

New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse
Zapus hudsonius luteus

STATUS: Candidate (72 FR 69034, December 6, 2007)

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The New Mexico meadow jumping mouse is a small rodent recognized for its extremely long tail and long hind feet. The hind legs (with five toes) are much longer than the delicate forelegs (with four toes), and the tail is attenuate, sub-cylindrical and longer than the body. The general pelage is coarse with broad dorsal band of brown or yellowish brown darkened with brownish black hairs; sides paler; under parts white or sometimes suffused with yellowish color. The back of the forefeet and hind feet are grayish white, while the sparsely haired tail is distinctly bicolor (dark brown above and yellowish white below). The head is small, narrow, and relatively high crowned. The nose is short and pointed. They are the only mammal with 18 teeth.

HABITAT: The New Mexico meadow jumping mouse nests in dry soils but uses moist, streamside, dense riparian/wetland vegetation.

RANGE: The New Mexico meadow jumping mouse is endemic to New Mexico, Arizona, and a small area of southern Colorado. Surveys conducted in 2005 and 2006 documented a drastic decline in the number of occupied localities and suitable habitat across the range of the species in New Mexico and Arizona. Of the original 98 known historical localities, there are now only 10 known extant localities in New Mexico, one in Arizona, and an additional eight localities that have not been surveyed since the early to mid 1990s. In Arizona, it is found in Apache County in the White Mountains.

REASON FOR DECLINE/ VULNERABILITY: Threats include excessive grazing pressure, water use and management, highway reconstruction, development, and recreation. Moreover, the highly fragmented nature of its distribution is a major contributor to the vulnerability of this species and increases the likelihood of very small, isolated populations being extirpated.

LAND OWNERSHIP: All lands encompassing the known range of the species in Arizona are under the management of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.

NOTES: Recent genetic studies confirm that the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse is a distinct subspecies from other *Zapus hudsonius* subspecies, confirming the currently accepted subspecies designation.

As a candidate, the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse receives no legal protection under the Endangered Species Act.