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News Release



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Post-delisting Monitoring Plan Finalized for Columbian White-Tailed Deer

The final monitoring plan for the Douglas County population of Columbian white-tailed deer is now available. This population of deer was removed from the endangered species list in 2003, and the monitoring plan is designed to ensure that it continues to thrive without the protection of the Endangered Species Act.

“The Columbian white-tailed deer in Douglas County rebounded as a result of the concerted efforts of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, private landowners, and many others,” said Dave Allen, Director of the Service’s Pacific Region. “We will continue to work with our partners to monitor the deer now that it has been removed from the endangered species list.”

The monitoring program is designed to track the status of the deer’s population and the incidence of threats that could compromise its recovery. The program has three key parts: 1) population trend surveys each year in spring and fall, 2) tracking the incidence of disease outbreaks, and 3) annual reviews of habitat to ensure that it is being managed to benefit the deer.

A Notice of Availability of the monitoring plan was published in the Federal Register, both it and the plan can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/Species/ESA-Actions/CWTDPage.asp>

The post-delisting monitoring period will continue through 2008 during which time the Fish and Wildlife Service will publish annual reports on the status of the species. If monitoring indicates that the species is doing well five years after delisting, we can cease monitoring. If the population has declined substantially, or if other threats are uncontrolled, the monitoring plan directs us to continue monitoring while working with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Bureau of Land Management to ameliorate the threats.

One of two remaining populations of Columbian white-tailed deer, the Douglas county segment is found in Douglas County, Oregon, in the Umpqua River Basin. The lower Columbia River population, found in Wahkiakum County, Washington, and in Clatsop and Columbia Counties, Oregon, has not yet met targets set in the species’ recovery plan. Therefore, this population will continue to be listed as an endangered species.

The Columbian white-tailed deer is the westernmost representative of 30 subspecies of white-tailed deer in North and Central America. Reddish-brown in summer and gray in winter, the medium-size deer has white rings around the eyes and a white ring around the nose. A relatively long brown tail sports white fringe and white

underneath. Early records indicate that these deer were once numerous from the western slopes of the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean and from Puget Sound in Washington southward to the Umpqua River Basin in southern Oregon.

Habitat loss was a key factor in the decline of the Columbian white-tailed deer. Protection and active management of riparian habitats and open space in Douglas County have allowed the population to recover.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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