

# News Release



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## Service Designates Critical Habitat for Oregon Spotted Frog in Washington and Oregon

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has finalized critical habitat for the Oregon spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*) within its known range in Washington and Oregon. Critical habitat is defined by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as areas vital to the long-term survival of listed species, and today's designation reflects the latest science and information from several public comment periods.

Designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership or establish a refuge or preserve, and has no impact on private landowners taking actions on their land that do not require federal funding or permits.

The Oregon spotted frog spends most of its life in water and needs water at all stages of its life, as compared to many other frogs that live part of their life in water and part on land

Historically, the Oregon spotted frog ranged from the lower Fraser River in British Columbia to the Pit River drainage in northeastern California. It is now restricted to disjunct populations in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. The species may no longer be found in California.

"The Oregon spotted frog faces a variety of threats, from loss of habitat and invasive species to reduced water quality and availability during critical times in their life cycle," said Eric Rickerson, the Service's Washington State Supervisor. "The designation of critical habitat in the states of Washington and Oregon allows the Service to continue to work collaboratively to address these threats in diverse habitat types across the frog's range."

In Oregon, the Service is working closely with local irrigation districts and federal and state agencies to address challenges of water management and craft a conservation plan that provides water for fish, wildlife and irrigation purposes.

“The wetland ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest, including those of the Upper Deschutes Basin of central Oregon, are vital to humans, the Oregon spotted frog and other wildlife. The Deschutes River is renowned for its clean water and recreational opportunities, while also being economically important to the local community,” said Paul Henson, the Service’s Oregon State Supervisor. “It’s our goal to continue to find collaborative solutions to conserving and recovering fish and wildlife resources while supporting a strong local recreational and agricultural economy.”

On August 29, 2014, the Service listed the Oregon spotted frog as a threatened species under the ESA. The listing, which is based on the best scientific data available, cites threats to the frog from loss of wetland habitat, reduced water quality, river flow management, vegetation changes, and competition from non-native species such as bull frogs.

Critical habitat was initially proposed in August 2013 and refined in June 2014. Today’s final designation includes approximately 65,038 acres and 20.34 river miles. There are 3,463 fewer acres of critical habitat than originally proposed. This is based on new information and includes the exclusion of some private and county lands with finalized management and conservation plans that provide a conservation benefit for the species.

In the designation, there are 14 critical habitat units spread over Klickitat, Skagit, Skamania, Thurston, and Whatcom Counties in Washington and Deschutes, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, and Wasco Counties in Oregon.

Copies of the critical habitat rule may be obtained at <http://www.regulations.gov> in Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2013–0088. Critical habitat maps and information on the Oregon spotted frog can be found at [www.fws.gov/wafwo/osf.html](http://www.fws.gov/wafwo/osf.html).

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