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News Release



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American Black Bear Does Not Warrant Protection Under The Endangered Species Act

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today that a petition seeking to protect the American black bear (*Ursus americanus*) in Nevada under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) does not contain substantial scientific data indicating the petitioned action may be warranted. Today's decision, commonly known as a 90-day finding, is based on scientific information about the species provided in the petition and other scientific information in the agency's files.

The Service made this determination in response to a petition received from Big Wildlife and NoBearHuntNV.org on September 6, 2011, seeking to add the American black bear in Nevada to the federal list of threatened and endangered species as a distinct population segment (DPS).

The petition did not provide substantial information, nor was there substantial information in the Service's files, to indicate black bears in Nevada are markedly separate from other black bears outside of the state based on physical, physiological, ecological, or behavioral factors. Based on the review, the American black bear in Nevada is not listable as a DPS under the ESA.

"It's the same black bears on either side of the California and Nevada state line and there is no biological difference associated with this political boundary," said Ted Koch, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office State Supervisor. "Therefore, the bears on the Nevada side do not warrant treatment as a separate species under the ESA."

American black bears are large animals with black or cinnamon colored fur. Adult males generally weigh between 300 and 350 pounds in summer, but they can weigh in excess of 600 pounds. Adult females generally weigh around 150 pounds. However, weight varies greatly across the species' range.

There are 16 subspecies of black bear in North America. Black bears in western Nevada belong to the subspecies *U. a. californiensis*, which is found in the Sierra Nevada of California and Nevada and the Cascade Range of northern California and south central Oregon.

A copy of the finding about the American black bear in Nevada will be published in the July 5, 2012, *Federal Register* and will be available on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>, Docket No.

FWS-ES-R8-2012-0024. Additional information about the finding can be found at <http://fws.gov/nevada> or by contacting the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office at 775-861-6300.

The ESA provides a critical safety net for America's native fish, wildlife and plants. 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/angered/>.

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 www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfws, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws>.

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