

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region



PRESS RELEASE

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Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse Retains Protections Under the Endangered Species Act

DENVER – Current scientific evidence indicates that removing the Preble's meadow jumping mouse from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife is not warranted. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today the completion of a 12-month status review in response to two petitions to delist the Preble's. Habitat loss continues to threaten the existence of the mouse throughout its range in Colorado and Wyoming. As a result, the Preble's retains its protections as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The Preble's is a small mouse with an extremely long tail, large hind feet, and long hind legs, which allow the mouse to escape from predators by making incredible jumps. The Preble's lives in heavily vegetated streamside areas along the eastern edge of the Front Range foothills from southeastern Wyoming south to Colorado Springs, Colorado. The streamside habitats where the Preble's resides provide important natural functions that benefit humans, including reducing flood damage and protecting water quality.

The Service added the Preble's to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife in 1998 as a threatened subspecies. Recent scientific information confirms that the Preble's is a distinct subspecies, and therefore, a listable entity under the ESA. New information indicates that the Preble's is not as widely distributed in Wyoming as previously thought, with the Preble's not likely found to the west of the Laramie Range. Human populations continue to increase along the Front Range of Colorado and in Wyoming, and as a result, urban development, flood control, water development, aggregate mining, and other human land uses continue to adversely affect Preble's habitats and populations. Additionally, Preble's populations declined over seven years on a protected site in El Paso County, Colorado, despite conservation efforts. Wildfires, drought, and global climate change also continue to reduce and fragment habitats and will likely increase in magnitude and intensity in the future. Due to all of these factors, the Preble's continues to warrant listing as a threatened species throughout its range.

In 2008, we removed the protections of the ESA for the Preble's in Wyoming. That action relied on an interpretation of the term "significant portion of the range", or "SPR," that has since been invalidated. Our current interpretation of SPR does not allow us to reach a similar conclusion. Although human development pressures are less intense or less concentrated in Wyoming, Colorado represents a significant portion of the Preble's range that, if lost, would greatly imperil the remaining, smaller populations in Wyoming.

The Endangered Species Act provides an important safety net for America's native fish, wildlife, and plants. This landmark conservation law has prevented the extinction of hundreds of imperiled species across the nation and promoted the recovery of many others. The Service is working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species. To learn more about the Endangered Species Program, visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

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. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/>. Connect with our [Facebook](#) page, follow our [Twitter](#) feed, watch our [YouTube](#) channel and view our [Flickr](#) photo stream.

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