



## Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

*Conserving the Biological Diversity of the Great Basin, Eastern Sierra, and Mojave Desert*

### **Questions and Answers Amargosa Toad 90-Day Finding September 9, 2009**

**Q. What is the Amargosa toad and where does it occur?**

- A. The Amargosa toad (*Bufo nelsoni*) is a member of the family Bufonidae which includes North American true toads. The species is endemic to Oasis Valley in southern Nye County, Nevada. The historical and current range of the Amargosa toad is estimated to be a 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 8,440 acres on both public and private lands.

**Q. Why did the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) complete a 90-day finding under the Endangered Species Act for the Amargosa toad?**

- A. This finding was prepared pursuant to a formal petition dated February 26, 2008, from the Center for Biological Diversity and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility requesting that the Amargosa toad be listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

**Q. What are the results of the Amargosa toad 90-day finding?**

- A. The Service reviewed the petition and the literature cited in the petition, and evaluated the information to determine whether the sources cited supported the claims made in the petition. The Service also reviewed information that was readily available in our files. Based on our evaluation of the information provided in the petition, and information in our files, the Service concluded that the petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that listing the Amargosa toad as threatened or endangered under the ESA may be warranted.

**Q. Why did the Service reach a substantial conclusion for the Amargosa toad 90-day finding?**

- A. The petition presented substantial information indicating that the Amargosa toad may be threatened throughout the entire range of the species due to the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range which includes existing and future water development, use of groundwater to support land development, overgrowth of vegetation, excessive habitat use by ungulates, and off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in toad habitat.

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**Q. Are there any conservation actions underway for the Amargosa toad?**

**A.** Yes. Conservation and management oversight for the Amargosa toad is provided through the Amargosa Toad Working Group (ATWG). The ATWG is comprised mostly of biologists, managers, and private landowners with a common interest in Amargosa toad conservation. The Amargosa Toad Conservation Agreement and Strategy (CA/S) was completed in 2000 and provides management and conservation guidance for the Amargosa toad. Signatories to the CA/S include the Service, State of Nevada, Nye County, University of Nevada, Reno, Bureau of Land Management, and The Nature Conservancy of Nevada.

**Q. Where can more information about the Amargosa toad and the 90-day finding be obtained?**

**A.** Copies of the 90-day finding are available on the internet at <http://www.fws.gov/nevada>, or by calling us at (702) 515-5230. Detailed information on the biology and habitat for the Amargosa toad are available in the 90-day finding.

**Q. What happens next?**

**A.** As a result of the positive 90-day finding, the Service is initiating an in-depth status review (12-month finding) of the best scientific and commercial data available to determine whether listing the Amargosa toad under the ESA is warranted. A species may be endangered or threatened due to any one or a combination of the following factors: (1) Factor A: The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) Factor B: Over utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) Factor C: Disease or predation; (4) Factor D: The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) Factor E: Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

In our status review, the Service will also consider all other claims presented in the petition under Factors A, B, C, D, and E, as well as any other threats to the species not identified in the petition under any of the factors. To ensure that the status review is comprehensive, the Service is soliciting information from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, Native American Tribes, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties concerning the status of the Amargosa toad.

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**Q How can new information or comments be included in the status review?**

**A.** The Service is soliciting additional information to ensure the status review is complete and based on the best scientific or commercial information. Details on specific information we are seeking is included in the 90-day finding. Anyone wishing to submit information regarding Amargosa toad may do so by one of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- U.S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R8-ES-2009-0047; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

No e-mails or faxes will be accepted and all information received on <http://www.regulations.gov> will be posted. This generally means the Service will post any personal information you provide us. Comments must be received by November 9, 2009

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