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News Release



For Immediate Release: October 18, 2013

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Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo Proposed for Federal Protections *Service Seeks Public Comments by December 2, 2013*

Sacramento – On October 3, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposed to list the western distinct population segment (DPS) of the yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the western United States, Canada, and Mexico. In the U.S., the western yellow-billed cuckoo is known to occur in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

“The western yellow-billed cuckoo is distinct from populations in the east and has different habitat requirements,” said Jennifer Norris, Field Supervisor for the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Service. “Populations of western yellow-billed cuckoo, and their nesting habitat along rivers and streams, have been declining over the last few decades. The Service is asking the public to review our proposal to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species and submit comments. We need all of the best available scientific information to help us make a final decision that most effectively protects the species.”

The Service is looking for information concerning the western yellow-billed cuckoo’s biology and habitat, threats to the species, and current efforts to protect the bird. To access the proposed rule and a specific outline of information requested by the Service, please go to our webpage at: http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/Public-Advisories/WesternYellow-BilledCuckoo/outreach_PA_Western-Yellow-Billed-Cuckoo.htm

Comments for the proposal to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species will be accepted through December 2, 2013. Comments may be submitted online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. The Docket Number for the proposed listing rule is FWS–R8–ES–2013-0104. Comments can also be sent by U.S. mail to:

Public Comments Processing
Attn: FWS–R8–ES–2013-0104
Division of Policy and Directives Management

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM
Arlington, VA 22203

The western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) is a neotropical migrant bird that winters in South America and breeds in western North America. The yellow-billed cuckoo is an insectivorous bird that lives in riparian woodlands.

While the yellow-billed cuckoo is common east of the Continental Divide, biologists estimate that more than 90 percent of the bird's riparian habitat in the West has been lost or degraded. The listing proposal, which is based on the best scientific data available, cites threats from loss of riparian habitat and habitat fragmentation as a result of conversion to agriculture, dams and river flow management, bank protection, overgrazing, and competition from exotic plants as key factors in the decline of the western yellow-billed cuckoo.

The Service was petitioned to add the western yellow-billed cuckoo to the federal list of threatened or endangered species in 1998. In a review of the status of the species, the Service found that the yellow-billed cuckoo populations west of the Continental Divide in the United States was a DPS and added the species to the candidate list in 2001. The Service's announcement today officially proposes to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species.

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

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