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# News Release



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## **12 Month Review of Sand Mountain Blue Butterfly Found Listing Not Warranted**

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, today, announced that listing the Sand Mountain blue butterfly as either threatened or endangered is not warranted after completing a thorough review of all available scientific and commercial information. The Service made this decision in response to a petition submitted by the Center for Biological Diversity, Xerces Society, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, and Nevada Outdoor Recreation Society, to list the butterfly as either threatened or endangered.

The Sand Mountain blue butterfly (*Euphilotes pallescens arenamontana*) is a small, pale-blue butterfly known to only occur at Sand Mountain, a sand dune system located in Churchill County, Nevada. The butterfly occurs in close association with its host plant, Kearney buckwheat, on an estimated 1,000 acres within and adjacent to the 4,795 acre Sand Mountain Recreation Area managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

“Since the 90-day finding was published in August 2006, new information has become available on the status of the Sand Mountain blue butterfly and new conservation actions are being implemented by the Bureau of Land Management,” said Bob Williams, Field Supervisor for the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office. “We consulted with recognized butterfly experts, Federal land managers, and arranged for researchers to initiate field studies to assess the conservation status of the butterfly and establish baseline data which will be used to compare future changes in its population. In addition to the large number of butterflies observed by researchers, a Conservation Plan and Agreement to conserve the butterfly and its habitat was signed in September 2006.”

According to Williams, the gradual destruction of the Kearney buckwheat habitat, on which the butterfly depends, poses a potentially significant threat to the butterfly in the foreseeable future. The Service has concluded that the recent limitation of motorized vehicles to a designated mandatory route system will ensure that further habitat loss does not occur and reduces the significance of this threat. After considering this new information, the Service concluded the Sand Mountain blue butterfly is not currently at risk of extinction and listing under the Act is not warranted.

The Service requests that any new information concerning the status of or threats to, this species be sent to Bob Williams, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Suite 234, Reno, NV

89502, as it becomes available. New information will help the Service monitor the species and encourage its conservation. For more information about the Sand Mountain blue butterfly and this finding, please visit the Service's web site at. <http://www.fws.gov/nevada>.

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.