

News Release



For Immediate Release

January 13, 2015

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will review status of Canada lynx to prepare for recovery planning

Contacts:

Maine:

Meagan Racey, 413-253-8558; Meagan_Racey@fws.gov

Mark Latti (MDIFW), 207-287-5216; Mark.Latti@maine.gov

National:

Jim Zelenak, 406-449-5225, ext. 220; Jim_Zelenak@fws.gov

Ryan Moehring, 303-236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

BANGOR, Maine. – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today that the agency will review the status of the Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), which is listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act as a contiguous United States distinct population segment (DPS). The five-year status review will clarify the extent, magnitude, and nature of the threats to the lynx DPS so that recovery planning may target those specific threats.

"The status review will help us evaluate how well the Service and our partners have addressed the primary threat to Canada lynx, which, when the species was listed, was the lack of regulatory mechanisms to protect the lynx and its habitats," said Laury Zicari, supervisor of the Service's Maine Field Office. "In northern Maine, a core area for lynx in the U.S., forest management planning on non-federal lands will continue to be key to maintaining favorable conditions for lynx and snowshoe hares."

Lynx are highly specialized predators that are dependent on snowshoe hares as a food source. The North American distribution of the lynx overlaps much of the range of the snowshoe hare, and both are strongly associated with boreal forests. The DPS was extended in 2014 from certain states to include the entire lower 48 states, ensuring lynx are federally protected wherever they are found in the contiguous United States.

The State of Maine is a key partner in lynx conservation. "The Department is looking forward to working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this review process by providing current information concerning Maine lynx including data on population abundance, range and habitat within Maine," said James Connolly, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Director of Resource Management.

Over the next several months, the Service will gather and analyze available information on the lynx as part of its five-year status review process for the species in the contiguous United States. The Service will use the best available scientific and commercial data in developing the report, which will ensure that the review will be as accurate and complete as possible. We plan to complete the review by June 2015.

At this time, the Service is seeking the following additional information and data from the scientific community and the public:

- General information concerning the taxonomy, biology, ecology, genetics, and status of the lynx in the contiguous United States;
- Specific information on the conservation status of lynx, including information on distribution, abundance, and population trends;
- Specific information on threats to the lynx DPS, including: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence;
- Specific information on conservation actions that have improved lynx habitat or reduced threats to lynx in the contiguous United States and in southern Canada;
- Habitat selection, use, and any changes or trends in the amount and distribution of lynx and snowshoe hare habitat in the contiguous United States and in southern Canada.

The Service requests that pertinent information be provided as soon as possible, and not later than February 1, 2015, to ensure we have adequate time to consider it during the review. All data and information submitted to the Service — including names and addresses — will become part of the record for this review, and may be made public. Information should be submitted to Jim Zelenak of the Service’s Montana Ecological Services Field Office (the Montana office is the Service’s lead for Canada lynx) at:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Montana Ecological Services Field Office
Attn: Jim Zelenak
585 Shepard Way, Suite 1
Helena, MT 59601

Detailed information about the Canada lynx may be found here: <http://bit.ly/CanadaLynxUSFWS>

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.