



U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

Conserving the Biological Diversity of the Great Basin, Eastern Sierra, and Mojave Desert

Questions & Answers

12-Month Finding for Four Species of Nevada Sand Dune Beetles

July 18, 2012

- Q. What are the four species of Nevada sand dune beetles included in the 12-month finding?**
- A.** The four species of Nevada sand dune beetles included in the 12-month finding are: Crescent Dunes aegialian scarab (*Aegialia crescenta*), large aegialian scarab (*A. magnifica*), Crescent Dunes serican scarab (*Serica ammomenisco*), and Giuliani's dune scarab (*Pseudocotalpa giulianii*)
- Q. Why did the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) complete a 12-month finding for the Nevada sand dune beetles?**
- A.** This finding follows a 12-month status review and a 90-day petition evaluation and finding issued by the Service on August 4, 2011. The reviews and subsequent findings were completed in response to a petition the Service received on February 2, 2010, from Wild Earth Guardians seeking to protect six species of Nevada sand dune beetles under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA): Hardy's aegialian scarab (*Aegialia hardyi*), Sand Mountain serican scarab (*Serica psammobunus*), Crescent Dunes aegialian scarab, Crescent Dunes serican scarab, large aegialian scarab, and Giuliani's dune scarab. As announced in the 90-day finding, the Service found that the petition did not present substantial scientific or commercial information necessary to warrant further review of two of the species; Hardy's aegialian scarab and Sand Mountain serican scarab.
- Q. Where do these four species of Nevada sand dune beetles occur?**
- A.** The four sand dune beetles included in the 12-month finding are known to occur only on public lands in Nye County, Nevada, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Crescent Dunes aegialian scarab occurs at Crescent Dunes and San Antonio Dunes, while the Crescent Dunes serican scarab occurs at Crescent Dunes. Crescent Dunes is located approximately 12 miles northwest of Tonopah and San Antonio Dunes is approximately 15 miles north of Crescent Dunes. The large aegialian scarab and Giuliani's dune scarab occur only at Big Dune and Lava Dune, located approximately 10 miles west of Lathrop Wells.

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Q. What were the results of the 12-month finding?

A. The Service found that none of the four species of sand dune beetles warrants federal protection under the ESA.

Q. How did the Service determine that none of the four species of sand dune beetles warrants federal protection under the ESA?

A. The Service reviewed the potential threats to the dune beetles — including mining, solar development, and off-road vehicle (ORV) use — and found that mining is limited in scope, only one solar power project is in development, and ORV use is also limited. To date, BLM's implementation of regulatory mechanisms and policy has been successful in minimizing these threats.

Q. What specifically has the BLM done to minimize threats to the dune beetles?

A. BLM's management actions to minimize threats to the beetles include:

- Prohibition of ORV use on Lava Dune
- Prohibition of ORV use in vegetated areas around Big Dune and Crescent Dune
- Prohibition of all ORV activity within the 223-acre beetle habitat enclosure at Big Dune
- Retaining Big Dune in federal ownership
- Prohibiting high-speed ORV events, rights-of-way, and mining at Big Dune
- For solar development requests, BLM must evaluate potential effects on the dune beetles and adhere to its sensitive species policy. Additionally, the Service would have the opportunity to provide recommendations to protect the beetles under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Q. Where can I find more information about the sand dune beetles and the 12-month finding?

A. For more information about the sand dune beetles and this finding, contact the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office by telephone at 775-861-6300 or visit the Service's web site at <http://www.fws.gov/nevada>.

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