

OUTLINE FOR PPT/WEBINAR FOR ARD BRIEFING ON MARCH 11, 2016

What are we doing?

We are implementing the SSA process, in order to meet a court ordered timeline to develop a Recovery Plan for Canada Lynx (if determined to still warrant listing) by January 2018. Prior to moving forward with recovery planning – the SSA will provide the additional analysis to re-evaluate the status of the species and document that through a five year review.

Why?

In 2000 (remanded 2003), the Canada lynx was listed in the contiguous U.S. DPS as a threatened species under the Act because of the inadequacy, at that time, of existing regulatory mechanisms. In 2005, we completed a Recovery Outline which focused on XYZ. In 2006, critical habitat was designated and revised in 2009 and 2014 due to XYZ. We are currently in litigation on our latest critical habitat designation from 2014. Currently, there are five geographic areas known to support resident lynx populations in the DPS: northern Maine (with occasional/sporadic breeding by small numbers of lynx in northernmost New Hampshire and Vermont); northeastern Minnesota; northwestern Montana and northeastern Idaho; north-central Washington; and western Colorado (Figure 1).

Key Points.

- We announced the initiation of a Five-year status review on December 8, 2014. Shortly thereafter, we embarked on the Species Status Assessment (SSA). This information in the SSA will be used by Service decision makers to inform classification decisions, recovery planning direction, and other determinations required by the Endangered Species Act. (ADD POTENTIAL FINDINGS SLIDE TO REMIND ARDS OF CHOICES WE COULD MAKE)
- Through the SSA process we intend to assess the current status, threats and future viability of the Canada lynx DPS and compile and summarize the best available scientific and commercial data, including empirical data, published literature, and expert input.
- In the SSA process, we will prioritize information and modeling to best evaluate potential future conditions and viability.
- We will continue to engage State, Tribal and other Federal, Canadian and other stakeholders, partners, and managers. We specifically asked State partners for names for panel.
- In the fall of 2015, we convened a workshop for scientific experts to address the current and likely future status of the Canada lynx DPS. The team included state agencies, other federal agencies, and academic researchers to elicit expert input. The resultant workshop report is one piece of information that will be used in developing the SSA.
- The Service Core Team for the Lynx SSA developed expert selection criteria based on professional credentials, positions, areas of expertise, and pertinent experience to develop a list of candidate lynx experts and other subject matter experts.
 - Selection criteria helped ensure that invitations to participate were made only to scientists with expertise highly relevant to workshop topics and, further, that the selections were

transparent, unbiased, and adequately captured the diversity of expertise and professional judgments related to the topics. **ADD MORE FROM REPORT**

Out comes from Workshop:

Representation

- o Expert presentations on lynx genetics in the DPS and in Canada and expert responses and discussion with regard to representation questions suggest few threats to the genetic fitness or adaptive capacity of lynx in the DPS.
- o Adaptability and evolutionary capacity of the DPS over time does not appear to have been diminished and is unlikely to become so, independent of threats that may impact the redundancy and persistence of lynx populations.

Redundance

- o DPS as a whole does not appear vulnerable to extirpation from a single catastrophic event. No catastrophic event that could result in the functional extirpation of the entire DPS and, further, no or a very low likelihood of functional extirpation of any of the individual geographic units due to a single catastrophic event.

Resiliency

- o Responses indicate that all five of the geographic units known to currently support resident lynx populations have a greater than 70% expectation of continuing to support lynx populations by mid-century but a declining likelihood and greater uncertainty of continuing to support lynx populations by the end of the century.
- o Responses also suggest that the overarching threat to the long-term persistence of lynx populations in the DPS is climate change, which is anticipated to result in loss of boreal forest habitats and snow conditions favorable for lynx, although the timing and magnitude of such losses are uncertain.

Climate timeline. **PULL FROM REPORT**

Overall Message from Panel Report

What happens next with the panel Report?

- Complete RO review (DO other ARDs want to review before it is posted?)
- Post on internet and send out to State partners

Other efforts. We asked Steve Torbit, ARD for Scientific Applications for his assistance to develop a range of reasonably certain future climate change scenarios related to lynx and some measure of the uncertainty associated with several time periods. These included low, moderate and high emissions scenarios at mid (2050) and end of century (2100), but we are open to other suggestions. Our questions particularly related to:

- How snowfall patterns, amounts/depths, duration, and consistency (powder versus packed/crusted) may change (as well as precipitation rates),
- What the projected rates of northward and upslope boreal forest migration might be - and the lag between climatic and vegetative changes, and if possible
- How climate change will affect fire size, frequency and intensity and forest insect outbreaks.

- What he was able to find out.
- What this means for our timeline and the science. (6 weeks per area, Core team doubts info would be more enlightening than what already presented by Alexi)

Core Team SSA Meeting (Denver)

Purpose

How it went

Where are we now?

Decision Points

- Climate scenario years from panel report...Are ARDs OK with timespan?
- Do we need better information to address likely impacts to lynx from CC? If the answer is yes, are we willing to request the settlement date be changed to allow the time for this information. It would likely be 6 months.
- When we do Peer review of SSA, do our State counterparts get it at the same time? If so, how do we treat their comments?
- Do managers want any recommendation from team in the SSA? If the SSA document is supposed to be science only, we suggest that the Five-year review would be the recommendation from the team and that all units would need to concur before it was finalized.
-

REVISED TIMELINES

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Workshop Report | FINAL -MARCH 18, 2016 |
| • Species Status Report | DRAFT, APRIL 15, 2016 |
| o Internal Review Complete | APRIL 29. 2016 |
| o Peer Review (and State?) Complete | MAY 15, 2016 |
| o Final Report Complete | MAY 30, 2016 |
| • Five-year Review | |
| o Draft | DRAFT, MAY 5, 2016 |
| o Final | FINAL, MAY 30, 2016 |
| • Draft Recovery Plan (if necessary) | DRAFT, JANUARY 2017?? |
| • Final Recovery Plan DUE (If necessary) | FINAL, JANUARY 2018 |

- At the time of completion of the SSA, we will be 6 months behind schedule.