

# News Release



Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
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<http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District Enters into Conservation Planning to Protect Fender's Blue Butterfly**

PORTLAND, OREGON - Thanks to efforts of the Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan, private landowners in Yamhill County will be able to reduce the administrative and regulatory burden of having Fenders blue butterfly (*Icaricia icarioides fenderi*) on their property while also promoting its recovery.

Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) are planning documents that describe the anticipated effects of various activities to listed or candidate species and how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated. By conducting activities such as vineyard management, livestock grazing, timber management, and habitat restoration in a way that minimizes impacts to the butterfly, landowners can enroll for inclusion under the Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) HCP. Yamhill SWCD will work with participating landowners to minimize and mitigate their impacts through a set of conservation measures for a permit will be in place for 50 years.

“HCPs provide for partnerships to conserve ecosystems for listed species, ultimately contributing to their recovery,” said Paul Henson, Oregon State Supervisor for the Service. “We are prioritizing these agreements in our office because they provide a vital tool for private landowners to continue with their regular activities while also protecting this rare butterfly.”

Approximately 7,800 acres of habitat on private lands in Yamhill County will be included.

Fender's blue butterflies are endemic to the Willamette Valley, and in 2013 five populations were identified in Yamhill County. This butterfly, listed as endangered in 2000, is dependent on upland prairie supporting its larval host plant, the threatened Kincaid's lupine, as well as other plants that can provide adequate nectar. The HCP also provides for conservation of Kincaid's lupine.

Primary threats to the butterfly include habitat loss and fragmentation, decline in abundance of host and nectar species, and encroachment of trees, shrubs, and invasive species.

Most of the native upland prairies, wet prairies, and oak savanna habitats have vanished in the Willamette Valley with less than 0.5% remaining, the majority of which is located on private lands.

Documents may be viewed at

<http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/ToolsForLandowners/HabitatConservationPlans/>.

The notice of availability of the draft HCP and associated documents, published in the Federal Register on February 23, 2015, opens a 30 day public comment period. Public comments will be accepted through March 25, 2015. To submit written comments, please use one of the following methods, and note that comments are in reference to the Yamhill SWCD HCP.

- Email: [OFWocomment@fws.gov](mailto:OFWocomment@fws.gov)
- U.S. Mail: State Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2600 SE 98th Ave., Portland, OR 97266
- Fax: 503-231-6195

For more information about Fender's blue butterfly and Kincaid's lupine, visit

<http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>.

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