

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
Proposed Rule to Delist the Ivory-billed Woodpecker
Virtual Public Meeting Transcript
January 26, 2022, 6:00-7:30pm Central Time**

00:00:22.110 --> 00:00:27.990

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Alright, we are going to begin the meeting now welcome everyone.

00:00:30.690 --> 00:00:46.050

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you for joining tonight we also want to note, one more time closed captioning is available by selecting the closed caption icon at the bottom of your zoom screen if you're using the zoom web portal or the zoom APP on your computer.

00:00:50.190 --> 00:00:54.600

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Just going to get that few more seconds here, it looks like we've still got people joining.

00:01:23.340 --> 00:01:24.090

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Alright.

00:01:25.710 --> 00:01:46.230

EMPSi - Megan Stone: We're going to go ahead and get started. We'd like to welcome everyone to tonight's meeting for the ivory-billed woodpecker. I'm Megan Stone with Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, a contractor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

00:01:47.610 --> 00:01:56.070

EMPSi - Megan Stone: We're going to go ahead and get started, and I would like to thank you all for joining us, we appreciate your time and participation.

00:01:56.490 --> 00:02:08.790

EMPSi - Megan Stone: I'm going to be one of your facilitators today for the meeting and, additionally, I have several members of the US fish and wildlife service today on the meeting, who we will introduce in a moment.

00:02:11.730 --> 00:02:14.460

EMPSi - Megan Stone: We're going to move into the meeting agenda for tonight.

00:02:15.720 --> 00:02:26.760

EMPSi - Megan Stone: First we'll go over some brief ground rules for tonight's meeting. Then we'll have our U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service presenters introduce themselves and begin their presentation.

00:02:27.480 --> 00:02:35.850

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Fish and Wildlife will provide a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed delisting which will last approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

00:02:36.240 --> 00:02:48.240

EMPSi - Megan Stone: We will then begin our verbal public comment portion of the meeting, starting at 6:30pm central time and the verbal public comment portion will last until 7:30 central time.

00:02:51.060 --> 00:02:56.760

EMPSi - Megan Stone: So, before we get started with the presentation, I'm going to go over some ground rules for the meeting.

00:02:57.420 --> 00:03:06.270

EMPSi - Megan Stone: First, this meeting is being recorded as part of the project record and a recording will be posted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website.

00:03:06.990 --> 00:03:18.660

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Second, your microphones and videos will be turned off for the duration of the meeting today, you only be unmuted if and when I unmute you during the comment portion of the hearing.

00:03:19.290 --> 00:03:31.080

EMPSi - Megan Stone: After the PowerPoint presentation, we will then move on to the public comment portion during which we will accept verbal public comments from participants who have joined today's meeting.

00:03:31.710 --> 00:03:39.030

EMPSi - Megan Stone: If you registered before the start time of today's meeting and indicated that you would like to offer a verbal public comment today.

00:03:39.450 --> 00:03:46.200

EMPSi - Megan Stone: You received a separate email stating that you would be called on during today's meeting to provide your verbal public comment.

00:03:47.010 --> 00:03:55.680

EMPSi - Megan Stone: If you registered after the meeting started, we'll do our best to reserve some time for you to have an opportunity to offer your verbal public comment tonight.

00:03:56.310 --> 00:04:05.550

EMPSi - Megan Stone: If we have time remaining after we have gone through our list of pre-registered commenters will open up the comment portion to the everyone on the meeting.

00:04:06.030 --> 00:04:16.020

EMPSi - Megan Stone: And anyone who would like to provide a comment, who is not already done so, regardless of whether you selected, yes or no to commenting when you registered for today's meeting.

00:04:16.920 --> 00:04:25.560

EMPSi - Megan Stone: If you do not get the opportunity to offer your verbal public comment today, written public comments can be submitted at regulations.gov.

00:04:25.890 --> 00:04:35.520

EMPSi - Megan Stone: And we'll provide further information on how to submit your written public comments after the presentation. So now I will turn it over to Melissa

00:04:36.090 --> 00:04:48.180

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Lombardi from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, who is going to start off the presentation and then Amy Trahan will lead us through Fish and Wildlife's PowerPoint presentation.

00:04:49.710 --> 00:04:58.890

EMPSi - Megan Stone: I'm going to go ahead and ask Amy and Melissa to unmute themselves now.

00:05:13.080 --> 00:05:15.900

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Hi Amy you should be unmuted now.

00:05:16.920 --> 00:05:21.450

EMPSi - Megan Stone: And Melissa you can go ahead and unmute yourself and turn on your video as well.

00:05:31.680 --> 00:05:33.870

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Melissa you might be double muted.

00:05:36.030 --> 00:05:38.730

EMPSi - Megan Stone: I'll go ahead and ask you to unmute one more time.

00:05:40.200 --> 00:05:40.920

EMPSi - Megan Stone: There we go.

00:05:45.300 --> 00:05:55.680

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: Great thank you so much Megan. Good evening, my name is Melissa Lombardi and I'm the acting field supervisor for the Louisiana Ecological Services Field Office.

00:05:56.340 --> 00:06:01.710

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: I'd like to welcome you to the public hearing for the proposed rule to delist the ivory-billed woodpecker.

00:06:02.400 --> 00:06:10.170

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: We appreciate your interest and engagement with this charismatic species, and we look forward to hearing your comments this evening on the proposed rule.

00:06:11.040 --> 00:06:21.660

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: I'd like to introduce Amy Trahan, the species lead biologist for the ivory-billed woodpecker, she'll be presenting an overview of the species ecology and the comment process. Amy?

00:06:25.530 --> 00:06:37.200

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Good evening, I'm Amy Trahan with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm out of the Louisiana Ecological Services office and I will go forth and start the presentation.

00:06:40.950 --> 00:06:41.520

Next slide.

00:06:46.380 --> 00:06:56.700

USFWS - Amy Trahan: During this presentation, we will offer information about the ivory-billed woodpecker, the Service's proposal to remove it from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the Endangered Species Act,

00:06:57.780 à 00:07:02.820

USFWS - Amy Trahan: and explain how the public can comment on this proposal. Next slide please.

00:07:07.830 --> 00:07:23.640

USFWS - Amy Trahan: We will begin with some background information about the ivory-billed woodpecker. The species was first described by Mark Catesby in 1731 under a different taxonomic nomenclature, but the current scientific name is *Campephilus principalis*.

00:07:24.660 --> 00:07:30.450

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The ivory-billed was known as the largest woodpecker in the U.S. and the second largest in North America.

00:07:31.380 --> 00:07:38.190

USFWS - Amy Trahan: It was described as having a black and white plumage with a white chisel-tipped beak, yellow eyes, and a pointed crest.

00:07:39.150 --> 00:07:56.400

USFWS - Amy Trahan: They were sexually dimorphic; females had a solid black crest and males were red from the nape to the top of the crest with an outline of black on the front of the crest. They also produced distinctive sounds such as the "kent" call and double knocks. Next slide please.

00:08:06.510 --> 00:08:13.080

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Ivory-billed excavated both nest cavities and roost cavities and both sexes incubated the eggs as well as fed the young.

00:08:14.130 --> 00:08:18.090

USFWS - Amy Trahan: An important component of their diet appeared to be large beetle larvae.

00:08:19.200 --> 00:08:25.710

USFWS - Amy Trahan: They also had large home ranges and extensive forested areas and required these large areas of the forest habitat.

00:08:26.790 --> 00:08:27.660

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:08:32.700 --> 00:08:45.840

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The required habitat for the ivory-billed woodpecker is extensive forested areas with old-growth characteristics and naturally high volume of dead and dying wood as an example, virgin bottomland hardwood forest.

00:08:47.220 --> 00:08:52.320

USFWS - Amy Trahan: These extensive areas of habitat historically occurred in the southeastern U.S.

00:08:53.460 --> 00:08:59.610

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The map on this slide indicates areas of bottom land hardwoods as well as the species historical range.

00:09:01.200 --> 00:09:01.950

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:09:07.260 --> 00:09:26.610

USFWS - Amy Trahan: One factor that contributed to the decline of the population of the species was the clearing and demolition of virgin forest in the southeastern U.S. between the 1880s and 1940s. Without this required habitat to support healthy populations, the ivory-billed numbers declined.

00:09:27.690 --> 00:09:38.070

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Another contributing factor of the decline of the species was the pursuit of the species by local hunters and professional collectors from 1892 the early 1920s.

00:09:39.570 --> 00:09:40.530

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:09:46.500 --> 00:09:53.580

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Ivory-billed woodpeckers were thought to be relatively widespread throughout the southeastern U.S. prior to European settlement.

00:09:54.690 --> 00:10:00.330

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Following this settlement a long-term decline in habitat for the species began in the early 1800s.

00:10:01.800 --> 00:10:06.750

USFWS - Amy Trahan: By the early 20th century essentially all of the historical range was affected.

00:10:08.010 --> 00:10:22.020

USFWS - Amy Trahan: There was a gradual decrease in specimen and sight records through the early 1940s, with the last commonly agreed upon sighting occurring on the Singer Tract and the Tensas River region of northeast Louisiana.

00:10:23.280 --> 00:10:33.390

USFWS - Amy Trahan: There was also a reported sighting at the cash river national wildlife refuge in 2004/2005. Next slide please.

00:10:38.070 --> 00:10:39.840

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Why delist due to extinction?

00:10:41.460 --> 00:10:57.270

USFWS - Amy Trahan: First, it fulfills a statutory responsibility and a number of provisions Congress made clear that an integral part of the statutory framework is for the Service to make delisting decisions when appropriate and revise the list accordingly.

00:10:58.410 --> 00:11:06.210

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The ESA requires the Service to revise the list to reflect recent determinations designations and revisions.

00:11:07.650 --> 00:11:22.290

USFWS - Amy Trahan: We review the list at least every five years, determine, based on those reviews, whether any species should be delisted or reclassified and, if so, apply the same standards and procedures asked for listing.

00:11:23.400 --> 00:11:29.070

USFWS - Amy Trahan: We conducted the most recent five-year review for the ivory-billed woodpecker in 2019.

00:11:32.040 --> 00:11:38.970

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The second reason for the Service to proceed with delisting decisions when appropriate is a pragmatic reason, efficiency.

00:11:40.860 --> 00:11:50.310

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Delisting species that will not benefit from protections because they are extinct allows us to allocate resources responsibly for on the ground conservation efforts,

00:11:50.640 --> 00:11:58.380

USFWS - Amy Trahan: recovery planning, five-year reviews, and other protections for species that are extant and will therefore benefit from those actions.

00:12:00.510 --> 00:12:16.260

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The third reason for the service to proceed with delisting decisions, when appropriate, is to serve the public by making wise use of agency resources, and it also allows us to provide

the public with more accurate information on species and the rate of extinction.

00:12:19.020 --> 00:12:35.940

USFWS - Amy Trahan: How do we assess a species for delisting due to extinction. We use the best scientific and commercial data available at that time and look at three common factors: detectability, survey effort, and time since last detection.

00:12:37.080 --> 00:12:43.770

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Some species may also have other considerations that should be taken into account during this process.

00:12:46.200 --> 00:13:04.560

USFWS - Amy Trahan: What do we mean by extinction? It means no living individuals of the species remain in existence. A determination of extinction will be informed by the best available information to indicate that no individuals of the species remain alive, either in the wild or captivity.

00:13:06.630 --> 00:13:07.530

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:13:15.360 --> 00:13:17.940

USFWS - Amy Trahan: What are the three factors considered for delisting?

00:13:20.520 --> 00:13:35.940

USFWS - Amy Trahan: First one, detectability. The ivory-bill produced distinctive sounds and had distinctive markings, such as the large white patch on the wing that could be seen from long distances which indicate a certain degree of detect stability during surveys.

00:13:37.530 --> 00:13:47.760

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Second, is survey effort. The reported 2004/2005 sighting at the cash river national wildlife refuge 35 years survey effort in Arkansas.

00:13:48.900 --> 00:13:56.970

USFWS - Amy Trahan: This reported sighting also prompted other survey efforts that were conducted throughout the species historical range from 2005 to the present.

00:13:57.990 --> 00:14:04.590

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Those survey efforts are described in more detail and the Service's 2019 five-year review for the ivory-billed woodpecker.

00:14:05.970 --> 00:14:18.750

USFWS - Amy Trahan: And lastly, the time since last detection. The last unrefuted sighting of the species occurred in April 1944 on the Singer tract and the Tensas River region of northeast Louisiana.

00:14:20.280 --> 00:14:21.180

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:14:26.190 --> 00:14:36.540

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Because of the ivory-billed woodpecker can look similar to other avian species, this is a good guide that can be used to distinguish between ivory-billed and other bird species of similar appearance.

00:14:39.450 --> 00:14:40.350

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:14:45.330 --> 00:14:54.060

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The Service has reopened the public comment period and will accept comments received or postmarked on or before February 10, 2022.

00:14:55.110 --> 00:15:01.050

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The public can submit comments and view all documents related to the proposed rule at the link below.

00:15:03.120 --> 00:15:12.210

USFWS - Amy Trahan: The Service welcomes all comments, but we are particularly seeking comments on encounters or observations with documentation. These encounters or observations

00:15:12.630 --> 00:15:23.640

USFWS - Amy Trahan: should be able to be repeatedly interpreted the same way by independent observers. If you need any of the web links or email addresses in this presentation, it will be available online.

00:15:25.350 --> 00:15:26.640

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:15:29.250 --> 00:15:44.310

USFWS - Amy Trahan: If you have documentation or information you would like to submit, in addition to written or verbal comments, regulations.gov accepts the following file types: pdf, jpg, gif, mpg2, tiff, txt, xlsx, and webm.

00:15:45.540 --> 00:15:56.310

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Any videos, photographs, or recordings that are in a file type, that is not accepted by regulations.gov maybe email to ivorybilledwoodpecker@fws.gov.

00:15:59.070 --> 00:15:59.940

USFWS - Amy Trahan: Next slide please.

00:16:06.360 --> 00:16:13.020

USFWS - Amy Trahan: For our next steps, we will review all comments and document submitted and make a final determination on whether to either

00:16:13.530 --> 00:16:25.860

USFWS - Amy Trahan: proceed with the action as proposed to delist that ivory-billed woodpecker due to extinction or to withdraw the proposed rule. The determination that is made will be published in the Federal Register.

00:16:27.630 --> 00:16:32.070

USFWS - Amy Trahan: This concludes our presentation, and I will now turn it back over to Megan.

00:16:33.690 --> 00:16:43.080

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you so much Amy. We're going to turn it over to Clayton McGee who's going to be the primary moderator for tonight's public comment portion.

00:16:46.230 --> 00:16:58.200

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Right. Thank you, Megan. We are now going to officially start the verbal public hearing portion of today's meeting to receive comments related to the proposed rule for the ivory-billed woodpecker.

00:16:58.560 --> 00:17:09.570

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: It is 6:17 central time so let's get started. Again, this is verbal public comment portion of the meeting, along with your comments, is being recorded

00:17:09.900 --> 00:17:16.470

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: as part of the official record. As a reminder, your camera and mic control settings are restricted during this time.

00:17:16.830 --> 00:17:28.350

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You will only be able to talk if and when you are unmuted, so please remember to speak when prompted. The US Fish and Wildlife Service will not be answering questions tonight, but we encourage you

00:17:28.740 --> 00:17:34.740

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: to submit your written public comments outside of this verbal public comment hearing.

00:17:35.520 --> 00:17:42.420

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: The US Fish and Wildlife Service wants to hear from all members of the public, so we will be using the following guidelines today.

00:17:43.140 --> 00:17:51.420

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: First, please be mindful of the length of your comments so that everyone who wants to speak, has an opportunity to do so today.

00:17:51.690 --> 00:17:58.380

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Second, please be respectful of others and their viewpoints. Third please refrain from using profanity.

00:17:58.590 --> 00:18:11.040

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: While passion is welcome in your comments, policy requires that we mute anyone who uses foul language, because we are recording this meeting and others may be live streaming so, please avoid inappropriate language.

00:18:11.250 --> 00:18:21.540

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: If that does happen, we'll provide a reminder before unmuting the person to try again using words acceptable to ears of all ages. Next slide.

00:18:24.990 --> 00:18:34.020

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I'm now going to read through the instructions for those participants who indicated they wanted to offer a verbal public comment when they preregistered for today's meeting.

00:18:34.260 --> 00:18:43.500

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: We have a list of these participants. Commenters will be accepted in order that people registered. Again, if you registered before the start time of today's meeting

00:18:43.740 --> 00:18:49.830

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: you received a separate email informing you that you would be called upon to offer your verbal public comment.

00:18:50.100 --> 00:19:02.250

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: This email also included your place in the commenter list. If you are on the commenter list when it is your turn to provide your comment, we will read your name aloud from the list and display your name on the screen.

00:19:02.550 --> 00:19:15.210

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: We will also display the name of the commenter who is next in line. When you hear your name called out, please use the raise hand feature so that we know you're available and ready to offer your comment.

00:19:15.660 --> 00:19:26.460

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You can access the raised hand feature by clicking on either the reactions icon or the participants list icon which are both located at the bottom of your zoom screen.

00:19:26.880 --> 00:19:36.900

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: If you wave your mouse back and forth across the bottom of your screen these icons should appear, you may need to exit out of your full screen zoom view to see these icons.

00:19:37.200 --> 00:19:43.980

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You can then select the raise hand feature located either in the reactions icon or at the bottom of your participants list.

00:19:44.310 --> 00:19:55.350

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Or, if you are one of our phone callers today, please remember to press star nine to access the raise hand feature if it is your turn to provide a verbal public comment.

00:19:55.740 --> 00:20:01.650

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once you have raised your hand you will then be unmuted so that you can provide your verbal public comment.

00:20:01.920 --> 00:20:08.910

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You may be double muted, if that is the case will prompt you to unmute yourself on your end so that we could hear you.

00:20:09.150 --> 00:20:22.320

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Please spell your first and last name for the record before providing a verbal public comment, and if you are representing an organization or group, please say so before you begin your comment.

00:20:22.680 --> 00:20:27.210

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: After you have provided your comment, we will mute you and move on to our next commenter.

00:20:27.450 --> 00:20:37.710

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Again, once we have worked our way through the current list of pre-registered commenters, if we have time, we will move on to those who registered after the start time of today's meeting

00:20:37.950 --> 00:20:45.510

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: who selected they want to do offer a comment. If we still have time remaining after we have worked our way through those participants

00:20:45.750 --> 00:20:59.490

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: we will open the verbal public comment portion of today's meeting to anyone who would like to offer a comment today who has not already done so. Commenters may not cede their time to other commentators during the meeting.

00:21:00.660 --> 00:21:01.530

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Next slide.

00:21:04.800 --> 00:21:16.290

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: On the screen, I've included some graphics showing participants where they can access the raise hand feature on zoom once again if you are in full screen mode, you might have to

00:21:16.920 --> 00:21:32.430

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: exit out of that to see some of these, I know that older zoom versions tend to use the image that's on the right under the participants pat tab and newer zoom versions have the reactions icon that will allow you to raise your hand.

00:21:41.220 --> 00:21:47.880

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And with that we're going to go ahead and get started with our first public commenter today.

00:21:48.210 --> 00:21:56.910

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: So, our first public commenter is Matt Courtman, Matt I do see that you've raised your hand I'm going to ask you to unmute yourself, and please let me know if you can hear me.

00:21:58.320 --> 00:21:59.280

Matt Courtman: I can hear you, thank you.

00:22:00.420 --> 00:22:06.210

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I can hear you, too, could you please spell your first and last name for the record, and if you represent an organization, please?

00:22:06.900 --> 00:22:18.600

Matt Courtman: Matt, M-A-T-T, Courtman, C-O-U-R-T-M-A-N, I represent two groups, the first is The Louisiana Wild, the second is Mission Ivory-Bill.

00:22:19.140 --> 00:22:20.790

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great your time has begun.

00:22:22.050 --> 00:22:29.940

Matt Courtman: As a person who requested this hearing, I thank Fish and Wildlife for the opportunity. However, I'm disappointed

00:22:30.420 --> 00:22:39.450

Matt Courtman: that there's probably no colloquy between those of us who have researched ivory-bills and those in the Fish and Wildlife Service who are proposing this rule.

00:22:39.780 --> 00:22:50.280

Matt Courtman: If you want to cure that you can come to one of Mission Ivory-Bill's zooms. One specifically for this topic will be on February 7 at seven o'clock

00:22:50.880 --> 00:23:00.900

Matt Courtman: central time. My name is Matt Courtman, I'm a former Louisiana Ornithological President who been interested in the ivory-billed woodpecker for over 50 years.

00:23:01.350 --> 00:23:16.440

Matt Courtman: In the fall of 1969 at 10:30 on an LSU football Saturday night, the incomparable Dr. George Lowery open the LSU Museum of Science to a then unknown to him eight-year-old boy and his father.

00:23:17.070 --> 00:23:23.610

Matt Courtman: That magical event was significant for two reasons. First, it cemented an interest in ornithology

00:23:24.180 --> 00:23:31.320

Matt Courtman: in me and it forged in me a passion for the ivory-billed that burns as bright in me at 60 as it did when I was eight.

00:23:31.770 --> 00:23:41.760

Matt Courtman: Second, and much more important for tonight's purposes the world-renowned ornithologist Dr. Lowery stated to me the operative fact which

00:23:42.600 --> 00:23:56.520

Matt Courtman: with all due respect, should have prevented the proposed delisting due to extinction rule from ever being drafted. To my question of "Dr. Lowery, do you think the ivory-bill is extinct?"

00:23:57.120 --> 00:24:03.000

Matt Courtman: He looked me dead in the eyes and said "Matthew, no one can answer that question. The ivory-bill's deep

00:24:03.450 --> 00:24:21.270

Matt Courtman: swamp forest home has not been adequately surveyed to know that." The same was true in 1969 as it was in 1937 as it is tonight in 2022. I respectfully request that the proposed rule be withdrawn, thank you very much.

00:24:22.530 --> 00:24:26.340

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment, Matt. I'm going to go ahead and put you back on mute.

00:24:27.030 à 00:24:41.310

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to move to our next public pre-registered commenter, John Fitzpatrick, John I do see that you have raised your hand so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, and please let me know if

00:24:41.880 --> 00:24:46.050

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: you can hear me. Give me one second, you just disappeared from my list.

00:24:50.430 --> 00:24:52.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Here we are, can you hear me, John?

00:24:54.420 --> 00:24:57.690

John Fitzpatrick: Yes, I just unmuted, thank you.

00:24:57.720 --> 00:25:01.710

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, could you please spell your first name last name, and if you represent an organization, please.

00:25:02.220 --> 00:25:15.810

John Fitzpatrick: Thank you John, J-O-H-N, Fitzpatrick, F-I-T-Z-P-A-T-R-I-C-K. I'm speaking as an independent, professional ornithologist with a 52-year career.

00:25:16.470 --> 00:25:33.420

John Fitzpatrick: I have worked as a director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York, but I am speaking as an independent scientist with extreme familiarity in avian ecology and conservation biology.

00:25:33.810 --> 00:25:35.610

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you, your time has started.

00:25:36.750 --> 00:25:37.740

John Fitzpatrick: My basic

00:25:38.760 --> 00:25:41.880

John Fitzpatrick: statement is that this is a premature

00:25:42.930 --> 00:25:43.620

John Fitzpatrick: proposal.

00:25:44.700 --> 00:25:45.990

John Fitzpatrick: It's based on

00:25:47.850 --> 00:25:56.310

John Fitzpatrick: Although we have huge respect for the Fish and Wildlife Service and for all of the individuals and effort that you are all undertaking with

00:25:57.660 --> 00:25:59.520

John Fitzpatrick: very inadequate resources,

00:26:00.660 --> 00:26:11.400

John Fitzpatrick: the species status assessment on which this proposal based is very light and very superficial with regard to particularly

00:26:11.910 --> 00:26:37.050

John Fitzpatrick: it's casual dismissal of a number of pieces of evidence that this bird still exists. Since 1944, a feather that is documented to be an ivory-billed woodpecker found in 1969, the 2004/2005 evidence, the US Fish and Wildlife Service itself concluded in 2010 that the evidence did not support

00:26:38.190 --> 00:26:47.280

John Fitzpatrick: delisting and the species status assessment on which is proposal is based does not actually make a scientifically valid

00:26:48.390 --> 00:27:06.870

John Fitzpatrick: case for eliminating the evidence that exists since 1944. The question I would ask is, if one of those sightings or records, for example, the Arkansas record in 2004 were deemed to be

00:27:08.190 --> 00:27:16.770

John Fitzpatrick: accurate or valid, would this delisting proposals still hold? I think not, that certainly implied in the delisting proposal.

00:27:17.250 --> 00:27:40.110

John Fitzpatrick: So, the probability still exists that any, and perhaps multiple, of these records are valid, therefore, it's premature. When Amy read her lists of criteria, she talked about delisting when appropriate, this is not an appropriate time, yet to delist this species.

00:27:41.550 --> 00:27:43.920

John Fitzpatrick: Allocation of resources was mentioned.

00:27:44.610 --> 00:27:46.770

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You've reached the end of your time.

00:27:46.860 à 00:27:50.880

John Fitzpatrick: There are very few resources being acknowledged to the ivory-billed woodpecker. Serving the public,

00:27:52.020 --> 00:27:53.010

John Fitzpatrick: we definitely

00:27:54.270 --> 00:27:55.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You've reached the end of your time, I'm going to go ahead and have to put you back on mute,

00:27:55.890 --> 00:27:56.340

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: John.

00:28:02.670 --> 00:28:08.940

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you. With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter.

00:28:10.290 --> 00:28:27.030

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thomas Hyder. Thomas, I don't see you in our participants list today, so if you're one of our phone callers, could you please access the raise hand feature using the star nine button on your phone keypad if that is you.

00:28:33.510 --> 00:28:43.020

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'll just give it a few more to see if Thomas is one of our phone callers today, once again, please press star nine on your phone pad.

00:28:46.530 --> 00:29:01.260

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing any of our phone callers access the raise hand feature so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter, Alan Mueller. Alan, if you're on the call please access the raise hand feature.

00:29:02.370 --> 00:29:11.790

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing Alan on our participants list today, so if you are one of our phone callers once again, please press star nine.

00:29:25.470 --> 00:29:37.590

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And it doesn't look like we're getting any participants on our phone callers using the star nine feature that could be Alan so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter, David

00:29:38.790 --> 00:29:50.280

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Luneau. David, I do see that you have access to your hand raise hand feature so I'm going to ask you to unmute. Please remember to spell your first and last name for the record, and if you represent an organization.

00:29:51.870 --> 00:29:57.210

David Luneau: Yes, my name is David Luneau, it's D-A-V-I-D L-U-N-E-A-U.

00:29:58.530 --> 00:30:04.230

David Luneau: I was involved in searches in Arkansas and Louisiana, but I represent just myself here.

00:30:05.220 à 00:30:08.160

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you, your time has begun.

00:30:08.790 --> 00:30:17.640

David Luneau: The ivory-billed woodpecker has been deemed extinct by some people at least several times in the past 120 years and each time has defied those who would write it off.

00:30:18.090 --> 00:30:27.300

David Luneau: We should not make the same mistake again. In 1971, Fielding Lewis shared photos of ivory-bills with George Lowry, an ornithologist at LSU.

00:30:27.810 --> 00:30:37.620

David Luneau: Dr. Lowery shared those with fellow ornithologists in an AOU meeting, only to be ridiculed for supposedly being duped. After all, wasn't the ivory-bill extinct?

00:30:39.030 --> 00:30:43.410

David Luneau: In 2004, Gene Sparling observed an ivory-bill in Eastern Arkansas, starting a search effort that led to sightings

00:30:43.950 --> 00:30:51.120

David Luneau: by 15 different people, most of whom were trained field ornithologist, and some of them would be considered woodpecker experts.

00:30:51.660 --> 00:31:00.450

David Luneau: Some of the 15 observers were skeptical about the presence of an ivory-bill until they saw it. After all, they had read in some field guides that the ivory-bill was extinct.

00:31:01.320 --> 00:31:15.030

David Luneau: I suppose if you're all invested in the thought that the ivory-bill is extinct, then photos videos and sighting reports can

all be dismissed with some mental gymnastics by calling each and every one of them cases of mistaken identity or wishful thinking.

00:31:16.170 --> 00:31:25.080

David Luneau: One final thought, Fish and Wildlife Service's 2010 recovery plan for the bird states in Appendix B regarding the interpretation of the video I took

00:31:25.530 --> 00:31:34.050

David Luneau: on April 24 2004, and I quote, "after weighing the various positions, the FWS accepts the interpretation of Fitzpatrick et al.

00:31:34.740 --> 00:31:47.970

David Luneau: FWS concludes that other published interpretations by Sibley et al. and, by extension, Collinson are based on misinterpretations of video artifact's plumage and novel interpretations of typical bird flight" end quote.

00:31:48.570 --> 00:31:56.130

David Luneau: So, I don't understand why the Service would now fall back on mistaken belief that the last time this bird was reliably observed was in 1944.

00:31:56.670 --> 00:32:08.550

David Luneau: There's far too much evidence to the contrary, including evidence that the service accepted only 12 years ago. The Service should avoid the embarrassment and the liability of declaring the species extinct when it's not. Thank you.

00:32:10.110 --> 00:32:13.320

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment, David. I'm going to put you back on mute.

00:32:14.190 --> 00:32:22.410

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter, Fred Virazzi. Fred, if you are on the call today.

00:32:22.890 --> 00:32:34.740

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I do see you on our participants list so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, and please remember to spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization.

00:32:37.500 --> 00:32:41.910

Fred Virrazzi: Fred Virrazzi, hello, F-R-E-D V-I-R-R-A-Z-Z-I, can you hear me?

00:32:42.780 --> 00:32:43.140

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Yes, I can hear you, Fred.

00:32:43.170 --> 00:32:54.870

Fred Virrazzi: I'm a zoologist with 40 years of field and academic experience in ornithology, ecology, and entomology. I represent National Biodiversity Parks, Incorporated, a federal nonprofit

00:32:55.410 --> 00:33:01.620

Fred Virrazzi: permitted to do various ivory-billed woodpecker studies in the past. As president and director zoologist with a federal nonprofit,

00:33:02.010 --> 00:33:12.990

Fred Virrazzi: as concerned research has documented tens of thousands of animals, inclusive of presence, absence, determinations, and population estimates. As a science officer with the federal government, I pledge to protect

00:33:13.410 --> 00:33:19.800

Fred Virrazzi: the natural resources of the country with integrity and I take that oath seriously. As lead investigator

00:33:20.700 --> 00:33:27.510

Fred Virrazzi: with the Department of Defense and National Park Service have granted our teams permits to perform U.S. Fish and Wildlife

00:33:27.720 --> 00:33:37.920

Fred Virrazzi: based endangered species surveys, including many projects specifically designed to detect ivory-billed woodpeckers. We planned, funded, and performed 14 acoustical survey expeditions

00:33:38.310 --> 00:33:46.500

Fred Virrazzi: for ivory-bills in four states for attraction to a netting point. During these studies we acoustically and covered 160 square miles

00:33:46.830 --> 00:33:59.370

Fred Virrazzi: and 200 total square miles by all methods. Total area 128000 acres. It took several thousand hours to accumulate varied information at approximately 650 points.

00:33:59.670 --> 00:34:06.630

Fred Virrazzi: We have at least six definite ivory-billed woodpeckers acoustically and one sighting associated with a DK in three states.

00:34:07.140 --> 00:34:14.670

Fred Virrazzi: An ivory-billed woodpecker Kented 150 feet from three of us in South Carolina. We are all experienced birders

00:34:15.060 --> 00:34:29.760

Fred Virrazzi: placing top in what's various fundraisers, including the world series of birding several times, a half a mile away on a subsequent day an ivory-bill flew out from the base of the tree and later DK'ed back the response to our ADK.

00:34:30.360 --> 00:34:42.450

Fred Virrazzi: That centralized the total southeast U.S. population estimate, no other entity that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife presently has data from has anything similar, but we have not been contacted.

00:34:42.840 --> 00:34:53.280

Fred Virrazzi: Upon finding a 300% in encounter rate disparity between our survey methods and Cornell Lab of Ornithology's no project designer was contacted.

00:34:53.670 --> 00:35:07.350

Fred Virrazzi: Their method was 14 ADK's in six minutes, ours was three ADK's in five minutes. The mobile team is also unnecessarily burdened with substantial field data collection incontinent to actually finding IBOs.

00:35:07.680 --> 00:35:17.700

Fred Virrazzi: An IBO gives only a few acoustical signals in a week. See tempo-spatial data by Hill et al. Florida. Described its surveyors chasing pictures of Swank's warblers.

00:35:18.840 --> 00:35:19.500

Fred Virrazzi: Now you.

00:35:20.640 --> 00:35:20.910

Fred Virrazzi: Now.

00:35:21.390 --> 00:35:21.960

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: You've reached the end of your time, Fred.

00:35:24.300 --> 00:35:24.690

Fred Virrazzi: That's the end of my time.

00:35:26.970 --> 00:35:27.240

Fred Virrazzi: Why could.

00:35:30.750 --> 00:35:38.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to move on to our next pre-registered commenter, John Williams, John, if you are on the call

00:35:39.000 --> 00:35:49.350

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: please access the raise hand feature, and I do see you've done that so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, and please tell your first and last name, and if you represent organization for the record.

00:35:50.160 --> 00:36:01.410

John Williams: Yes, my name is John Williams, J-O-H-N W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S. I am associated with Mission Ivory-Bill at the current time.

00:36:01.680 --> 00:36:02.760

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you John, your time starts now.

00:36:03.840 --> 00:36:19.560

John Williams: Yes, since the year 2000, 8 expeditions have searched for the ivory-billed woodpecker and have reported encounters. These were by professionals with advanced degrees and professional organizations. They have obtained documentation.

00:36:20.580 --> 00:36:33.030

John Williams: Critics of the documentation of evidence, have taken the stance of being cautionary, as they should be, but not dismissive. Close study of the evidence shows that the critics have been addressed.

00:36:34.140 --> 00:36:41.700

John Williams: Cornell Ornithological Lab cite things and audio evidence with sonograms matching known ivory-billed kents.

00:36:42.510 --> 00:37:02.520

John Williams: David Luneau: encounter with video that shows ivory-billed's field marks. Auburn university: sightings and video with analysis that shows ivory-billed field marks. Extensive audio of double knocks and kent sonograms that match ivory-bill, this was done by Dan Metal's lab.

00:37:03.540 --> 00:37:10.020

John Williams: Mike Collins: sightings in three separate videos with morphometric analysis that show

00:37:10.470 --> 00:37:20.610

John Williams: ivory-bill field marks. Audio analysis of kent sonograms and double knocks that match ivory-bill. Math based evidence published in peer reviewed journals.

00:37:21.570 --> 00:37:32.850

John Williams: Bobby Harrison: video of bird with field marks matching ivory-bill. National Biodiversity Parks: multiple encounters with extensive data sets.

00:37:34.230 --> 00:37:46.830

John Williams: Project Coyote: sightings and multiple still images of birds that match ivory-bill. [unidentifiable name]: math analysis of image. Kent sonograms that match ivory-bill.

00:37:47.670 --> 00:38:02.130

John Williams: Most recently Mission Ivory-Bill most recent sightings of bird including this year. These are eight separate efforts in eight different locations that have found evidence of the bird since 2000. Thank you.

00:38:03.900 --> 00:38:11.340

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you, John, and we would like to remind everyone that if we have time we will circle back to commenters, however,

00:38:11.610 --> 00:38:21.420

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: due to the number of commenters and an effort to give everyone an opportunity to speak, we are giving each comment to two minutes to provide their comments. So once again,

00:38:21.990 --> 00:38:37.530

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: we will circle back to commenters if there is time remaining. With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our

next pre-registered commenter Ezra Hosch, excuse me if I pronounced your last name incorrectly.

00:38:39.390 --> 00:38:49.260

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I don't see any Ezra on our participants list today so, if you are one of our phone callers, could you please access the raise hand feature using the star nine button.

00:38:54.900 --> 00:39:04.380

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not getting any raised hand features from our participants on the phone today so we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter.

00:39:04.620 --> 00:39:17.910

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: George Eoberts. George, if you are on the call today, please access the raise hand feature at the bottom of the screen and if you're one of our phone callers please press star nine on your keypad.

00:39:20.460 --> 00:39:38.970

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I do see that we just got a different phone call with us so if this phone caller happens to be George Eoberts please access your raise hand feature using the star nine feature and we'll just give it a few more seconds to see if that in case is.

00:39:46.080 --> 00:39:48.240

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once again, that is star nine.

00:39:50.700 --> 00:39:56.010

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: But it doesn't look like the phone caller that has joined us is going to end up being George.

00:39:57.300 --> 00:40:14.730

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: So, we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter Timothy Barksdale, Timothy if you are on the call today, please access the raised hand feature at the bottom of your zoom screen and if you're on the phone please remember to press star nine.

235

00:40:24.120 --> 00:40:34.170

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And it doesn't look like we're getting any raised hands from someone who might be Timothy so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter

00:40:34.410 --> 00:40:50.520

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Dan Dullum, Dan if you on the call please access the raise hand feature, and I do see that you are in our participants list so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, please remember to spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization.

00:40:54.120 --> 00:41:01.170

Dan Dullum: Hi, this is Dan Dullum, D-A-N D-U-L-L-U-M, I do not represent an organization.

00:41:01.200 --> 00:41:03.630

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thanks, Dan your time has begun.

00:41:04.500 --> 00:41:14.760

Dan Dullum: In the comments I provided during the original comment period I identify two statements in the Federal Register notice that are incorrect. Both are in regard to the sightings and all your recordings made by Cornell in 2004 and 2005.

00:41:16.440 --> 00:41:23.850

Dan Dullum: The Fish and Wildlife Service said that Cornell had determine that the recordings do not constitute evidence of the presence of ivory-billed woodpeckers.

00:41:24.240 --> 00:41:31.740

Dan Dullum: They also said that by 2013 the ornithological community determined that these sightings could not be confirmed.

00:41:32.190 --> 00:41:40.290

Dan Dullum: The cited references containing a notice contradict these statements. The implication of these false statements is that others who may have evidence of the

00:41:40.710 --> 00:41:53.220

Dan Dullum: existence of the ivory-billed woodpecker could be dissuaded from sharing their evidence, since they may decide that their information is contrary to the entire ornithological community and any evidence that they provide

00:41:54.120 --> 00:42:03.420

Dan Dullum: would not be taken seriously and would be dismissed. I don't think it is appropriate to proceed with delisting without issuing a corrected Federal Register notice.

00:42:03.750 --> 00:42:10.500

Dan Dullum: It currently has false and misleading information which could suppress the public's involvement in the rulemaking process.

00:42:10.830 --> 00:42:22.770

Dan Dullum: Instead, I would recommend that you spend more time doing additional research, setting criteria for determining what constitutes credible evidence and taking a fresh look at evidence that has been obtained in the last 20 years.

00:42:23.310 --> 00:42:27.720

Dan Dullum: Most importantly, go deep into the woods of areas where ivory-bills have been seen.

00:42:28.170 --> 00:42:43.020

Dan Dullum: Work your way through the swampy hardwood floors past the snakes and alligators into areas where few people go, not because you will see an ivory-bill, but so that you will see the difficulties in getting to their habitat

00:42:44.520 --> 00:42:59.310

Dan Dullum: and the near impossibility of seeing a rare, quiet, and elusive bird in such an environment. It will demonstrate the need for patience, while waiting for further evidence of the existence of the ivory-billed woodpecker. Thank you.

00:43:03.720 --> 00:43:04.680

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you, Dan.

00:43:06.780 --> 00:43:21.480

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And with that Megan I did just get a message from Mark that he was saying that he will submit written comments and he will not be speaking so we could go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter

00:43:22.830 --> 00:43:23.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: after Mark.

00:43:32.940 --> 00:43:36.870

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you Clayton our next commenter is going to be Kelin.

00:43:38.490 --> 00:43:39.780

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Kelin Flanagan.

00:43:42.810 --> 00:43:53.280

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing talent on our participants list today so Kelin if you are one of our phone callers, please remember to access the raise hand feature using star nine

00:43:54.420 --> 00:43:55.260

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: on your phone.

00:44:07.020 --> 00:44:13.980

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And it doesn't look like we're getting any raised hands from Kelin, so with that we'll go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter,

00:44:14.250 --> 00:44:29.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: William Simpson, William if you are on the call, and I do see you on our participants list today so I'm going to go ahead and unmute you please remember to spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization.

00:44:42.060 --> 00:44:54.240

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once again I'll go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, you might be double muted, so you should get a prompt on your end, William, that should you to unmute yourself

00:45:06.480 --> 00:45:07.110

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: and

00:45:08.370 --> 00:45:16.590

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: once again, William, I've asked you to unmute yourself, so you should be getting a prompt on the screen.

00:45:18.180 --> 00:45:22.140

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And you might need to hit unmute in the bottom left of the screen

00:45:23.490 --> 00:45:25.410

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: if that's causing you any issues.

00:45:40.320 --> 00:45:51.330

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once again, William, I've asked you to unmute yourself, you might need to press the mute and unmute and button on your left side of your stream again.

00:45:57.030 --> 00:46:04.200

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: If you're having audio issues, or anything why don't you go ahead and message me or Megan Stone,

00:46:04.800 --> 00:46:10.590

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: and we'll work to try to get that resolved and we'll circle back to you, so you can make your public comment.

00:46:11.280 --> 00:46:29.790

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter Kelly Craft. Kelly, if you are on the call today, could you please access the raise hand feature, or if you're one of the phone participants, please remember to press star nine.

00:46:36.810 --> 00:46:53.520

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing Kelly our participants list today and I'm not seeing that any phone callers have also accessed their raised hand feature with that I'll give it a few more seconds to see if we get a phone caller that raised their hands that could be Kelly.

00:46:55.050 --> 00:47:13.230

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: But I'm not seeing that so with that wouldn't go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter Alan Gehret, Alan if you're on the call today, please access the raise hand feature at the bottom of your screen and if you're one of our phone callers please press star nine.

00:47:22.620 --> 00:47:37.590

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing Alan on our participants list today, nor am I seeing a raised hand feature so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter Michael Perez. Michael if you are on the call, please access the raise hand feature

00:47:39.450 --> 00:47:42.300

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: and star nine on your keypad of your phone.

00:47:55.110 --> 00:48:03.600

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And it doesn't look like I'm getting any raised hands from our phone callers so we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter

00:48:03.780 --> 00:48:17.190

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Ashley Hopkins. Ashley if you are on the call, and I do see that you are on our participants list today, and you raised your hand. I'll go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, please spell your first and last name, and if you represent organization, please, thank you.

00:48:19.140 --> 00:48:21.420

Ashley Hopkins: Hey there can you hear me all right, Michael, oh I'm sorry.

00:48:21.840 --> 00:48:23.880

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Oh, you're good, I can hear you, Ashley.

00:48:24.180 --> 00:48:29.790

Ashley Hopkins: Oh great, my name is Ashley Hopkins that's A-S-H-L-E-Y H-O-P-K-I-N-S.

00:48:31.740 --> 00:48:33.720

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great your time has begun.

00:48:34.080 --> 00:48:40.050

Ashley Hopkins: Fantastic. Thank you. So I am with no organization, I live in Tallahassee, Florida.

00:48:40.650 --> 00:48:51.330

Ashley Hopkins: in the vicinity of the habitat of the ivory-billed woodpecker and I just wanted to speak today to say, I think that the listing of this species is premature, I think there's ample evidence to show

00:48:51.870 --> 00:48:58.290

Ashley Hopkins: that it's still out there and by delisting it we're only further putting it in peril

00:48:58.860 --> 00:49:04.650

Ashley Hopkins: and putting its habitat in peril. I'd also like to say I don't I don't think there's any argument that

00:49:05.430 --> 00:49:15.210

Ashley Hopkins: this animal has found itself in this situation, along with many other animals because of the theft of indigenous land and the development and greed of people

00:49:15.960 --> 00:49:22.170

Ashley Hopkins: developing their land and this animal is sacred to indigenous people, and it has been for time immemorial

00:49:22.590 --> 00:49:34.110

Ashley Hopkins: and I think we have a responsibility to the indigenous community to do what we can to preserve this sacred animal and that many mistakes have been made

00:49:34.860 --> 00:49:52.080

Ashley Hopkins: and many of those by settlers and European settlers and I think we have a moral responsibility to absolutely everything we can to preserve this animal, not only for itself, but for the people who've been living with this animal as a sacred species, since time immemorial on this continent.

00:49:53.370 --> 00:49:54.060

Ashley Hopkins: Thank you.

00:49:55.590 --> 00:49:56.670

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment.

00:49:56.880 --> 00:49:57.510

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Ashley.

00:50:00.720 --> 00:50:10.500

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter and I do apologize if I mispronounce your name here.

00:50:11.970 --> 00:50:22.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: But I see it is Roshan Vignarajah, I do see that you've raised your hand and so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, please let us know if you can hear us.

00:50:23.520 --> 00:50:26.310

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Hello, I can hear you.

00:50:27.120 --> 00:50:35.760

Roshan Vignarajah: My name is Roshan Vignarajah, R-O-S-H-A-N V-I-G-N-A-R-A-J-A-H.

00:50:36.690 --> 00:50:38.670

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you, your time has started.

00:50:44.190 --> 00:50:48.270

Roshan Vignarajah: I would like to make three points about the delisting of the ivory-billed woodpecker.

00:50:49.800 --> 00:50:55.020

Roshan Vignarajah: First, there is ample evidence to suggest that the ivory build woodpecker is not extinct.

00:50:56.610 --> 00:51:15.840

Roshan Vignarajah: The five-year review that was commissioned in 2019 did not look at the evidence correctly, it reviewed some videos such as Mike Collins' as inconclusive, because they were blurry. However, the blurriness aside, they can be confirmed, as ivory-bills.

00:51:19.200 --> 00:51:30.000

Roshan Vignarajah: Photos taken by Project Principalis in 2009 and 2011 show ivory-bills. This can be looked at using a neck

00:51:31.230 --> 00:51:45.960

Roshan Vignarajah: arm width length ratio measurement which shows that ivory-bills have a ratio that is two times that of the pileated. The range of the ivory bill also needs to be

00:51:47.250 --> 00:51:51.990

Roshan Vignarajah: rethought, the range map made by Tanner is too small, and today,

00:51:53.190 --> 00:51:56.340

Roshan Vignarajah: however, that would be a good area to search nowadays.

00:51:59.640 --> 00:52:00.330

Roshan Vignarajah: um.

00:52:03.120 --> 00:52:07.080

Roshan Vignarajah: Thank you for letting me present oh yes.

00:52:09.930 --> 00:52:23.100

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you for your comments. We're going to go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter, Barry Bennett. Barry, I do see that you have raised your hand so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself.

00:52:25.830 --> 00:52:26.550

Barry Bennett: Yes, good evening.

00:52:27.690 --> 00:52:29.490

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Good evening I can hear you.

00:52:30.270 --> 00:52:36.570

Barry Bennett: My name is Barry Bennett, first name is B-A-R-R-Y, last name is B-E-N-N-E-T-T.

00:52:37.890 --> 00:52:40.530

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great Thank you busy your time and started.

00:52:41.040 --> 00:52:47.190

Barry Bennett: Alright, this ivory-billed woodpecker controversy is a moral issue.

00:52:49.680 --> 00:52:52.410

Barry Bennett: It's not just about a bird but,

00:52:55.140 --> 00:53:09.540

Barry Bennett: This is a moral issue, because I think many of the people I've talked to say that the proposal to delist is just as much about the critical habitat designation, that is associated with the ivory bill, as it is with the bird itself.

00:53:11.220 --> 00:53:22.080

Barry Bennett: And I don't know how many of you have been to the south, recently, but the wood pellet biomass industry is making a huge push for southern forests.

00:53:22.560 --> 00:53:32.430

Barry Bennett: Right now, they've been working on private land in the south, for a few years now, but at the rate they're going, they will run out of potential

00:53:33.360 --> 00:53:42.420

Barry Bennett: forest and during the Trump administration, officials, corporate officials, CEOs from companies like Drax,

00:53:42.990 --> 00:53:52.260

Barry Bennett: an English company, a company called German Pellets that has headquarters in Bismarck Germany, a company called In Viva, I know they have an office in Berlin that I've seen.

00:53:52.800 --> 00:54:03.570

Barry Bennett: These corporations put a lot of pressure on members of Congress and on people in the Trump administration to open up public lands in the South.

00:54:04.650 --> 00:54:09.390

Barry Bennett: Now these are, these are the sort of political appointees. I'm not talking about the science.

00:54:09.960 --> 00:54:25.740

Barry Bennett: But there's been pressure put on political appointees during the Trump administration, an administration that was notoriously hostile to the ESA and, they made no bones about it, some of the trump administration openly discussed ditching the ESA.

00:54:28.140 --> 00:54:30.480

Barry Bennett: These forests are being logged, they're being

00:54:30.720 --> 00:54:38.490

Barry Bennett: sent a wood pellet mills, then their process, then their shift put on bar just simply she's into our ports in the Gulf of Mexico and in the southeast.

00:54:38.670 --> 00:54:49.230

Barry Bennett: Then, then our forests are loaded onto these are loaded on the ships and sent 6,800 miles to power plants in the UK, power plants in the Netherlands and Belgium.

00:54:49.500 --> 00:54:59.700

Barry Bennett: To be burned and coal fired power plants that have been modified to burn our trees, have been modified to burn wood pellets. So, what we're doing is we're cutting our southern forest

00:55:00.000 --> 00:55:09.840

Barry Bennett: and people are selling them to power plants in the UK and in the Netherlands and in Belgium. Now how does that sit with you all?

00:55:10.260 --> 00:55:12.300

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Your time has ended Barry.

00:55:12.330 --> 00:55:21.810

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: But I'll just remind you that we're going to go ahead and open up to allow people to make some more comments once we finish our list of pre-registered commenters.

00:55:25.140 --> 00:55:30.300

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our last pre-registered commenter Judy.

00:55:34.800 --> 00:55:45.600

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Judy Chucker, sorry my bad there. Judy, I do see that you're on our participants list, and I do see that you actually did just message me that you will submit your comments in writing.

00:55:46.500 --> 00:56:02.910

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And so, with that we've reached the end of our pre-registered commenters I'm going to go ahead and turn it back over to Megan Stone and we will circle back now to some of the people and allow them to have some additional speaking time. Thank you everyone.

00:56:04.080 --> 00:56:17.550

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you Clayton at this time we're going to give everyone a moment who signed up to provide a comment but maybe wasn't on when we call it on your originally.

00:56:18.870 --> 00:56:31.050

EMPSi - Megan Stone: So, we're going to give people a moment to do that, after that I'm going to go into my zoom web portal and check to see if anyone has registered after the start of the meeting and look to see if anybody

00:56:31.920 --> 00:56:45.060

EMPSi - Megan Stone: has registered and would like to provide a comment after that. Then we are going to open it up to those who would like to provide a comment but may not have indicated, so when they registered.

00:56:46.050 à 00:56:54.840

EMPSi - Megan Stone: And then, after that, if time allows, we're going to let people who didn't get to finish their comments

00:56:56.310 --> 00:57:00.060

EMPSi - Megan Stone: come back and speak a second time so with that.

00:57:01.140 --> 00:57:13.860

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Our first commenter that was pre-registered, but we didn't hear from was Alan Mueller. Alan if you're on with us, could you please access the raise hand feature?

00:57:19.110 --> 00:57:22.110

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Still doesn't look like Alan has joined us.

00:57:23.130 --> 00:57:36.090

EMPSi - Megan Stone: So, the next speaker who is pre-registered that we didn't get a chance to hear from is David Luneau. David if you're on, can you please go ahead and access that raise hand feature.

00:57:42.270 --> 00:57:45.690

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Again, it doesn't look like David is on with us.

00:57:46.410 --> 00:57:49.770

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Megan, I do see that he's on the participants list.

00:57:50.100 --> 00:57:52.560

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Oh yeah there, he is.

00:57:54.600 --> 00:58:02.820

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Awesome, David. I'm going to turn it over to Clayton and he's going to facilitate the public comment for you.

00:58:03.630 --> 00:58:14.460

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Right thanks Megan, David, I do see you on our participants list so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute and please let us know spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization.

00:58:16.680 --> 00:58:20.220

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I have asked you, oh looks like you, are unmuted now can you hear us.

00:58:20.430 --> 00:58:21.840

David Luneau: I can hear you fine, can you hear me.

00:58:22.140 --> 00:58:23.310

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I can hear you, David.

00:58:24.360 --> 00:58:33.480

David Luneau: Well, I spoke most of my piece already, but there were a few other sighting reports that I wanted to throw out that I didn't have time to.

00:58:34.770 --> 00:58:45.000

David Luneau: John Dennis in the late 1960s. John Dennis was a well-known ornithologist and had firsthand experience photographing Cuban ivory-bills, obviously not the kind of guy who would mistake an ivory-bill.

00:58:45.360 --> 00:58:54.720

David Luneau: He found ivory-bills in East Texas in the late 1960s and was somewhat dismissed by others as wishful thinking.

00:58:56.550 --> 00:59:06.510

David Luneau: In 1999 David [unidentifiable surname] watch a pair of ivory-bills at very close range for several minutes in Louisiana, reported his observation to [unidentifiable name] at LSU.

00:59:07.710 --> 00:59:18.990

David Luneau: And then also just a few years after the Arkansas sightings by Gene Sparling and others that were well documented sightings, sound recordings, and videos from the Florida panhandle and from southeast Louisiana.

00:59:19.740 --> 00:59:29.040

David Luneau: And there are many others I'm sure most of the people on this call know about a lot of those and I just wanted to say that again I

00:59:30.210 --> 00:59:38.220

David Luneau: think, in my opinion, the ultimate arrogance in birding is the act of telling someone else what they did not see and these people who are

00:59:38.880 --> 00:59:50.310

David Luneau: or otherwise thought to be top notch ornithologist and birders reporting ivory-bills seem to be dismissed by others and I'm not sure what the reason for that is, but I find it,

00:59:51.300 --> 00:59:57.210

David Luneau: I would find it personally very offensive and that's all I've got to say about that, thank you very, thank you for the opportunity.

00:59:59.010 --> 01:00:01.260

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Right, thank you for your comment, David.

01:00:05.670 --> 01:00:19.380

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and circle back to Ezra. Ezra, if you, Ezra Hosch, sorry my bad, Ezra if you are on the call, please access the and I do see that you on the call and it looks like there's some,

01:00:20.010 --> 01:00:32.700

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: oh, I do see that there's audio now on your end so that's great I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, and please remember to spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization for the record.

01:00:41.280 --> 01:00:47.640

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Oh, I think you might have just muted yourself I'll go ahead and unmute you again Ezra and let me know if you can hear me.

01:00:56.490 --> 01:00:59.430

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I do see that you're unmuted can you hear me.

01:01:02.580 --> 01:01:03.060

Ezra Hosch: Yes.

01:01:04.470 --> 01:01:08.790

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great I can hear you. Can you please spell your first and last name for the record?

01:01:11.850 --> 01:01:24.690

Ezra Hosch: My first name as Ezra is spelled E-Z-R-A and my last name is Hosch, spelled H-O-S-C-H.

01:01:25.710 --> 01:01:28.740

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thanks Ezra, your time has started.

01:01:31.290 --> 01:01:33.420

Ezra Hosch: I think when we consider

01:01:34.590 --> 01:01:46.020

Ezra Hosch: whether the ivory-billed woodpecker should be delisted or not, we first need to consider whether the evidence at least meets an orchidological standard that will be considered as acceptable documentation.

01:01:46.980 --> 01:01:58.560

Ezra Hosch: No documentation would ever pass a reasonable records committee or EAbird review process and has not, since at least the 1960s, when it was recorded in Texas.

01:02:00.570 --> 01:02:04.080

Ezra Hosch: If the species is going to be delisted,

01:02:06.960 --> 01:02:09.810

Ezra Hosch: I think that it has met the standard.

01:02:10.980 --> 01:02:15.780

Ezra Hosch: There's no evidence at all in the past 60 plus years

01:02:16.920 --> 01:02:23.550

Ezra Hosch: and all arguments that have been presented are either based on sentimental values,

01:02:25.560 --> 01:02:27.090

Ezra Hosch: non-conclusive data,

01:02:28.350 --> 01:02:32.100

Ezra Hosch: or the argument that the habitat won't be protected

01:02:33.270 --> 01:02:35.250

Ezra Hosch: if the ivory-billed woodpecker is delisted.

01:02:36.690 --> 01:02:37.200

Ezra Hosch: Thank you.

01:02:39.900 --> 01:02:41.790

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thanks for your comment, Ezra.

01:02:44.010 --> 01:02:48.360

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Let me go ahead and move on to our next commenter that wasn't on the call before.

01:02:50.220 --> 01:02:56.340

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: just give us one second George, George if you are on the call, could you please, George Eoberts,

01:02:56.700 --> 01:03:10.650

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: my bad, could you please access the raise hand feature at the bottom of your screen and if you're one of our phone callers George please remember to press star nine on the phone and that should let you raise your hand.

01:03:16.380 --> 01:03:27.360

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing a George Eoberts coming on right now and I don't see out of our participants with their hands that have raised them I'm not seeing them.

01:03:28.770 --> 01:03:34.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: So, with that we'll go ahead and move on to our next pre-registered commenter that

01:03:35.550 --> 01:03:52.770

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: we went over, Timothy Barksdale. Timothy if you're on the call you please access the raise hand feature at the bottom of your zoom screen, or if you're one of our phone callers please press the star nine button on your keypad.

01:04:01.500 --> 01:04:13.140

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing any of our phone callers raise their hands or anything, so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next

01:04:14.580 --> 01:04:19.380

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: commenter that we need to go over, and it looks like that's

01:04:23.310 --> 01:04:28.470

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Mark Bonta, Mark if you are on the call, could you please access the raise hand feature.

01:04:32.370 --> 01:04:34.710

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I do see that you are on the call

01:04:38.040 --> 01:04:39.600

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: and our participants list.

01:04:45.360 --> 01:04:51.750

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Oh, my bad Mark says that they will submit their written comments, my apologies, Mark.

01:04:55.680 --> 01:05:05.220

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: So, with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter Kelin Flanagan, Kelin, if you are with us now

01:05:06.300 --> 01:05:16.590

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: please access the raise hand feature at the bottom of your zoom screen or please press star nine on your keypad if you're one of our phone callers joining us.

01:05:27.300 --> 01:05:39.000

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing Kelin raise their hand or one of our phone callers so with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our other pre-registered commenter that might not have been on earlier, Kelly Craft.

01:05:40.920 --> 01:05:54.750

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I'm not seeing a Kelly Craft on our participants list today so once again Kelly, if you're on the phone, please access the raised hand feature at the bottom of your zoom screen.

01:06:07.020 --> 01:06:22.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Okay, with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our other comments that we might have missed over Alan Gehret. Alan if you're on our participants list today, I do see that you are on the participants list today.

01:06:27.000 --> 01:06:38.640

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: So, I will go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself if that works with you, and please remember to spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization.

01:06:42.750 --> 01:06:44.190

Alan Gehret: Okay, so coming through.

01:06:44.520 --> 01:06:46.080

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Yes, I can hear you, Alan.

01:06:46.170 --> 01:07:02.460

Alan Gehret: Okay, my name is Alan Gehret retired naturalist and curator of two Audubon museums and have research on birds as a bird banner for over 30-35 years.

01:07:04.050 --> 01:07:26.970

Alan Gehret: I think the delisting of the endangered, of the ivory-billed woodpecker as an extinct species is premature. With research that was going on, I do realize that there have not been any activity seen in the past, say 5-10 years, but I have been

01:07:28.170 --> 01:07:42.570

Alan Gehret: out, I was in a peninsula Florida, with the now deceased artists/naturalist John Ruffin and [unidentifiable name], which led teams into that area, and we did have what we believe were credible

01:07:44.970 --> 01:07:56.850

Alan Gehret: glimpses as well as sounds and such have ivory-bills, I am also in the process of checking historic record from a friend of mine in Savannah, Georgia area.

01:07:57.630 --> 01:08:17.910

Alan Gehret: I believe that, although they are ivory-bill may be gone, I think we need to have time to continue to search and give protection to these areas and continue to look for possibilities and have a thorough job done by as many researchers as possible in the field

01:08:18.990 --> 01:08:25.380

Alan Gehret: before this conclusion of extinction is given to this species, thank you very much.

01:08:27.210 --> 01:08:28.410

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you, Alan.

01:08:29.730 --> 01:08:38.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: We're going to go ahead and move on to our other commenter that we might have missed earlier, or maybe they weren't they were on the call when we asked.

01:08:39.780 --> 01:08:41.130

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And that's going to be Alan.

01:08:43.440 --> 01:08:45.900

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Alan I do see that you're on our,

01:08:47.010 --> 01:08:49.500

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Wait and it's actually going to be Michael Perez.

01:08:49.710 --> 01:08:54.270

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Oh, my bad my screen is not refreshing like it should on my end.

01:08:54.810 --> 01:09:09.420

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: My apologies everyone, So Michael, if you are on the call today, please remember to access the raise hand feature at the bottom of your screen and if you are on our participants list, please remember to press star nine.

01:09:10.950 à 01:09:19.230

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I 'don't see Michael on our participants list today and I don't see that our phone one of our phone callers has not raised their hands either.

01:09:20.430 --> 01:09:23.220

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that, we're going to go ahead and move on to our last

01:09:24.420 --> 01:09:38.700

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: commenter that, pre-registered that we might have missed over today, or they weren't present when we call their name, Judy chucker, Judy if you're on the call I do see that you are on our participants list today and

01:09:40.320 --> 01:09:46.560

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: just give me one second but I remember that you are submitting your comments and writing so with that we will,

01:09:48.270 --> 01:10:05.010

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: we are done with our pre-registered commenters today and we're going to move on to our next part and allow people who spoke earlier to have some more time to speak. Megan did you want me to turn it back over to you?

01:10:06.030 --> 01:10:16.890

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Yeah, thank you Clayton. So, at this time we're going to give each person who has already spoken, one more chance to speak and they'll be provided another two minutes,

01:10:17.430 --> 01:10:23.640

EMPSi - Megan Stone: But we would still like to give people who haven't had an opportunity to speak yet, a chance.

01:10:24.360 --> 01:10:39.600

EMPSi - Megan Stone: So, if you go ahead and raise your hand, we will try and get to you first before we get to the people who have already spoken. So that looks like, I don't think we've heard from Kevin Perozeni yet.

01:10:41.160 --> 01:10:44.940

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Kevin if you'd like to provide your comment we'll go ahead and move to you now.

01:10:54.360 --> 01:10:58.440

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Right, with that looks like, Kevin you are unmuted.

01:10:58.920 --> 01:10:59.520

Kevin Perozeni: Yeah, I can.

01:10:59.850 --> 01:11:14.580

Kevin Perozeni: I am off mute, this is awesome. Thank you, my name is Kevin Perozeni, K-E-V-I-N P-E-R-I-Z-E-N-I, I just wanted to come on really quickly I probably won't take the whole time. I wanted to say thank you

01:11:15.630 --> 01:11:20.340

Kevin Perozeni: for setting this up and going through all the trouble and stuff and having to hear everybody.

01:11:22.500 --> 01:11:29.730

Kevin Perozeni: I feel like a word I've been hearing a lot tonight is premature that, like the delisting's premature everything we're doing is premature.

01:11:30.720 --> 01:11:48.330

Kevin Perozeni: But the last credible sighting has been in you know 80 years ago something like that it's been a while it's been plenty of time to search through all these mystical swamps and bogs at a wetlands, to try to find a very large and supposedly very loud woodpecker.

01:11:50.880 --> 01:12:04.080

Kevin Perozeni: I haven't seen any or heard any credible evidence I mean I'm I am you know; I was a kid just as all of you, I wanted it to be true, I spent hours searching websites and searching, you know

01:12:05.340 --> 01:12:20.010

Kevin Perozeni: evidence to see is this true? Is this, you know really still alive? But at some point, or another you got to accept that it's extinct and I'm glad that USFWS has taken the stance and delisted it.

01:12:21.240 --> 01:12:34.260

Kevin Perozeni: So, wherever those funds or you know work or people that this bird is taking up can go to better birds, ones that are not actually extinct yet, so thank you.

01:12:34.830 --> 01:12:41.880

Kevin Perozeni: And I think you did a really good job, that you've done all the work you need to and I'm glad you made this decision, so thank you.

01:12:43.470 --> 01:13:00.570

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment, Kevin. We're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter Matthew Sarver. Matthew, I do see you with your raise hands so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, give me one second, the hands are jumping all over the place.

01:13:03.030 --> 01:13:04.740

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Sorry about this, give me one second.

01:13:08.160 --> 01:13:11.190

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: There we go Matthew, please let me know if you can hear me.

01:13:12.510 --> 01:13:13.950

Matthew Sarver: Okay, that seems to work.

01:13:14.430 --> 01:13:14.730

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Yeah, I can hear you, Matthew.

01:13:14.790 --> 01:13:24.480

Matthew Sarver: Thank you. Yeah, didn't plan on commenting tonight initially, but I was just listening this evening, and I wanted to go ahead

01:13:25.620 --> 01:13:38.430

Matthew Sarver: go on record. I was a member of the original that the 2004 2005 Cornell ivory-bill search team in Arkansas spend about five months down there in the big woods and the habitat

01:13:39.750 --> 01:13:47.460

Matthew Sarver: looking for the species. I did not have any completely convincing sightings myself, but I did have some

01:13:48.990 --> 01:13:59.430

Matthew Sarver: interesting possible sightings that I can't discount as not ivory-billed woodpecker. I have heard some double knocks, saw at one point very interesting bird

01:14:00.720 --> 01:14:02.070

Matthew Sarver: that I couldn't relocate.

01:14:03.750 --> 01:14:12.030

Matthew Sarver: You know, having spent five months doing this every day, seeing tons of pileated, working through those habitats, it's an exceptionally difficult habitat, as others have mentioned to

01:14:13.290 --> 01:14:26.940

Matthew Sarver: even stay on a pileated woodpecker, for instance, I can see where potentially a low-density population of ivory-billeds could be overlooked, I would agree with a number of the other commenters that the extinction

01:14:28.860 --> 01:14:30.360

Matthew Sarver: proposal was premature.

01:14:31.440 --> 01:14:40.020

Matthew Sarver: I do think importantly, with regard to what the last commenter said, you know, this is essentially a flagship species for some really incredible

01:14:40.620 --> 01:14:50.520

Matthew Sarver: southern hardwood forests and there is value in continuing to protect these habitats in the event that this species is rediscovered in future search efforts.

01:14:52.020 --> 01:14:53.130

Matthew Sarver: So, you know,

01:14:54.210 --> 01:14:57.180

Matthew Sarver: can we say it's out there, right now? No.

01:14:58.590 --> 01:15:11.250

Matthew Sarver: But the searches have not been exhaustive at this point. I should say also commenting on my own behalf, but I do have about 15 years as a professional ecologist certified senior ecologist.

01:15:12.450 --> 01:15:19.770

Matthew Sarver: So yeah, I would urge the Service to hold off on the extinction decision at this point.

01:15:22.470 --> 01:15:24.270

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thanks for your comment, Matthew.

01:15:25.740 --> 01:15:38.700

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: We are going to going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter, Dale Gribble, Dale I do see that you have raised your hand so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, and please tell your first and last name, and if you represent organization for the record.

01:15:41.730 --> 01:15:47.010

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I think you might have just muted yourself again I've asked you to unmute yourself once again.

01:15:48.900 --> 01:15:56.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Hopefully you get that prompt on your end and you might have to click the in the bottom of the left screen with a mute button is.

01:15:57.600 --> 01:16:01.170

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: When I'm doing this as well and I'll go ahead and try this one more time with you.

01:16:12.150 --> 01:16:16.230

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once again Dale, I have asked you to unmute on your end.

01:16:17.760 --> 01:16:34.890

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And you might have to press in the bottom of your left screen once that comes up, and please make sure you are connected to your computer audio your microphone is connected your computer sometimes I know that can be an issue when people are joining zoom meetings.

01:16:36.270 --> 01:16:41.700

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: It should be in the bottom left of your screen there's a little up arrow and it says select microphone

01:16:43.080 --> 01:16:48.120

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: and then you can choose the microphone that you're using should be your computer audio.

01:16:49.710 --> 01:16:52.410

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Once again I'll try to unmute you one more time.

01:16:58.830 --> 01:17:14.100

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And looks like we're still having some issues with this, so why don't you go ahead and message Megan Stone what issue you're having, and we will try to work with you to resolve that so you could provide your public comment.

01:17:16.080 --> 01:17:24.300

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter Matt Courtman, Matt I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself.

01:17:25.680 --> 01:17:26.700

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Give me one second.

01:17:33.240 --> 01:17:34.320

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Can you hear us, Matt?

01:17:34.650 --> 01:17:35.580

Matt Courtman: I can thank you.

01:17:36.060 --> 01:17:37.470

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great we can hear you too.

01:17:39.720 --> 01:17:47.250

Matt Courtman: I want to correct many misstatements, but I don't have time in two minutes to do it, but, like many others, I know that the ivory-billed woodpecker is not extinct.

01:17:47.640 --> 01:17:59.070

Matt Courtman: The idea that we keep dismissing eyewitness testimony, we execute people in this country for eyewitness testimony, whether or not that's proof is up to you all to decide, but there's so much

01:17:59.520 à 01:18:06.270

Matt Courtman: eyewitness testimony. I have more than eyewitness testimony. David Luneau made a great point earlier when he said

01:18:06.660 --> 01:18:15.870

Matt Courtman: the people in Arkansas who saw the ivory-billed, prior to them seeing the ivory-bill, were skeptical as was I even after I audio recorded

01:18:16.710 --> 01:18:29.100

Matt Courtman: What I think to be three ivorybills for over three hours in 2017 I recorded one in 2018 and then in 2019 I saw ivory-bills on two occasions, one on February 18, 2019,

01:18:31.950 --> 01:18:43.170

Matt Courtman: and a pair on March 10, 2019. I have no doubt about the identifications, and I've seen an ivory-billed recently as November, last November, it was November 20.

01:18:43.560 --> 01:18:51.240

Matt Courtman: Anyhow, what's really frustrated about this disparity. Those of us who claim we've seen ivory-bills, we never get a fair hearing

01:18:51.630 --> 01:19:05.130

Matt Courtman: and I appreciate that y'all have allowed this hearing, but I am disappointed that, for instance, we want to get to talk to Amy Trahan in a public setting, since she is the ivory-billed expert for the Service,

01:19:06.450 --> 01:19:07.620

Matt Courtman: we've had great talks.

01:19:09.480 --> 01:19:22.320

Matt Courtman: Like many others, I know the ivory-billed is not extinct I am so confident of that that my wife and I moved back home to Louisiana in 2019 to organize an effort to save the species. We're going to do that, over the next five years, with searches.

01:19:23.850 --> 01:19:33.480

Matt Courtman: Proving to others that that the ivory-billed is not extinct is understandably difficult. To acquire better evidence of the outcomes persistence, is one of the main goals for five years search.

01:19:33.930 --> 01:19:40.740

Matt Courtman: Thankfully, proving the ivory-billed exists has nothing to do with defeating this rule, all you have to look to as the conclusion of the 2016

01:19:42.150 --> 01:19:56.580

Matt Courtman: technical report that you have in your possession. It says that it is premature to declare the ivory-billed woodpecker extinct. I ask the Service follow its own records and drop this delisting proposal, thank you very much.

01:19:57.750 --> 01:19:59.580

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment, Matt.

01:20:01.530 --> 01:20:07.050

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter.

01:20:07.590 --> 01:20:17.070

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Before we go ahead and move on to our next commenter, I just wanted to circle back to Dale really quickly, because I do see that Dale did come back and join the

01:20:17.460 --> 01:20:28.380

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: participants list, and I know he was having some audio issues so I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, one more time Dale and it does look like you, are unmuted this time.

01:20:30.270 --> 01:20:30.600

Dale Gribble: Thank you.

01:20:31.020 --> 01:20:31.800

Dale Gribble: Thank you, Michael.

01:20:33.030 --> 01:20:34.470

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great I can hear you, Dale.

01:20:35.160 --> 01:20:38.850

Dale Gribble: Right, my name is Dale Gribble, D-A-L-E G-R-I-B-B-L-E.

01:20:41.760 --> 01:20:43.350

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, your time has started.

01:20:44.580 --> 01:20:59.100

Dale Gribble: Well, as previous caller said, we do have penalties in this country for less than eyewitness testimony, we have plenty of eyewitness testimony in this case, so I think we should continue, thanks that's all.

01:21:01.290 --> 01:21:08.190

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thanks for your comment, Dale, with that we're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter.

01:21:09.360 --> 01:21:25.500

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Matthew Sarver I do see that you have your hand raised and then it looks like after Matthew we can move on to Fred Virrazzi, Matthew I'm going to go ahead and ask to unmute yourself, please let me know if you can hear us, oh, I do see you already went my bad.

01:21:26.430 --> 01:21:28.440

Matthew Sarver: Yeah, sorry I yeah, I

01:21:28.800 --> 01:21:30.330

Matthew Sarver: already went.

01:21:30.420 --> 01:21:31.470

Matthew Sarver: Thank you, though, appreciate it.

01:21:33.570 --> 01:21:50.340

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that we're going to go ahead and move on to our other commenter Fred, Fred, I see that you've lowered your hands, but if you still would like to make a comment, could you please there you go great I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself.

01:21:54.540 --> 01:22:02.220

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: I can hear you Fred you know I want to talk a little more phone, so we can hear you a little better, but I can hear you.

01:22:05.400 --> 01:22:05.790

Fred Virrazzi: Subject: the 208 Louisiana ivory-billed woodpecker video.

01:22:11.880 --> 01:22:20.880

Fred Virrazzi: NBP has partially completed the first unbiased, independent review of this video. US Fish and Wildlife has recently said that this that the author said this was inconclusive for ivory-billed woodpecker.

01:22:21.540 --> 01:22:33.090

Fred Virrazzi: This is not true. The video in question lacks aesthetics, but it is strikingly beautiful work of nature to scientists and all of us.

01:22:33.750 --> 01:22:39.660

Fred Virrazzi: The video is full of ID information and is proof of recent ivory-billed woodpecker's existence.

01:22:40.020 --> 01:22:55.080

Fred Virrazzi: Someone should download it in the US Fish and Wildlife, and we will go over it. The bird is unequivocally a spectacular ivory-billed woodpecker. We shall present video sequences, frames, and discussion soon. We will send the link to the US Fish and Wildlife.

01:22:55.950 --> 01:23:07.440

Fred Virrazzi: Subject: Wing beat frequency. Pileated woodpecker versus the ivory-billed woodpecker. These two species flap rates does not approach overlapping each other in powered level flight.

01:23:08.280 --> 01:23:18.450

Fred Virrazzi: The literature on this is unequivocal. There is not one pileated woodpecker in over thousands of videos that flaps like the two ivory-billed woodpeckers videos in question.

01:23:18.960 --> 01:23:32.580

Fred Virrazzi: That is Arkansas, and the Louisiana video I just mentioned. Implication, subject: indications of the imperial woodpecker films of 56. They completely support that the two newest videos

01:23:34.170 --> 01:23:45.510

Fred Virrazzi: are ivory-billed woodpeckers and not pileated woodpeckers. Please redraw this extinction proposal. Inexpensive management for the ivory-billed woodpecker needs to start immediately. NBP with its entomology and ornithology

01:23:46.320 --> 01:24:06.270

Fred Virrazzi: experience has completed the initial design to start working on the management of the species. This species is worth 50 to 100 million dollars in eco-tourism money if it's properly managed as the valuable resource, it is. It's time for US Fish and Wildlife to begin understanding the species.

01:24:09.390 --> 01:24:09.840

Fred Virrazzi: They have been wrong for 80 years, and also some of us have been wrong, it's time to hold hands and move forward. Thank you, have a good night.

01:24:16.830 --> 01:24:18.750

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Thank you for your comment, Fred.

01:24:19.980 --> 01:24:32.130

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: With that there is only about six minutes left so if anyone has not provided a comment, who would like to provide a comment, please raise their hand.

01:24:35.280 --> 01:24:42.870

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And I do see that Ezra has raised his hand again so Ezra I'm going to go ahead and

01:24:44.340 --> 01:24:46.290

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: unmute you and you can

01:24:49.020 --> 01:24:54.120

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: speak, my bad sorry, there and then we're going to go to Hannah Hunter after Ezra.

01:24:56.790 --> 01:25:00.030

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Can you hear us, Ezra?

01:25:00.630 --> 01:25:08.340

Ezra Hosch: Yes, I would like to cover some of the claims about eyewitness testimony. Eyewitness testimony is generally considered the worst kind of testimony.

01:25:09.330 --> 01:25:25.110

Ezra Hosch: And everything that has come forward from the ivory-billed woodpeckers has all been under very difficult circumstances to evaluate a bird identification, these have been brief, they've been obstructed, or they've been distant.

01:25:26.550 --> 01:25:44.820

Ezra Hosch: Secondly, a lot of these claims about the magical flap rate are perplexing because we have no original flat rates from ivory-billed woodpeckers to confidently state that pileated woodpeckers and ivory-billed woodpeckers pace differ in any significant way.

01:25:46.710 --> 01:25:47.280

Ezra Hosch: Finally,

01:25:48.750 --> 01:25:59.610

Ezra Hosch: if they're so easy to detect or if they've been detected so many times, I can't think of a single species that has such a low rate of detection to physical documentation.

01:26:00.210 --> 01:26:09.120

Ezra Hosch: There are many species in the United States that are very difficult to detect visually such as black rail, but people can get photos of black rail every year.

01:26:10.530 --> 01:26:17.010

Ezra Hosch: I think the evidence is clear that every that the ivory-billed woodpecker is unfortunately no longer with us in the lower 48.

01:26:23.310 --> 01:26:26.640

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thank you for your comment, Ezra.

01:26:28.050 --> 01:26:36.360

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: We're going to go ahead and move on to our next commenter Hannah Hunter, Hannah I'm going to go ahead and ask you to unmute yourself, give me one second.

01:26:37.740 --> 01:26:44.160

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And let us know if you could hear us Hannah and please spell your first and last name, and if you represent an organization for the record.

01:26:44.850 --> 01:26:49.530

Hannah Hunter: Yes, I can hear you it's H-A-N-N-A-H H-U-N-T-E-R. I'm a PhD researcher at Cornell university, but here I'm just representing myself.

01:26:50.670 --> 01:26:57.540

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, your time has started Hannah.

01:26:58.230 --> 01:27:03.840

Hannah Hunter: Okay, I just wanted to make it really quick comment I wasn't planning on saying anything, but I just want to echo something that

01:27:04.890 --> 01:27:11.100

Hannah Hunter: someone said earlier about inconsistency in the report that needed to be corrected, before we went any further.

01:27:12.030 --> 01:27:17.580

Hannah Hunter: As someone who researches this topic in detail, I've run into quite a few inconsistencies which I will put in

01:27:18.330 --> 01:27:27.000

Hannah Hunter: a written response as well, one of which is based on detectability, which is one of the main things that your proposal is based on.

01:27:27.750 --> 01:27:36.330

Hannah Hunter: And, for instance, Arthur Ray Allen and Peter Paul Kellogg who in the 1930s were some of the last people, as you say, to have credibly seen

01:27:37.140 --> 01:27:48.960

Hannah Hunter: the ivory-billed woodpecker. They, in articles said that the ivory-billed woodpecker was actually not a very detectable species at all and kind of outlined various reasons because of that

01:27:49.650 --> 01:27:57.600

Hannah Hunter: and yeah, and that's just one of the things that I believe to be inconsistent in the report and should be fixed before going any further, thank you.

01:27:59.370 à 01:28:15.660

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: Great, thanks for your, oops sorry I didn't mean to unmute again, but thanks for your comment, Hannah. Once again, we just wanted to thank everyone tonight for providing their verbal public comments, the US Fish and Wildlife Service really does appreciate it.

01:28:17.310 --> 01:28:21.900

EMPSi - Clayton McGee: And with that I'm going to go ahead and hand it back over to Megan.

01:28:24.540 --> 01:28:30.480

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you Clayton, yeah, we just want to say thank you again everyone for participating and joining.

01:28:31.470 --> 01:28:41.250

EMPSi - Megan Stone: I do see that some people are still joining the meeting we had a few people join in the past 10 minutes, and so I just wanted to provide an update for those people.

01:28:41.940 --> 01:28:56.370

EMPSi - Megan Stone: We have reached the conclusion of tonight's meeting, and we have worked our way through the pre-registered list of commenters and opened it up for some folks to provide additional comments.

01:28:57.930 --> 01:29:16.590

EMPSi - Megan Stone: At this time, we're going to pass it over to Fish and Wildlife Service for some closing remarks, but we do want to remind everyone that you're strongly encouraged to submit the remainder of your comments in writing. On the screen here, you can see where those can be submitted.

01:29:17.850 --> 01:29:19.800

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Please feel free to

01:29:20.940 --> 01:29:36.390

EMPSi - Megan Stone: let us know anything that you weren't able to finish, we were working with a long list of commenters and a high rate of participation tonight, so we do appreciate everyone working with the two-minute limit.

01:29:37.590 --> 01:29:47.700

EMPSi - Megan Stone: And now I'm going to turn it over to Melissa for some closing remarks. Melissa, you should be able to unmute now.

01:29:54.270 --> 01:29:59.820

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: Thank you Megan and thank you to all our participants in tonight's public hearing.

01:30:01.860 --> 01:30:17.610

USFWS - Melissa Lombardi: We appreciate the comments, the passion, and the expertise shared with us. We will carefully consider all comments presented here tonight and those submitted to regulations.gov. So, thank you again and you'll have a good night.

01:30:19.470 --> 01:30:40.710

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thanks Melissa I'm going to stop the recording and end the meeting now. Thank you everyone, and real quick, we did have a message from Ashley Hopkins, and she asked if we could copy and paste the link in the chat and we're going to do that, right now. Thank you for asking Ashley.

01:30:41.910 --> 01:30:43.800

EMPSi - Megan Stone: I'm going to put that in there

01:30:45.210 --> 01:30:45.900

EMPSi - Megan Stone: and

01:30:47.340 --> 01:30:50.520

EMPSi - Megan Stone: that's where everyone can go and submit their comments

01:30:54.150 --> 01:31:08.130

EMPSi - Megan Stone: and we also do want to remind everyone that the recording of this meeting will be posted after the meeting ends and it will be posted to the US Fish and Wildlife website.

01:31:10.170 --> 01:31:10.800

EMPSi - Megan Stone: Thank you all.