



News Release

Arizona Ecological Services Field Office
2321 W. Royal Palm Road, Suite 103
Phoenix, Arizona 85021
602/242-0210
602/242-2513 (Fax)

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www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/

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Contacts: Jeff Humphrey 602-242-0210 x222
Cat Crawford 520- 670-6150 x232

PROTECTION FOR SONORAN TALUSSNAIL MAY BE WARRANTED

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has found that information on file and included in a petition seeking to provide Endangered Species Act protection to the Sonoran talussnail is enough to prompt the Service to initiate a full status assessment to determine if protection is warranted. Recent, range-wide survey data for the species is lacking, and information regarding the species' biology, range, population trends, and its threats is being requested through Sept. 24, 2012.

The Sonoran talussnail is a ¾-inch land snail that inhabits talus (rock rubble) slopes and is known to occur in seven mountain ranges in Pima and Santa Cruz counties, Arizona, and one mountain range in Sonora, Mexico. Talussnails typically spend most of their lives in dormancy (up to three years) in the spaces in coarse broken rock slides and are only active above ground during or following summer monsoon rains.

The petition asserts that the Sonoran talussnail is threatened by hard rock mining and may occur in the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine area. Additional information indicates that the expansion of invasive plants, such as buffelgrass, and their propensity for carrying fire may also threaten the talussnail.

The Center for Biological Diversity petitioned the Service to add the Sonoran talussnail to the list of threatened and endangered species in June 2010. Per a separate [settlement agreement](#) with the petitioners, the Service has scheduled its Endangered Species Act listing program through 2016, so it does not anticipate completing a status assessment and finding whether the Sonoran talussnail warrants listing until after 2016. The Sonoran talussnail is one of five species within the Rosemont area of Arizona that have been recently petitioned for listing.

The petition and the Service's finding can be viewed on the Federal eRulemaking Portal at: <http://www.regulations.gov> – Docket No. FWS-R2-ES-2012-0048. Information can be submitted electronically at the same Internet location, or by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R2-ES-2012-0048; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

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