs and priorities related to resource protection, research, monitoring, education and interpretation at the proposed Sanctuary. It will contain an administrative plan and budget as well as a discussion of volunteer programs, public access, visitor use policies, and facilities development needs. The various administrative and regulatory alternatives for Sanctuary management will be analyzed and preferred alternatives recommended.

Formal opportunities for public participation in NOAA's development of a draft environmental impact statement and mangement plan will be provided through the October scoping meetings, solicitation of comments on the DEIS/