



Questions and Answers

Proposal to List the Rayed Bean and Snuffbox Mussels as Endangered

What action is the Service taking?

The Service is proposing list two freshwater mussels, the rayed bean and snuffbox, as endangered under the authority of the Endangered Species Act. To propose listing these mussels as endangered, the Service published a “proposed rule” in the Federal Register on November 2, 2010. The proposed rule opens a 60-day public comment period, which closes on January 3, 2011. Before making a final decision on the listing proposal, the Service must gather and analyze the public comments and any new information received during the public comment period.

Why is the Service proposing to list the rayed bean and snuffbox mussels as endangered?

The rayed bean has declined significantly across its original range. Once found in 111 streams and Lake Erie, today it is found in only 28 streams and Lake Erie, a 75 percent range decline. The species is extirpated from Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia and was extirpated from West Virginia but was reintroduced in 2006.

The snuffbox was known from 208 streams but is now found in only 74, which represents a 65 percent decline in occupied streams. However, the range reduction combined with population losses represent an actual population decline of at least 90 percent. Most existing populations are small and isolated. The species has been lost from Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and New York.

The existence of most of the remaining populations of rayed and snuffbox mussels are threatened by point and nonpoint source pollution, sedimentation, and physical changes in streambed structure.

Where are the rayed bean and snuffbox mussels found?

The rayed bean is currently found in Indiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The snuffbox is found in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

How do I comment on the proposal to list the rayed bean and snuffbox mussels?

You may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- U.S. mail or hand-delivery:
Public Comments Processing, Attn: RIN 1018–AV96;
Division of Policy and Directives Management;
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222;
Arlington, VA 22203.

We will not accept comments by e-mail or fax. The comment period closes on January 3, 2010.

What type of comments or information is the Service seeking?

Our intent is to use the best available commercial and scientific data as the foundation for all endangered and threatened species classification decisions. We are asking for data, comments, new information, or suggestions. We are particularly seeking the following types of information:

- (1) Survey results for the rayed bean or snuffbox, as well as any studies that may show distribution, status, population size, or population trends, including indications of recruitment;
- (2) Pertinent aspects of life history, ecology, and habitat use of the rayed bean or snuffbox;
- (3) Current and foreseeable threats faced by the rayed bean or snuffbox, or both species, in relation to the five factors (as defined in section 4(a)(1) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.));
- (4) The specific physical and biological features to consider, and specific areas that may meet the definition of critical habitat and that should or should not be considered for a proposed critical habitat designation as provided by section 4 of the Act; and
- (5) The data and studies to which this proposal refers.

How can I get more information?

Information about rayed bean and snuffbox mussels and their proposed listing is available on our website at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered>.

You may also write or phone:

Angela Boyer
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ohio Ecological Services Field Office
4625 Morse Road, Suite 104
Columbus, Ohio 43230
(telephone 614–416–8993, ext. 22)