

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office  
1655 Heindon Road  
Arcata, California 92251  
Phone: 707/822-7201  
Fax: 707/822-8411  
<http://www.fws.gov/arcata/>

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**  
**May 15, 2008**

**Contact: Matt Baun (530) 843-5763**

### **ASHY STORM-PETREL TO BE CONSIDERED FOR POSSIBLE FEDERAL PROTECTION UNDER ESA** *Service to Conduct Species Status Review*

ARCATA, Calif., – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) today announced its determination that a petition has presented sufficient information indicating that listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) may be warranted for the ashy storm-petrel (*Oceanodroma homochroa*), a California seabird. The Service is initiating a status review to determine if listing the species is warranted.

The ashy storm-petrel is a smoke-gray, medium-sized storm-petrel with long slender wings, a long forked tail, and webbed feet. Ashy storm-petrels spend their entire lives within the Pacific Ocean's California Current System, and breed on islands and islets off the coast of California and northwest Baja California, Mexico.

On October 16, 2007, the Service received a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity to list the ashy storm-petrel as threatened or endangered, and to designate critical habitat for the species. The petition asserts that the ashy storm-petrel's island breeding habitat is being modified and degraded by artificial light pollution resulting from a commercial market squid fishery, introduced species, and current and future climate change. It also asserts that the bird's at-sea foraging habitat is being modified and degraded by artificial light pollution, chemical and plastics pollution, and current and future ocean climate change.

The Service's determination today, commonly known as a 90-day finding, initiates a more thorough review of all scientific and commercial information available. The action is based on the information provided in a petition to list the ashy storm-petrel as threatened or endangered under the ESA. The finding is available at <http://www.fws.gov/arcata>.

**-MORE-**

Today's action by the Service opens a 60-day public comment period, closing July 15 2008, during which experts, interested parties and the public are encouraged to submit all relevant information about the species. This opening of the comment period begins the next stage of the process, a status review of the species commonly called a 12-month finding, which the Service expects to complete by February 16, 2009.

Based on the status review, the Service will make one of three possible determinations:

- 1) Listing is not warranted, in which case no further action will be taken.
- 2) Listing as threatened or endangered is warranted. In this case, the Service will publish a proposal to list, solicit independent scientific peer review of the proposal, seek input from the public, and consider the input before a final decision about listing the species is made. In general, there is a one-year period between the time a species is proposed and the final decision.
- 3) Listing is warranted but precluded by other, higher priority activities. This means the species is added to the federal list of candidate species, and the proposal to list is deferred while the Service works on listing proposals for other species that are at greater risk. A warranted but precluded finding requires subsequent annual reviews of the finding until such time as either a listing proposal is published, or a not warranted finding is made based on new information.

Comments may be submitted until July 14, 2008, and will be posted on <http://www.regulations.gov>. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- 1) Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for submitting comments;
- 2) U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R8-ES-2008-0034, Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

---

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

###