

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Research and Special Programs Administration****49 CFR Part 192**

[Docket No. PS-107; Notice 2]

RIN 2137-AB50

Determining the Extent of Corrosion on Gas Pipelines**AGENCY:** Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of availability of draft environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: Gas pipeline operators must examine buried metallic pipelines for corrosion when the pipeline is exposed. RSPA proposed to require that operators investigate further to determine the extent of any harmful corrosion that is found. A draft environmental assessment of this proposed rule is available in the docket.

DATES: Interested persons may submit written comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment until June 24, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send comments in duplicate to Marvin Fell, Room 7428, Research and Special Programs Administration, U. S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Identify the docket and notice number stated in the heading of this notice. All comments and docketed material will be available for inspection and copying in Room 7428 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each business day.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marvin Fell at (202) 366-6205 or fellm@rspa.dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Whenever a gas pipeline operator learns that a buried metallic pipeline has been exposed, the operator is required to examine the exposed portion of the pipeline for evidence of external corrosion, if the pipeline is bare or has a deteriorated coating (49 CFR 192.459). In a notice of proposed rulemaking (54 FR 27041; June 27, 1989), RSPA proposed to amend this standard to require that when corrosion requiring remedial action is found, the operator investigate further to determine the extent of the corrosion.

We have analyzed the proposed rule for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Only in limited circumstances will operators marginally enlarge an area of exposed pipe to investigate the extent of corrosion, and less harmful investigative techniques

will be used where necessary to safeguard people and the environment. Thus, we have determined that the proposed rule would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. A draft environmental assessment document is available for review in the docket.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on May 19, 1999.

Richard B. Felder,Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.
[FR Doc. 99-13161 Filed 5-24-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-U

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****50 CFR Part 17**

RIN 1018-AF61

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Proposed Endangered Status for *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* (Ventura Marsh Milk-vetch)**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), propose endangered species status pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), for *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* (Ventura marsh milk-vetch). Historically known from a three-county region in coastal southern California, *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* was believed extinct until its rediscovery in 1997. The newly discovered and only known extant population of this taxon occurs in Ventura County, California. This population occupies less than one acre and is located in degraded dune habitat previously used for disposal of petroleum wastes. The most significant current threats to *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* are direct destruction of this population and alteration of its habitat from proposed soil remediation, residential development, and associated activities. Because of the small area occupied by this taxon, it is also threatened by catastrophic natural and human-caused events. Competition from nonnative invasive plant species and predation by nonnative snails are additional threats. This proposal, if made final, would extend the Act's protection to this plant. We seek additional data and invite comments from the public on this proposed rule.

DATES: Comments from all interested parties must be received by July 26, 1999. Public hearing requests must be received by July 9, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send comments and materials concerning this proposal and public hearing requests to the Field Supervisor, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2493 Portola Road, Suite B, Ventura, California, 93003. Comments and materials received, as well as the supporting documentation used in preparing this rule, will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diane Steeck, Botanist, at the address above (telephone 805/644-1766; facsimile 805/644-3958).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Astragalus pycnostachyus var. *lanosissimus* (Ventura marsh milk-vetch) was first described by Per Axel Rydberg (1929) as *Phaca lanosissima* from an 1882 collection by S.B. and W.F. Parish made from "La Bolsa," probably in what is now Orange County, California. The combination *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* was assigned to this taxon by Philip Munz and Jean McBurney in 1932 (Munz 1932).

Astragalus pycnostachyus var. *lanosissimus* is an herbaceous perennial in the pea family (Fabaceae). It has a thick taproot and multiple erect, reddish stems, 40 to 90 centimeters (cm) (16 to 36 inches (in)) tall, that emerge from the root crown. The pinnately compound leaves are densely covered with silvery-white hairs. The 27-39 leaflets are 5 to 20 millimeters (mm) (0.2 to 0.8 in) long. The numerous yellowish-white to cream colored flowers are in dense clusters and are 7 to 10 mm (0.3 to 0.4 in) long. The calyx teeth are 1.2 to 1.5 mm (0.04 in) long. The nearly sessile, single-celled pod is 8 to 11 mm (0.31 to 0.43 in) long (Barneby 1964). The blooming time has been recorded as July to October (Barneby 1964); however, the one extant population was observed in flower in June 1997. This variety is distinguished from *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *pycnostachyus* by the length of calyx tube, calyx teeth and peduncles.

The type locality is "La Bolsa," where the plant was collected in 1882 by S.B. and W.F. Parish (Barneby 1964). Based on the labeling of other specimens collected by the Parishes in 1881 and 1882, Barneby (1964) suggested that this collection may have come from the