

# News Bulletin

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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Working with State and Timber Interests to Reduce Threats to Oregon Fishers

*Collaboration is the key to conservation*

PORTLAND, Oregon—A voluntary conservation agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and non-federal forest landowners to benefit fishers is being proposed today. This agreement puts fisher conservation on a solid path forward in western Oregon.

This voluntary agreement, known as the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA), serves as a template in that it establishes general guidelines and identifies management responsibilities for participants thus streamlining the enrollment process. In a CCAA, landowners voluntarily agree to manage their lands to remove or reduce threats to a species and in return, receive assurances against additional regulatory requirements should that species ever be listed under the Endangered Species Act.

“Green Diamond Resource Company is delighted that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing private landowners with an opportunity to conserve fishers in Oregon with the assurance that we can help fishers while managing our working forests,” said Galen Schuler, Vice President of Green Diamond Resource Company. “Using Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances, we can accomplish fisher conservation that is more effective than listing a species.”

There is a strong desire to implement the western Oregon fisher CCAA as exhibited by the Service receiving letters of intent from 9 different landowners covering nearly 2 million acres. Most of these letters also commit to financial or in-kind support to increase our understanding of fisher populations and potentially reintroduce fishers in Oregon.

The fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) is one of the larger members of the weasel family that also includes marten, otter and mink. Fishers are secretive creatures, extremely adept at climbing trees and commonly associated with forests dominated by conifers.

“Working collaboratively with timber interests, we’ve developed an agreement that helps reduce and manage threats so that fishers are conserved,” said Paul Henson, Oregon State Supervisor for the Service. “This CCAA will benefit the fisher by filling key information gaps and allowing for establishment of additional populations through reintroduction in western Oregon.”

Historically, the fisher occurred throughout the boreal and temperate forests of North America. The fisher's range was reduced dramatically in the 1800s and early 1900s through trapping, predator and pest control, and alterations of forested habitats. Efforts to reintroduce fishers in parts of their historic range have helped expand their current distribution.

The Service and participating landowners seek to utilize the CCAA to facilitate continued successful partnerships for fisher surveys, monitoring, and reintroductions in light of the current limited distribution and abundance in Oregon. Eligible landowners will receive an enhancement of survival permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act for a period of up to 30 years.

The Service has prepared a draft Environmental Action Statement for this action. As effects are not expected to result in significant impacts to environmental values or resources, we have preliminarily determined the CCAA is categorically excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act review.

The Service is requesting public comment on the draft CCAA and Environmental Action Statement through April 25, 2016, 30-days from publication date in *Federal Register*.

Comments may be submitted to the Service via email at [ORfisherCCAAcomments@fws.gov](mailto:ORfisherCCAAcomments@fws.gov). Include “Template Fisher CCAA” in the subject line of the email. Instructions for submitting comments via fax, through the mail and other means are described in the *Federal Register* Notice, also available on the web.

For more information or to download copies of documents related to this application, please visit: [www.fws.gov/oregonfwo](http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo).

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