

News Release

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Endangered Mountain Yellow-legged Frog Draft Recovery Plan Available for Public Comment *Plan will serve as a roadmap for helping native frog in Southern California*

Carlsbad, Calif. — Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a draft recovery plan to help restore Southern California populations of the endangered mountain yellow-legged frog. The plan was developed in collaboration with partners including California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Forest Service as well as San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Ana and Omaha zoos.

The mountain yellow-legged frog occurs in two distinct population groups - one in the Sierra Nevada and the other in mountains ranges of Southern California. Although their habitats vary significantly, both populations of frogs face similar threats.

In Southern California, this brownish-yellow frog is found near water in the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains. Ensuring quality habitat in these areas will protect one of California's last true frogs and benefit people and countless wildlife species by ensuring clean watersheds in Southern California. True frogs are those that live in and near water, and need water to survive.

When the mountain yellow-legged frog was listed under the Endangered Species Act in 2002, there were fewer than 100 adult frogs left in Southern California. Threats include wildfire, contaminants, predatory nonnative fish species (trout), illegal marijuana cultivation and incompatible recreational activities. Since the time of listing, the Service has been working with partners to implement beneficial recovery actions for the frog in response to some of these threats. These conservation efforts are reflected in the draft plan.

“We’re actively engaging numerous federal, state and local partners to further recovery of the mountain-yellow legged frog population in Southern California,” said Paul Souza, director of the Service’s Pacific Southwest Region. “Helping this native frog will benefit other wildlife species and help promote a healthy environment for local communities within these watersheds.”

The recovery plan lays out a strategy to recover the frog to the point where downlisting or delisting the species is a viable option. The mountain yellow-legged frog will be considered successfully recovered if healthy, viable populations exist within the three designated recovery units. Recovery units include the San Gabriel Mountains, the San Bernardino Mountains, and the San Jacinto/Palomar Mountains. Additionally, the Service will identify several stream reaches where reestablishment of the frog will be considered.

The draft plan includes recovery actions for the frog including: developing and implementing a rangewide monitoring protocol to accurately and consistently document populations; conducting research designed to inform management actions and recovery; investigating rangewide threats to inform threat prevention strategies; and reestablishing mountain yellow-legged frog populations in the wild.

Recovery plans are not regulatory documents and do not require any agency or landowner to implement specific actions.

The notice of availability for the draft recovery plan and associated 60-day comment period was published today in the *Federal Register*. Comments and information will be accepted until September 17, 2018. All relevant information received from the public, government agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties will be considered.

You may obtain a copy of the recovery plan and additional species information from our website: <https://go.usa.gov/xUNec>. Alternatively, you may contact the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250, Carlsbad, California 92008 (telephone 760-431-9440).

If you wish to comment on the draft recovery plan, you may submit your comments in writing by any one of the following methods: U.S. mail: Field Supervisor, at the above address; hand-delivery: Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, at the above address; or email: fw8cfwocomments@fws.gov.

Learn more about recent recovery efforts for the mountain yellow-legged frog: <https://go.usa.gov/xUNeb>.

Photos of this species may be found on Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/gp/usfws_pacificsw/V0M624.

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