published on March 12, 1998, (63 FR 12334), with an effective date of April 13, 1998.

In the final NAHASDA regulations, the committee that crafted the portion on limitation of construction costs wanted to design as much flexibility into the program as possible, yet still ensure that affordable housing standards were being maintained. Because of this, the decision was made to discontinue Total Development Cost (TDC) limits, used under the 1937 Act development program, as TDCs limited soft costs as well as the actual construction costs. Historically, the TDCs were developed by first determining the actual costs of construction (hard costs) and then multiplying by a factor to include funds for soft costs. These hard costs, known as Dwelling Construction and Equipment (DC&E) costs, were what the committee chose as a standard of ensuring that construction costs remained within a modest design and gave the tribes flexibility in other costs associated with development of housing. This standard is established at 24 CFR 1000.156 of the NAHASDA regulations.

Under the 1937 Act program, there are some instances where tribes may have realized savings in the planning or administration of developing housing, permitting them to utilize a portion of these soft cost funds for construction purposes. If tribes have progressed substantially in developing housing designs under the 1937 Act and are nearing construction start, changing to a DC&E cost limitation under NAHASDA may pose a hardship. This was not the intent of the committee and therefore, HUD is implementing a ''grace'' period, up to January 1, 1999, in which a tribe or TDHE may elect to use TDC limits rather than DC&E costs, to allow for a smooth transition in these situations.

II. Transition Development Cost Questions and Answers

The following questions and answers are designed to assist in understanding these development cost transition provisions.

Question #1: My project, funded under the 1937 Act, is almost ready to go to bid. Must I use the new DC&Es?

Answer #1: No. You may choose to use either the DC&Es, or a calculated TDC limitation. To determine a calculated TDC, multiply the applicable DC&E amount, determined pursuant to 24 CFR 1000.156, by 1.75. Apply this figure in the same manner that previous TDC limits were utilized, that is, all hard and soft costs combined must come in within the TDC limit. This method does not require that a variance request be submitted to the Area Office of Native American Programs (AONAP), but documentation showing that this procedure was followed must be maintained in your files for at least three years.

Question #2: We were able to save money on planning and administration and designed plans under the 1937 Act development program that allocated more funds into the actual construction. Because of this we don't fit within the NAHASDA DC&Es. May we use calculated TDCs?

Answer #2: Assuming that these designs are within modest standards and the intent of NAHASDA and that the project is out to bid or reached construction start by January 1, 1999, you may use calculated TDC maximums.

Question 3#: My project is under construction right now. Must I change to DC&E cost limits?

Answer #3: No. The documents that were approved prior to construction start are still in effect.

Question #4: We haven't designed the project that we want to build with funds that were originally made available under 1937 Act. Which system do we use, DC&Es or calculated TDCs?

Answer #4: You will use the DC&Es. The calculated TDCs are to be used only in circumstances where a tribe has substantially completed work toward construction start or work start under force account and will be out for bid solicitation or have started construction by January 1, 1999.

Question #5: We are planning our project with NAHASDA funds that are not former 1937 Act funds. Which system of cost limits should we use?

Answer #5: All projects utilizing such NAHASDA funds use the DC&E cost limits and guidelines outlined in Notice PIH 98–29 (HA).

Authority: 25 U.S.C. 4116(a).

Dated: September 25, 1998.

Deborah Vincent,

General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

[FR Doc. 98–26387 Filed 10–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210–33–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR–4397–D–02]

Delegation of Authority for Indian Programs

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, HUD.

ACTION: Notice of Redelegation of Authority.

SUMMARY: In this notice, the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing redelegates the authority for administering the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native American Programs, the Administrators of the Office of Native American Programs, the Director, Office of Grants Management, and the Director, Office of Grants Evaluation, subject to certain exceptions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 25, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Bullough, Office of Native American Programs, Office of Public and Indian Housing, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Room 4130, Washington, D.C. 20410. Telephone number: (202) 401–7914. This is not a toll-free number. This number may be accessed via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA or the Act), 25 U.S.C. 4101 *et seq.*, reorganizes the system of Federal housing assistance to Native Americans by eliminating several separate programs of assistance and replacing them with a single block grant program. Pursuant to Section 3 of the Act, NAHASDA will be administered by the Office of Native American Programs within the Office of Public and Indian Housing of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Pursuant to Section 902 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, 42 U.S.C. 3533, ONAP was created within the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) in Headquarters. According to the statute, the office is to administer and coordinate all programs of the Department relating to Indian and Alaska Native housing and community development.

By separate delegation, the Secretary has elsewhere in today's **Federal Register** delegated to the Assistant Secretary for PIH the authority for administering NAHASDA, subject to certain exceptions.

Accordingly, the Assistant Secretary for PIH redelegates that authority as follows:

Section A. Authority Delegated

The Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing redelegates to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native

American Programs all power and authority to administer the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4101 *et seq.*), except as provided in Section B of this delegation of authority.

The Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing further redelegates to the ONAP Administrators; the Director, Office of Grants Management; and Director, Office of Grants Evaluation the power and authority to:

A. Review plans submitted in compliance with Section 102 of the Act and to notify the tribe or the tribally designated housing entity whether the plan complies with the statutory requirements, the reasons for the noncompliance, and the modifications necessary to meet the requirements of section 102 of the Act;

Execute all necessary agreements, including but not limited to grant agreements;

B. Conduct environmental reviews in compliance with section 105(b) of the Act;

C. Review performance reports submitted by the tribe or the tribally designated housing entity and issue reports based on such review; and

D. Any other authority necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act which have not been excepted from this redelegation.

Section B. Authority Excepted

The authority redelegated does not include:

A. The power to waive regulations or the power to waive the requirement for submitting the Plan as set forth in Section 101(b)(2) of the Act;

B. The authority to require the replacement of a tribally designated housing entity pursuant to Section 402 of the Act.

Section C. Authority to Further Redelegate

The authority delegated in Section A above, to the ONAP Administrators; the Director, Office of Grants Management; and the Director, Office of Grants Evaluation above may be redelegated.

Authority: Section 7(d), Department of Housing and Urban Development Act, 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

Dated: September 25, 1998.

Deborah Vincent,

General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

[FR Doc. 98–26386 Filed 10–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210–33–P

DEPARMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Intent To Issue 2 Final Comprehensive Conservation Plans, Associated Environmental Assessments, and Findings of No Significant Impact for 2 National Wildlife Refuges in the Southwest Region

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared Final Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP), associated Environmental Assessments (EA), and Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Roswell, New Mexico, and San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, Las Cruces, New Mexico pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, and National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and its implementing regulations. The Regional Director, Southwest Regional Office, upon issuing a FONSI for both the San Andres NWR EA and the Bitter Lake NWR EA considered ranges of alternatives for each document.

Approval of the Bitter Lake NWR CCP formalizes six goals which will result in: (1) Restoration, enhancement, and protection of biological diversity, land, wildlife and habitat; (2) Restoration of hydrological resources and improvements to water quality; (3) Provision of compatible recreational uses; (4) Protection of cultural resources; (5) Strengthening and maintenance of effective relationships with other governmental agencies and stakeholders; (6) Improvements to refuge staffing and funding. Some of the specific changes to the existing program changes include but are not necessarily limited to the following strategies:

- A restoration of 250 acres of Research Natural Areas and 1000 acres in other areas by removal and control of non-native salt cedar;
- Restoration of over story vegetation near the refuge headquarters (10 acres) and providing appropriate irrigation;
- Restoration of 140 acres of abandoned agricultural fields as grasslands;
- Enhance promotion of environmental education in area schools and organizations on the value of short grass prairie ecosystems;
- Acquire identified land parcels as appropriate as they become available on a willing seller basis;
- Restoration of 100 acres of habitat associated with 25 gypsum sinkholes;
- Conversion of non-productive farmlands to seasonal wetlands/moist soil units;
- Construction and upgrade of all-weather road for wildlife tour route.

Approval of the San Andres NWR CCP constitutes the definition of appropriate management approaches and establishment of refuge goals, objectives and strategies leading to the achievement of the refuge's purposes and mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The CCP formalizes six goals which will result in: (1) Restoration, enhancement, and protection of biological diversity, land, wildlife and habitat; (2) Protection of archeological and cultural resources; (3) Provision of increased wildlife education and interpretation initiatives; (4) Strengthening and maintenance of effective relationships with other governmental agencies and stakeholders; (5) Improvements to refuge staffing and funding. Approval of the San Andres NWR CCP establishes a management program inclusive of the following objectives:

- Enhancing refuge baseline biological data collection;
- Establishing and protecting an augmentable scabies free desert bighorn population;
- Reducing and eliminating non-native plant and animal species:
- Implementing cost effective fire management strategies for habitat protection and enhancement;
- Continuing cultural resource inventory and monitoring efforts;
- Continuing effective educational outreach;
- Improving coordination efforts with other agencies and stakeholders; and,
- Improving use of internal budgetary reporting mechanisms to achieve effecting staffing and facilities levels.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the San Andres NWR CCP establishes the following strategies:

- Continue herpetofauna surveys;
- Continue to mist net and band neotropical migratory birds;
- Conduct point count surveys of neotropical migratory birds;
- Conduct small mammals surveys to improve baseline data;
- Conduct annual mule deer and mountain lion surveys to determine population trends and effects on bighorn sheep habitat;
- Continue cooperative efforts with WSMR regarding Land Condition Trend Analysis program transects;
- Gather air quality data from air quality stations on the refuge;
- Participate with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish in efforts