

## **Peer Review for the Proposed Reclassification Rule for the Kirtland's Warbler (*Setophaga kirtlandii*)**

### **About the Document**

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is proposing a rule to reclassify the Kirtland's warbler under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA).

**Estimated Dissemination Date:** January 1, 2018-September 30, 2018

### **About the Peer Review Process**

**Type of Peer Review:** The Service will solicit comments from independent scientific reviewers who will submit individual comments in written form. The scientific peer review will run concurrently with public review.

**Anticipated Number of Reviewers:** The Service will request review by a minimum of 3 independent expert reviewers.

**Reviewer Selection Method/Expertise of Reviewers:** We will solicit reviews from objective and, preferably, well known and widely respected experts who are willing to commit to providing an objective review within the needed time frame. Reviewers will be selected from specialists in the relevant taxonomic group as well as experts in conservation or population biology and threats to the species. Expertise may include any one or combination of the following: knowledge/understanding of Kirtland's warbler biology; knowledge/understanding of potential for any of the listed activities to impact the Kirtland's warbler; knowledge/understanding of applicability of conservation measures; and knowledge/understanding of ESA compliance. We will try to avoid using individuals who have already expressed strong support or opposition to the action, individuals who have been previously paid by the Service, and individuals who are likely to experience personal gain or loss (e.g., financial, prestige) as a result of the Service's decision. We will avoid using Service employees except in cases where an employee possesses unique expertise that is key to the review. The Service will provide each peer reviewer with information explaining their role and instructions for fulfilling that role, including Regional and Service guidance and the draft document or proposed rule. Deadline for receipt of reviews will be clearly stated.

**Handling of Peer Review Comments:** All peer reviews and comments will be public documents and will be made available to the public on regulations.gov. If a peer reviewer does not want his/her name to appear in the final decision document he/she must inform us of this early in the review process. Peer review comments will be incorporated or addressed, as appropriate, in the final decision document.

**Estimated Start Date of Peer Review:** January 1, 2018-July 30, 2018

**About Public Participation**

The public is asked to provide comments on this planned peer review process. Comments on this peer review plan should be sent to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, Attn: Peer Review, 5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990, Bloomington, Minnesota 55437. Comments on this plan may also be submitted by electronic mail to <laura\_ragan@fws.gov>. The subject line should read "Proposed Reclassification Rule for the Kirtland's Warbler." We will announce opportunity for a public review of the proposal in the Federal Register.

**Contact**

For more information, contact Laura Ragan at (612) 713-5157.