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# News Release



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

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## **Public Comment Period Reopened on Reinstatement of 1993 Proposed Rule to List the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard as Threatened**

### **Public Hearings Scheduled in California and Arizona**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today it is reopening a public comment period on the 1993 proposed rule to list the flat-tailed horned lizard as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Public hearings have been scheduled to provide opportunities for the Service to receive oral and written comments from all interested parties on the proposed rule. Hearings are scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, March 23, 2010, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm and 6:00pm to 8:00pm, UCR Palm Desert Graduate Center, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert, California 92211.

Wednesday, March 24, 2010, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm and 6:00pm to 8:00pm, Radisson Hotel, 1501 South Redondo Center Drive, Yuma, Arizona 85365

An advance copy of the notice is available electronically today at [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov); however, the official notice will be posted on March 2, 2010, at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), along with copies of the 1993 proposed rule and the 2003 Rangewide Management Strategy.

In addition to commenting at one of the hearings, interested parties may submit comments and information electronically to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), or by U.S. mail or hand delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R8-ES-2010-0008; Division of Policy and Directives Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222, Arlington, VA 22203. Comments and information on the proposed listing of the flat-tailed horned lizard will be accepted from March 2 – May 3, 2010.

The flat-tailed horned lizard has a wide, flattened body and short tail. It measures about 3.2 inches in length, excluding the tail, and can be distinguished from other horned lizards by a dark stripe running down its back, the presence of two elongated occipital spines, and the absence of external ear openings.

Flat-tailed horned lizards feed almost exclusively on harvester ants, consuming between 150-200 ants

per day.

On November 29, 1993, the Service proposed listing the species as threatened. The proposal was withdrawn in 1997. The 1997 withdrawal was challenged and the proposed rule was reinstated in 2002. After an extensive comment period and review of all information, the Service again withdrew the proposed listing in 2003.

The 2003 withdrawal was challenged, and after another round of public comment and analysis of information, the Service withdrew the proposed rule on June 28, 2006. Following another challenge against the withdrawal of the proposed rule, the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona issued an order on Nov. 3, 2009, for the Service to reinstate the 1993 proposed rule.

A Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Conservation Agreement (Conservation Agreement) has been in place since 1997. Federal and state agencies that are signatories to the Conservation Agreement have been implementing a Rangelwide Management Strategy to aid in conservation of the species. Throughout the years of legal challenges efforts have continued to implement the Rangelwide Management Strategy. The flat-tailed horned lizard is also a covered species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

Information regarding previous Federal actions for this species can be found at <http://ecos.fws.gov>.

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 [www.fws.gov/](http://www.fws.gov/)

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