



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
6010 Hidden Valley Road
Carlsbad, California 92009

JUN 30 2004

Dear Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly Survey Permit Holders:

Subject: Guidelines for Conducting Presence/Absence Surveys for the Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly

Because of our ongoing review of the best available scientific and commercial information on the biology of the Delhi Sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*) (DSF), we are modifying the Interim General Survey Guidelines for the Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly (USFWS 1996).

The 1996 interim survey guidelines recommended that site surveys be conducted at least twice a week from August 1 to September 20 for a 2-year period. In 2003, we recommended that site surveys start by July 15 and continue to September 20 (June 25, 2003, letter from USFWS to DSF permit holders). Our review of the positive DSF survey data contained in section 10(a)(1)(A) permit reports through 2002 demonstrate that, at least, 10 DSF observations were made at various sites between July 1 to August 1, 2002, including three observations between July 1 and July 15, 2002. Other research observed adult DSF almost every day from July 15, the date surveys were conducted, to August 1 over a 2-season study (Kingsley 1996). This information suggests that adult DSF may be observed prior to July 15 and as early as July 1 under appropriate conditions.

To better ensure that site surveys are conducted to optimize observations of DSF and better document the presence/absence of this species, we recommend surveys be conducted at least two times per week from July 1 to September 20 for 2 consecutive years under suitable conditions.

We recognize that these recommendations to improve the survey guidelines for DSF will be difficult to implement given the imminent onset of the survey period for DSF. For that reason, not implementing this particular recommendation will not be used as the sole basis for finding any particular survey as deficient. We will continue to consider all of the best available information, including site surveys and habitat assessments, in making our determination regarding the presence or absence of DSF at a particular project site.

For the 2005 season, we intend to increase the recommended survey frequency from two times per week to three times per week, and to decrease the survey rate from 12.5 acres per hour per biologist to a slower rate to better ensure detection of DSF. To the extent that increased survey frequencies and slower survey rates can be voluntarily incorporated into your field surveys for this field season, we would appreciate receiving this information to better improve the survey protocol for 2005.

If you have questions regarding this letter or any other permitting issues, please contact Joel Pagel or Dan Marquez of my staff (760/431-9440).

Sincerely,

Jim A. Bartel
Field Supervisor

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