

Peer Review of Scientific Information

12-month finding on a petition to delist the Southern Selkirk Mountains Population of Woodland Caribou and proposed rule to amend the listing by defining the Southern Mountain Caribou Distinct Population Segment (DPS)

About the Document

Title: 12-month finding on a petition to delist the Southern Selkirk Mountains Population of Woodland Caribou and proposed rule to amend the listing

Dissemination Date of the Proposed Rule: May 8, 2014

Peer Review Timeframe: May 8, 2014 to July 7, 2014

Type of review: Influential

About the Peer Review Process

In accordance with the requirements of the Office of Management and Budget's Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and National Marine Fisheries Service's interagency peer review policy, we initiated peer review of the science used to amend the Southern Selkirk Mountains Population of Woodland Caribou listing by defining the Southern Mountain Caribou DPS and proposing to list the DPS as threatened under the Act.

The Service selected four subject area experts to conduct a scientific review of the proposed rule. Reviewers had to commit to providing an objective written review within a set time frame. We selected reviewers who were unlikely to experience personal gain or loss as a result of the Service's decision. Peer reviewers were not compensated for their time, and Service employees were not used for this peer review. The scientific peer review was run concurrently with the public review.

The primary disciplines or expertise that were needed for this peer review were:

- 1- Knowledge of biological information concerning the Southern Mountain Caribou DPS;
- 2- Knowledge of relevant data concerning presence or absence of current or future threats to the Southern Mountain Caribou DPS and its habitat; and
- 3- Knowledge of information regarding management plans or other mechanisms that provide protection to the Southern Mountain Caribou DPS and its habitat.

The Service provided each peer reviewer with the information necessary to complete their reviews. Reviewers were specifically asked to comment on the relevancy of, and the uncertainty associated with, the data used by the Service to develop the proposed rule, to review the appropriateness of the methods used to analyze the data, and to

evaluate the Service's conclusion. Because the peer review comment period ran concurrently with the public comment period, we were unable to provide the peer reviewers with public comments. The deadline for the receipt of the reviews was clearly stated. Like the public comments received on the proposed rule, peer review comments are public documents and are posted and available at <http://www.regulations.gov>, at Docket Number FWS-R1-ES-2012-0097.

Will the public and/or scientific or professional societies be asked to nominate peer reviewers? No.

Are waivers or deferrals being invoked? No

Start Date of Peer Review: May 8, 2014

About Public Participation

The public was invited to comment on the proposed rule during the public comment period. The public comment period was originally open from to May 8, 2014 to July 7, 2014, but was extended to August 6, 2014. A second 30-day public comment period was opened from March 24, 2015 to April 23, 2015. The proposed rule and all comments received are available for review at <http://www.regulations.gov>, at Docket Number FWS-R1-ES-2012-0097.

Contact

Call Mike Carrier, State Supervisor, (phone 208-378-5243). Direct all questions or requests for additional information to: Southern Mountain Caribou, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, Idaho 83709. Individuals who are hearing-impaired or speech-impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8337 for TTY assistance for additional information regarding this peer review plan.