

Peer Review of Scientific Information: Proposed Rule to List 11 Freshwater Species (10 Fish and 1 Crayfish) as Injurious Wildlife Species

About the Document

Subject and Purpose: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is publishing a proposed rule to add the crucian carp (*Carassius carassius*), Eurasian minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*), Prussian carp (*Carassius gibelio*), roach (*Rutilus rutilus*), stone moroko (*Pseudorasbora parva*), Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*), Amur sleeper (*Perccottus glenii*), European perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), zander (*Sander lucioperca*), wels catfish (*Silurus glanis*), and the common yabby (*Cherax destructor*) to the list of injurious wildlife under the Lacey Act (18 USC 42, as amended). The Service will consider results of the peer review to address questionable or unresolved issues and relevant missed information.

Importance of Scientific Information: Using a rapid screening method, the Service selected 11 nonnative aquatic species with a result of “high risk” to consider for listing as injurious. Evaluations demonstrated that these 11 species have a high climate match in parts of the United States, have a history of invasiveness outside of their native range, a high degree of certainty regarding these results, and, except for one species in one lake, are not yet found in United States ecosystems. The Service uses Injurious Wildlife Evaluation Criteria to evaluate if a species qualifies as injurious under the Lacey Act. The criteria include the likelihood and magnitude of: release or escape, survival and establishment upon release or escape, and spread from origin of release or escape. The criteria also examine the effect on wildlife and wildlife resources (through hybridization, inbreeding, competition for food or habitat, predation on native species, and pathogen transfer) including threatened and endangered species and their respective habitats; and on ecosystems, humans, forestry, horticulture, and agriculture. Additionally, the Service evaluates the likelihood and magnitude of wildlife or habitat damages resulting from measures to control an evaluated species if it became invasive.

About the Peer Review Process

Type of review: Independent Peer Review – The Service will solicit comments from independent scientific reviewers who will submit individual written comments and responses to questions posed to all invited reviewers.

Number of reviewers: The Service will use three independent expert reviewers.

Reviewer Expertise: Any one or combination of the following: invasive species biology, invasive species risk assessment, aquatic species biology, aquaculture, fisheries.

Selection of Peer Reviewers: The Service will select peer reviewers based on their expertise of the subject matter and as described in the Office of Management and Budget Peer Review Guidelines (“Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review”), including no stated conflict of interest.

A summary of the comments of reviewers as well as their names and affiliations will be made available as part of the regulatory administrative file and, therefore, may be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act, but the attribution of specific comments to a specific reviewer will not be provided. Because this peer review process is running concurrently with public review of the proposed action, peer reviewers will not be provided public comments (although public

comments may be viewed through <http://www.regulations.gov>). A final determination regarding the proposed action is expected in 2016.

Management of Peer Reviewer: The Service will manage the peer review, coordinated by a contractor. Peer reviewers will be given 60 days to complete their reviews. The peer review will start on October 30, 2015.

About Public Participation

Public comments on the proposed rule will be sought with a **Federal Register** announcement on October 30, 2015; Docket No. FWS–HQ–FAC–2013–0095). This comment period ends on December 29, 2015. Information regarding submission of comments is included in the **Federal Register** notice. The Service will consider all comments received prior to publishing a final determination.

This peer review plan is made available on this website to allow the public to monitor our compliance with the Office of Management and Budget’s Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review.

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