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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Nevada Fish & Wildlife Office  
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# News Release



**For Immediate Release**  
**Date: September 28, 2007**

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## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Seeks Public Comments

**Clark County, Nevada...** The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service announced yesterday that they will be accepting public comments through October 29, 2007, on their intent to gather information to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a proposed Virgin River Habitat Conservation and Recovery Program (VRHCRP), for the lower Virgin River Basin in Clark County, Nevada.

The Fish and Wildlife Service together with the Bureau of Land Management, City of Mesquite, Clark County, National Park Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Southern Nevada Water Authority, and Virgin Valley Water District propose to develop the VRHCRP. The intent of the VRHCRP is to provide a recovery strategy for five species in the Lower Virgin River Basin: Virgin River chub, woundfin, southwestern willow flycatcher, Yuma clapper rail, and yellow-billed cuckoo. The VRHCRP would be used as a tool when conducting future section 7 consultations, implementing recovery actions and preparing habitat conservation plans for new and existing development. Currently, the City of Mesquite and Clark County intend to prepare a habitat conservation plan under the VRHCRP for existing and new development activities on non-Federal lands within the city limits of Mesquite and unincorporated Clark County near the towns of Bunkerville and Riverside.

The purpose of the scoping process is to identify important issues raised by the public related to the proposed action. The Service requests that comments be specific. In particular, the Service is requesting information regarding: (1) potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of implementation of the proposed action; (2) other possible alternatives that meet the purpose and need; (3) potential adaptive management and/or monitoring provisions; (4) existing environmental conditions in the area; (5) other plans or projects that might be relevant to this proposed project; and (6) potential conservation efforts.

Public scoping meetings to obtain suggestions and gather information on the proposed EIS will be held on:

- October 16, 2007 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Federal Interagency Building, 4701 North Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas; and
- October 17, 2007 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Mesquite City Hall, 10 East Mesquite Blvd., Mesquite.

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Written comments should be submitted to Robert D. Williams, Field Supervisor, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89130, or faxed to (702) 515-5231. Comments should be received by October 29, 2007. More information on the proposed action is available online at [www.fws.gov/nevada](http://www.fws.gov/nevada) or by calling Amy LaVoie at (702) 515-5230.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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