

# News Release



## Pacific Southwest Region

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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Findings on Petitions to List Six Species in California and Nevada

**Sacramento:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has completed reviewing petitions to list six species in California and Nevada under the Endangered Species Act. The Service determined the Western spadefoot toad, Relictual slender salamander, Kern County slender salamander, and Foothill yellow-legged frog petitions contained substantial information; therefore, the Service will now initiate more in depth reviews of these species and their conservation status.

Petitions to list the California giant salamander and the distinct population segment of North American wild horses on federal lands were not substantial. In the case of the wild horse petition, the Service determined it is not a listable entity. No further actions will be taken regarding these species.

These determinations, commonly known as 90-day findings, are based on scientific information about the species provided in the petition. The substantial 90-day findings are the first step in a long process that triggers a more thorough review of all the biological information available. There is no regulatory impact resulting from the positive 90-day findings.

To ensure the status reviews of the Western spadefoot toad, Foothill yellow-legged frog, Relictual slender salamander, and Kern County slender salamander are comprehensive, the Service is soliciting information from state and federal natural resource agencies and all interested parties about their biology and life history.

A copy of the Federal Register notice announcing the petition findings will publish on July 1, 2015. Comments and information can be submitted electronically at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Written comments and information can be submitted by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: [Insert appropriate docket number from the list below]; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike; Falls Church, VA 22041-3803. Comments and information will be accepted until August 31, 2015.

Docket numbers:

Foothill yellow-legged frog FWS–R8–ES–2015–0050  
Kern Canyon slender salamander FWS–R8–ES–2015–0054  
Relictual slender salamander FWS–R8–ES–2015–0059  
Western spadefoot toad FWS–R8–ES–2015–0066  
California giant salamander FWS–R8–ES–2015–0044  
Distinct population segment of North American wild horse FWS–R8–ES–2015–0049

Based on the status review, the Service will make one of three possible determinations:

- 1) Listing is not warranted, in which case no further action will be taken.
- 2) Listing as threatened or endangered is warranted. In this case, the Service will publish a proposal to list, solicit independent scientific peer review of the proposal, seek input from the public, and consider the input before a final decision about listing the species is made. In general, there is a one-year period between the time a species is proposed and the final decision.
- 3) Listing is warranted but precluded by other, higher priority activities. This means the species is added to the federal list of candidate species, and the proposal to list is deferred while the Service works on listing proposals for other species that are at greater risk. A warranted but precluded finding requires subsequent annual reviews of the finding until such time as either a listing proposal is published, or a not warranted finding is made based on new information.

Western spadefoot toads range from the Central Valley and surrounding foothills in California, south to Baja California, Mexico. Information presented in the petition indicates factors affecting the species include habitat loss and impacts from vehicular collisions and introduction of exotic species.

Foothill yellow-legged frogs range from the Willamette River in Oregon, south to Upper San Gabriel River in Los Angeles County, California. Threats identified in the petition include habitat loss, pollution, and introduction of exotic species.

The Kern County slender salamander has a highly restricted range and is found only in lower Kern River Canyon in Kern County, California, between approximately 1500-3900 feet elevation. The petition identified habitat loss, inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms, and effects of small population size and inbreeding depression as threats.

Relictual slender salamanders are found in the lower Kern River Canyon (Breckenridge Mountain) in Kern County, California. Threats identified in the petition include habitat loss or modification, inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms, and effects of small population size and inbreeding depression.

*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 <http://www.fws.gov/cno>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#), and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).*

