

News Release



Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130
Tel: 702-515-5230; Fax 702-515-5231
<http://fws.gov/nevada>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Dan Balduini (702) 515-5480
daniel_balduini@fws.gov

Las Vegas Valley Water District seeks permit and safe harbor agreement to house endangered Pahrump poolfish

Service opens 30-day public comment period on April 12, 2016

LAS VEGAS — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is seeking public comments on an application from the Las Vegas Valley Water District for an enhancement of survival permit under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The permit application includes a proposed safe harbor agreement (SHA) between the Water District and the Service. The SHA would provide for voluntary activities that will contribute to the recovery of the endangered Pahrump poolfish (*Empetrichthys latos*) by providing refugia ponds at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve. The term of the SHA would be 15 years.

Historically, the Pahrump poolfish occurred only in Manse Springs in Nye County, Nevada. In 1975, Manse Springs dried up due to excessive groundwater pumping resulting in the loss of the only natural population of Pahrump poolfish. Three populations of Pahrump poolfish have been established since that time: in Corn Creek Spring on the Desert National Wildlife Refuge north of Las Vegas, in Shoshone Springs southeast of Ely, and in an irrigation reservoir at Spring Mountains Ranch State Park west of Las Vegas. Completion of this SHA would establish a refugium at the Springs Preserve.

SHAs are voluntary agreements involving private or other non-federal property owners whose actions contribute to the recovery of species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The agreement is between cooperating non-federal property owners and the Service.

In exchange for actions that contribute to the recovery of listed species on non-federal lands, participating property owners receive formal assurances from the Service that if they fulfill the conditions of the SHA, the Service will not require any additional or different management activities by the participants without their consent. In addition, at the end of the agreement period, participants may return the enrolled property to the baseline conditions that existed at the beginning of the SHA.

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Copies of the permit application, the environmental action statement, or copies of the full text of the SHA, including a map of the proposed permit area, references, and legal descriptions of the proposed permit area, are available at www.fws.gov/nevada and www.regulations.gov [FWS–R8–ES–2016–N049].

Documents will also be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130.

Entire comments—including personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While commenters can ask the Service to withhold their personal identifying information from public view, the agency cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so. The public comment period opens on April 12, 2016, and closes on May 12, 2016.

For further information, please contact James Harter at the Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office address or by telephone at 702–515–5230.

Comments can be provided by U.S. mail to Michael J. Senn, Field Supervisor, Southern Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130, or via fax to 702–515–5231.

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