

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Nevada Fish & Wildlife Office
1340 Financial Blvd #234
Reno, NV 89502
Phone: 775-861-6300
Fax: 775-861-6301
<http://www.fws.gov/nevada>

News Release

For Immediate Release
Date: July 20, 2010

Contact: Bob Williams
(775) 861-6300

Endangered Species Act Protection Not Warranted for Amargosa Toad

LAS VEGAS — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has determined that the Amargosa toad (*Anaxyrus nelsoni*) (formerly in the genus *Bufo*) does not warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act at this time. The Service's decision was published today in the *Federal Register*.

In making this determination, the Service completed a comprehensive review, known as a 12-month finding, and found that the best scientific and commercial data available indicates that listing the Amargosa toad as a threatened or endangered species throughout its range is not warranted.



Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Bob Williams, State Supervisor for the Service's Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, said the sustained stability of the toad's population is a testament to the hard work of people dedicated to conserving the species.

"The Amargosa toad is an excellent example of how agencies, organizations and private landowners with varied interests can successfully work on long-term conservation efforts for a species," Williams said. "Our finding concludes that the current range of the toad is approximately the same, and possibly larger, than its historical range as a result of conservation efforts accomplished by the various entities and individuals."

-More-

The Amargosa toad is a member of the family Bufonidae, which includes North American true toads. The species is endemic (found nowhere else) to Oasis Valley in southern Nye County, Nevada. The historical and current range of the Amargosa toad is estimated to occur along an approximately 10-mile stretch of the Amargosa River and nearby spring systems, roughly between the towns of Springdale and Beatty. The amount of known and potential Amargosa toad habitat is estimated at about 8,440 acres on both public and private lands.

In making its decision, the Service reviewed information pertaining to the Amargosa toad in relation to the following five factors: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization of its habitat or range for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

The decision was made in response to a petition filed by The Center for Biological Diversity and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility on February 27, 2008. The Service completed an initial review or 90-day finding on September 10, 2009, and concluded that the petition contained substantial information supporting the Service's decision to conduct the 12-month finding.

The petition listed potential threats to the Amargosa toad as: private land development resulting in habitat loss and water use; groundwater development/extraction; habitat degradation including overgrowth of vegetation; grazing and trampling by livestock; recreation and OHV activity; invasive plant species; disease; predation by nonnative bullfrogs, crayfish, and fishes; lack of regulatory control of residential groundwater withdrawal; inadequate protection on privately owned land including lack of a final master plan for the Oasis Valley; small range and population size; climate change; random events; and contaminants. In its finding, the Service concluded that none of these threats, either singularly or in combination, constitute a significant threat to the species that warrants listing as a threatened or endangered species throughout its range. Long-term population monitoring data indicate populations fluctuate locally, but range-wide population estimates for the Amargosa toad remain stable.

The finding is available on-line at <http://www.regulations.gov> and <http://www.fws.gov/nevada/>. Supporting documents used in preparation for this finding are available for inspection by appointment, during normal business hours at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV, 89130; telephone 702/515-5230; facsimile 702/515-5231.

-More-

The Service asks the public and interested parties to provide any new information that becomes available concerning the threats to the Amargosa toad or its habitat at any time.

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 <http://www.fws.gov>.

-30-

LV2010-013