



# News Release

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[www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/)

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## Comments Sought on Draft Thick-billed Parrot Recovery Plan

PHOENIX, AZ - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability of a draft plan for the recovery of the thick-billed parrot. The thick-billed parrot is an endangered species that currently occurs only in the Sierra Madre Occidental of Mexico, but historically occurred at least intermittently in the mountains of southeastern Arizona and possibly southwestern New Mexico. Comments on the draft plan are being accepted through Aug. 20, 2012.

The draft plan is an addendum to Mexico's National Commission of Protected Areas' 2009 recovery plan for the thick-billed parrot entitled "Programa de Acción para la Conservación de las Especies: Cotorras Serranas (PACE). Mexico's plan guides recovery of the parrot throughout its current range in Mexico. The Service is adopting the PACE for the parrot and has prepared an addendum to meet the requirements of the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The draft recovery strategy focuses on restoring populations and habitat in the parrot's current range in Mexico with the potential for the parrot's expansion into its historical U.S. range. The draft addendum establishes criteria for measuring recovery progress.

"We support the strategy for recovering the thick-billed parrot set forth in Mexico's plan," said the Service's Southwest Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle. "This is the first time the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is adopting a Mexican recovery plan for a species as part of a U.S. recovery plan."

The draft recovery plan addendum was prepared by the Service and Arizona Game and Fish Department, with input from Mexican biologists. It complies with a Dec. 14, 2010, agreement between WildEarth Guardians and the Secretary of the Interior. A final plan is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2013.

Thick-billed parrots are long-lived, form social groups, and nest in tree cavities in old-growth pine forests. The thick-billed parrot's current range is limited to high elevations of the Sierra Madre Occidental of Mexico extending to within 50 miles of the U.S. border. Threats to the thick-billed parrot in Mexico include loss of habitat, primarily driven by extensive logging of large mature pines. Removal of birds from the wild for the illegal pet trade has also contributed to its decline.

In the U.S. the last documented sighting of thick-billed parrots was in Arizona's Chiricahua Mountains in 1938. Extirpation of the U.S. population was likely caused by excessive, unregulated shooting.

The draft recovery plan is available at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/> or by request from Arizona Ecological Services Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2321 West Royal Palm Road, Phoenix, AZ 85021-4951 (602-242-0210). Comments may be submitted in writing to the address above, by facsimile to 602-242-2513 or emailed to [incomingzcorr@fws.gov](mailto:incomingzcorr@fws.gov). Comments are due Aug. 20.

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