

## Peer Review of Scientific Information

Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for Frosted Flatwoods Salamander and Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander; Proposed Endangered Status for Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander

Species: Frosted flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*)  
Reticulated flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma bishopi*)

### About the Document

**Title:** Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for Frosted Flatwoods Salamander and Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander; Proposed Endangered Status for Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander

**Summary:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is proposing to split the listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), of the currently threatened flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*) into two distinct species: frosted flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*) and reticulated flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma bishopi*) due to a change in taxonomy. The frosted flatwoods salamander will maintain the status of threatened. However, we are proposing to list the reticulated flatwoods salamander as endangered under the Act. We are also proposing to designate critical habitat for both the frosted flatwoods salamander and the reticulated flatwoods salamander under the Act. In total, approximately 30,628 acres (ac) (12,395 hectares (ha)) (23,132 ac (9,363 ha) for the frosted flatwoods salamander and 7,496 ac (3,035 ha) for the reticulated flatwoods salamander) fall within the boundaries of the proposed critical habitat designation, which is located in the panhandle of Florida, southwestern Georgia, and southeastern South Carolina.

**Type of Review:** Influential

### Timeline of the Peer Review (Estimated Dates):

**Draft document disseminated:** August 13, 2008

**Peer review initiated:** August 14, 2008

**Peer review completed by:** October 14, 2008

**Date Document will be finalized:** January 30, 2009

## About the Peer Review Process:

The Service will solicit written comments from five independent scientific reviewers. Formal request for peer review were made to independent flatwoods salamander experts and experts with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and the University of Missouri. These reviewers were selected by the Service for their recognized expertise with these salamanders. This review will occur during the public comment period for the proposed action. The comment period closes on October 14, 2008. The Service will use the information received from the peer review, as appropriate, to develop the final listing and critical habitat rule for the frosted flatwoods salamander and the reticulated flatwoods salamander.

## About Public Participation:

Public comments on the salamanders proposed listing and critical habitat rule were sought with a Federal Register announcement on August 13, 2008, and the distribution by mail and press release of this announcement to interested parties. This comment period ends on October 14, 2008. This peer review plan is made available on this website to allow the public to monitor our compliance with the Office of Management and Budget's "Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review."

## Contact:

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