

From: [Shoemaker, Justin](#)
To: [Jodi Bush](#); [Marjorie Nelson](#)
Cc: [Grizzle, Betty](#); [Guinotte, John](#); [Craig Hansen](#); [Caitlin Snyder](#)
Subject: Wolverine briefing memo for RD
Date: Friday, June 9, 2017 8:45:25 AM
Attachments: [Wolverine Detailed Timeline_06092017.docx](#)
[Briefing Memo for RD Wolverine SSA update_06092017.docx](#)

Jodi and Marj,

We have prepared a briefing memo for our wolverine SSA update for the RD next Thursday. This memo needs to be to the RD's office by Monday per R6 RD briefing guidance from Stephanie Potter. Please take a look and let me know if you have edits. We will be quickly circulating a surname folder through RO ES for Mike's signature on Monday.

We are trying to put together a genetics options paper as Mike requested. It can be an attachment to this memo if we get the necessary info regarding costs by Monday. Steve is looking into it. If not, I'll drop reference to the options paper in this memo but leave the topic for discussion.

We can also attach the revised schedule to the RD memo if you think appropriate. The latest draft is attached.

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Wolverine Listing Determination Timeline
6/9/17 version

Task	Responsible Parties	Dates	Length of time
<i>Species Status Assessment (SSA) Phase</i>			
FR notice opening comment period on 2013 proposed listing rule	MTFO	Oct 18 2016	done
DIP letters sent out to States and partners	MTFO	Oct	done
Public comment period, input from States, partners, etc.		Oct 18-Nov 17	30 days, done
Conduct science analysis (SSA)	SSA core team	By Sept 15 2017	in process
Draft SSA report	Betty Grizzle (FO Lead Bio)	By Oct 7	in process
SSA core team meeting in Denver	Core team, R6 management and decision support staff	Feb 15-16	2 days, done
SSA report check-in w/ RD	SSA core team, management	June 8	1 hr briefing
Peer review planning and contracting	Justin Shoemaker (ULT lead), Caitlin Snyder (ULT assist)	Aug - Oct	2 months to get contracted peer reviewers in place
SSA report core team review	SSA core team	Oct 7-14	1 week
Edit SSA report based on core team review	Betty Grizzle	Oct 14-Oct 21	1 week
SSA report to peer reviewers and partners*	Justin Shoemaker, Jodi Bush (MTFO Project Leader)	Oct 21-Nov 21	1 month
Edit and finalize SSA report	Betty Grizzle	Nov 21-Dec 19	4 weeks
<i>Listing Decision Analysis Phase</i>			
SSA report to recommendation team	Justin Shoemaker, Jodi Bush	Dec 19	At least 2 weeks prior to recommendation team meeting
Decision meeting	RDs or delegates, ARDs, other management, SSA core team	First or second week of Jan 2018	2 days
Draft decision summary for the record or certify decision meeting notes	R6 RD or delegate	early Jan	3 days (after recommendation team meeting)
<i>Process for final withdrawal of proposed listing (if decision is to not list) - or revised proposed listing rule (if decision is to list)</i>			
Draft final withdrawal (not-warranted) FR notice or revised proposed listing rule (and if necessary, proposed 10(j), 4(d))	Justin Shoemaker and Betty Grizzle	Jan 15-Feb 12	4 weeks
Core team reviews FR notice,	SSA core team,	Feb 12-Feb 26	2 weeks

*Includes States, Tribes, Federal Agencies

make revisions	Justin Shoemaker		
Regional Office Surnames and concurrence	Marjorie Nelson, Mike Thabault, Matt Hogan, Noreen Walsh, and concurring regional RDs/ARDs or delegates	Feb 26-March 12	2 weeks
SOL surname	DOI SOL	Feb 26-March 12	2 weeks
PPM	PPM	Feb 26-March 12	2 weeks
Revise based on RO/SOL/PPM comments	Justin Shoemaker and Betty Grizzle	March 12-March 21	10 days
HQ review	Sarah Quamme, Bridget Fahey	March 21-	2 weeks (submit 6 weeks prior to FR submittal date)
Asst. Director for ES Surname	Asst. Director for ES	April 4	5 business days
FWS Director Surname	Director of FWS	April 11	5 business days
Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Surname	FWP	April 18	10 business days
Executive Secretary Surname	Executive Secretary's Office	May 2	3 business days
Deliver to FR	HQ	May 7	
Publication of withdrawal or proposed rule	Federal Register	May 14	
Public comment period on revised proposed listing (only if decision is to list)		May 14-June 12	30 days (may need to be 60 days, if so will revise)
<i>Process for final listing Federal Register document</i>			
Comment and response strategy meeting – develop plan to review and address comments received	SSA core team, management	Mid May (TBD)	half day
Review and address public comments on proposed listing	SSA core team, support staffing as needed from R6 RO	June 12-July 16	1 month
Meeting with decision team to discuss public comment and any new info, revisit decision	Marjorie Nelson, Mike Thabault, Matt Hogan, Noreen Walsh, and concurring regional RDs/ARDs or delegates	Early July 2018	half day
Draft final listing FR doc (if necessary 10(j), 4(d))	Justin Shoemaker and Betty Grizzle	by July 16	2 months from proposed listing publication
SSA core team reviews FR notice, make revisions	SSA core team	July 16-July 23	1 week
Regional Office Surnames and concurrence	Marjorie Nelson, Mike Thabault, Matt Hogan, Noreen Walsh, and	July 23-Aug 6	2 weeks

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	concurring regional RDs/ARDs or delegates		
SOL surname	DOI SOL	July 23-Aug 6	2 weeks
PPM	PPM	July 23-Aug 6	2 weeks
Revise based on RO/SOL/PPM comments	Justin Shoemaker and Betty Grizzle	Aug 6-Aug 13	1 week
HQ review	Sarah Quamme, Bridget Fahey	Aug 7	6 weeks prior to FR date (may need to start this review concurrent w/ RO,SOL, PPM revisions)
AES Surname	Assistant Director Ecological Services	Aug 21	5 business days
FWS Director Signature	Director of FWS	Aug 28	5 business days
Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Surname	FWP	Sep 5	10 business days
Executive Secretary Surname	Executive Secretary's Office	Sep 19	3 business days
Deliver to FR	HQ	Sep 24	
Publication of final rule	Federal Register	Sep 28, 2018	Note: We've committed to final rule in FY 18 in the work plan

*Includes States, Tribes, Federal Agencies

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM FOR THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

DATE: June 9, 2017

FROM: Michael Thabault, Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services

SUBJECT: Wolverine Species Status Assessment Update

To inform the Regional Director of the progress made on the wolverine Species Status Assessment (SSA) and the key information that will be of interest to the eventual wolverine listing decision. Briefing scheduled for June 15.

BACKGROUND

In compliance with a Court order that remanded our previous withdrawal of a proposed rule to list the contiguous U.S. Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of the wolverine (79 FR 47522; August 13, 2014), we will prepare either a revised proposed rule to list or a revised withdrawal of the previous proposed rule (78 FR 7864; February 4, 2013). In October 2016, we published a notice to announce the vacature of the withdrawal rule to the public, announce the proposed status since the judge's ruling, and to reopen the public comment period on the February 4, 2013 proposed rule to list the wolverine as a threatened species.

DISCUSSION

Highlighted in Judge Christensen's Court order remanding the withdrawal were the Service's determinations regarding: (a) the threat posed to the wolverine by the effects of climate change at the reproductive denning scale, (b) the threat posed to the wolverine by small population size and lack of genetic diversity, and (c) application of the SPR Policy to the wolverine. In our SSA we are making every effort to inform these points and ensure we are using the most up-to-date science upon which to base our listing decision.

Range of the species – Our current approach to delineating wolverine range in the lower 48 is different, and we believe more accurate, than the broader range considered in the 2014 withdrawal.

Trapping Data – We have gathered additional trapping data not available to us in 2014 to inform the range of the species and the effect of trapping in Canada (British Columbia and Alberta) as it relates to an updated DPS determination.

NOAA/CU snow persistence model – High resolution snow pack models have been developed for Glacier and Rocky Mountain National Parks. These areas bracket the DPS range in the lower 48. The majority of model scenarios indicate significant future snow persistence through April and May for elevations currently used for denning (Glacier) and the inferred elevations where wolverines would be expected to den in Rocky Mountain National Park.

New denning information – We have several records that were not available to us in 2014 of den sites found outside of modeled snow habitat in North America, as well as confirmation of successful wolverine dens outside of snow in Scandinavia.

PVA underway – We are coordinating with USGS on a PVA to inform minimum viable population size and the effects of demographic and habitat parameters on the wolverine population in the lower 48 States.

Genetics – The court said that, in our 2014 withdrawal, we failed to articulate how our statements regarding the following did not constitute adverse effects to wolverine:

- Apparent loss of connectivity between Rocky Mountains and Canada prevented influx of genetic material needed to maintain or increase the genetic diversity in contiguous U.S.
- Effective population size is too low to support the subpopulations in contiguous U.S.
- Genetic drift has already occurred in subpopulations in contiguous U.S. as compared to Canada, and a continued loss of genetic diversity may lead to inbreeding depression and inability of wolverines in contiguous U.S. to persist

Thus, we need to evaluate our statements in previous rules that there is “good evidence” that genetic diversity is lower in wolverines in the contiguous U.S. as compared to Canada and Alaska. We also need to determine whether there is a threat for inbreeding depression based on small population. In addition to informing these points, knowledge gained through a more thorough and complete comparison of the genetic structure of wolverine population in the contiguous U.S. as well as Alaska and Canada would provide a more legally and scientifically robust basis on which to base our DPS determination.

See attached options paper.

NEXT STEPS

We plan to have the final SSA report, with peer and partner review incorporated, to the RD and decision team by December 2017.

ATTACHMENTS

Wolverine SSA and listing decision schedule attached.

Genetics options paper.