



# U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## Proposed Rule to Delist the Ivory-billed Woodpecker

Public Hearing

January 26, 2022

**Welcome!**

The meeting will begin momentarily.  
Thank you for your patience as we wait for others to join.

**\*Closed captioning is available by selecting the Closed Caption icon at the bottom of your Zoom screen**

**\*Please join using computer audio**

## Meeting Agenda

USFWS Introductions

Meeting Ground Rules

USFWS Presentation

Public Hearing

Closing Remarks

# Meeting Ground Rules

- ▶ The meeting is being recorded and will be posted to: INSERT LINK
- ▶ Microphones and videos of participants will be restricted for the duration of the meeting unless the moderator unmutes you during the verbal public hearing portion.
- ▶ Verbal public comments can be provided after the presentation. Written comments can also be submitted at <https://www.regulations.gov> (in the Search box, enter FWS-R4-ES-2020-0109)

# Introductions

## Welcome

Melissa Lombardi

Acting Field Supervisor

Louisiana Ecological Services Field Office

## Presentation

Amy Trahan

Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Louisiana Ecological Services Field Office

# Ivory-billed woodpecker

During this time, 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 and explain how the public can comment on this proposal.



*Photo credit: James T. Tanner*

# Ivory-billed woodpecker facts

- ▶ First described by Mark Catesby in 1731 under a different taxonomic nomenclature.
- ▶ Current scientific name is *Campephilus principalis*.
- ▶ Known as the largest woodpecker in the U.S. and the second largest in North America
- ▶ Described as having a black and white plumage with a white chisel-tipped beak, yellow eyes, and a pointed crest.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Produced distinctive sounds such as the “kent” call and double knocks.

# Ivory-billed woodpecker facts continued

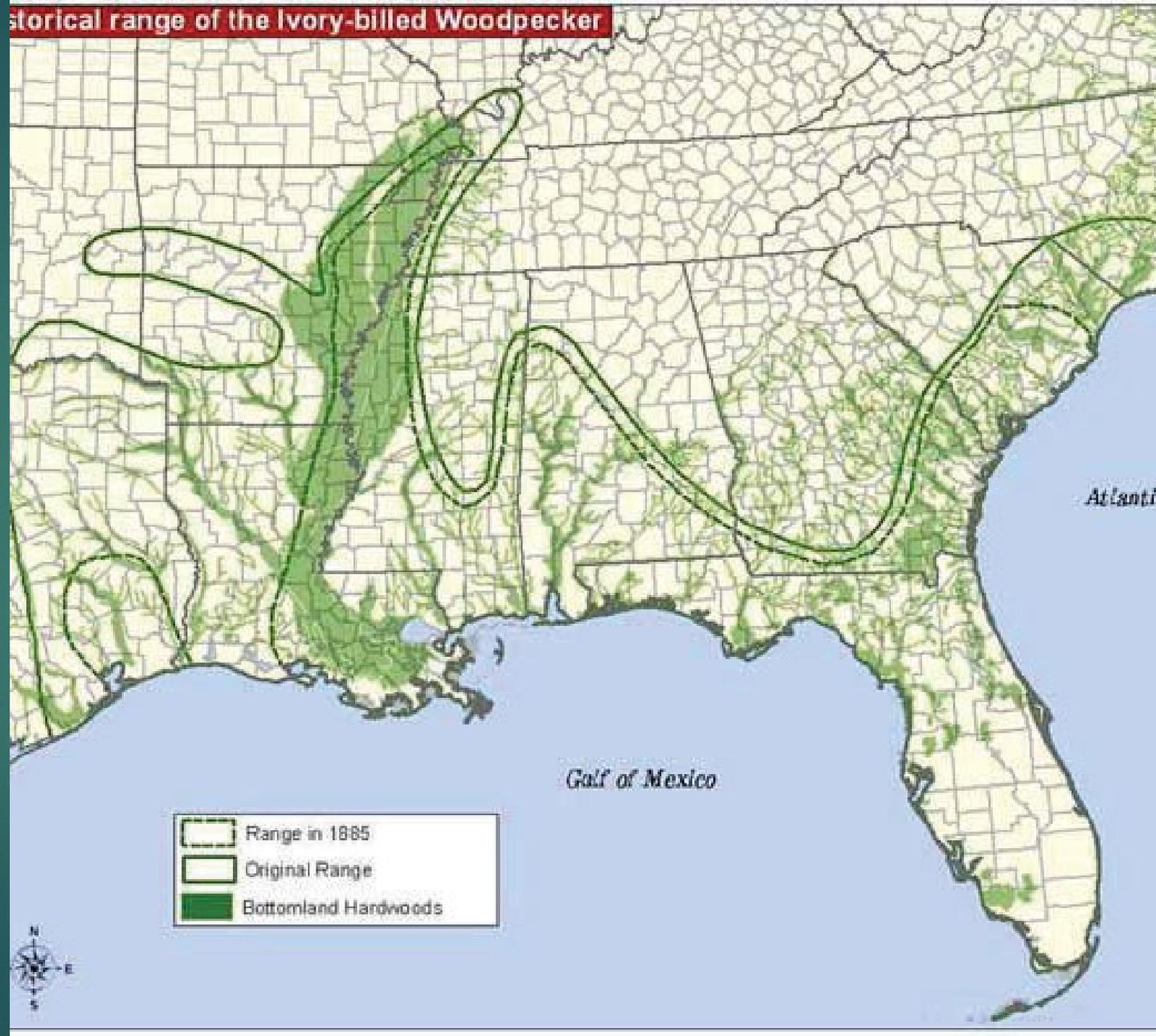
- Excavated both nest cavities and roost cavities
- Large beetle larvae appeared to be an important component of their diet
- Both sexes incubated the eggs as well as fed the young.
- Large home ranges in extensive forested areas



*Photo credit: James T. Tanner*

# Habitat and Range

- ▶ Extensive forested areas with old-growth characteristics and naturally high volume of dead and dying wood (e.g. virgin bottomland hardwoods)
- ▶ Historically occurred in the southeastern U.S.



# Decline of the Population

- ▶ Factors contributing to the decline of the population of the species
  - ▶ Clearing and demolition of virgin forests in the southeastern U.S. between the 1880s and 1940s
  - ▶ Pursuit of the species by local hunters and professional collectors from 1890 to the early 1920s



*Photo credit: James T. Tanner*

# Trends and Distribution

- ▶ Relatively widespread throughout southeastern U.S. prior to European settlement
- ▶ Long-term decline in habitats began in early 1800s
- ▶ Essentially all of historical range affected by early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- ▶ Gradual decrease in specimen and sight records through the early 1940s
- ▶ 1944: last commonly agreed upon sighting-Singer Tract in Tensas River region of northeast Louisiana
- ▶ 2004/2005: reported at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge

# Delisting due to Extinction

- ▶ Why delist due to extinction?
  - ▶ Statutory responsibility
  - ▶ Efficiency
  - ▶ To Serve the Public
- ▶ How do we assess a species for delisting due to extinction?
  - ▶ Best scientific and commercial data available
  - ▶ Three common factors: Detectability, Survey Effort, and Time Since Last Detection
  - ▶ Other considerations
- ▶ Extinction: 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.

# Factors Considered for Delisting

- ▶ Detectability
  - ▶ The distinctive sounds it produced and its distinctive markings (e.g., large white patch on the wing that can be seen from long distances) indicate a certain degree of detectability during surveys
- ▶ Survey Effort
  - ▶ A 5-year survey effort was conducted in Arkansas after a reported ivory-billed woodpecker in 2004/2005 at the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge
  - ▶ Other survey efforts were conducted throughout the range from 2005-present (Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Arkansas, and Cuba)
- ▶ Time Since Last Detection (and past intervals between detections)
  - ▶ The last unrefuted sighting of the species occurred in April 1944 on the Singer Tract in the Tensas River region of northeast Louisiana

## Identifying Field Marks of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker and Similar Birds

### In flight - view from below

*Distinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker characteristics:*

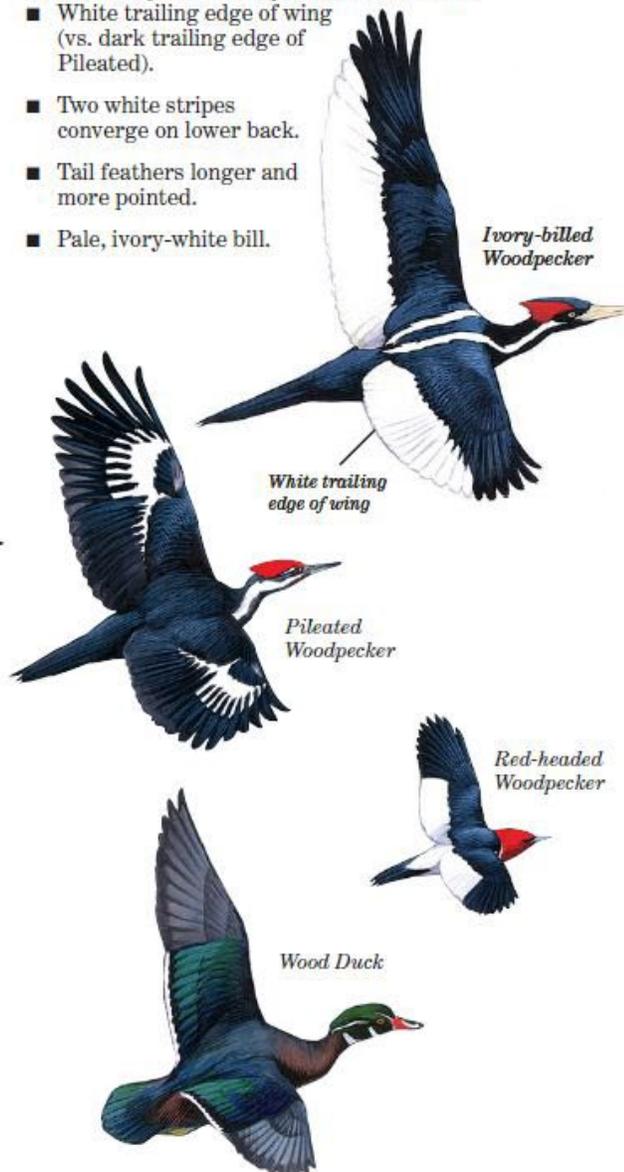
- White trailing edge of wing (vs. dark trailing edge of Pileated).
- Wing more slender than Pileated.
- Tail feathers longer and more pointed.
- Pale, ivory-white bill.



### In flight - view from above

*Distinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker characteristics:*

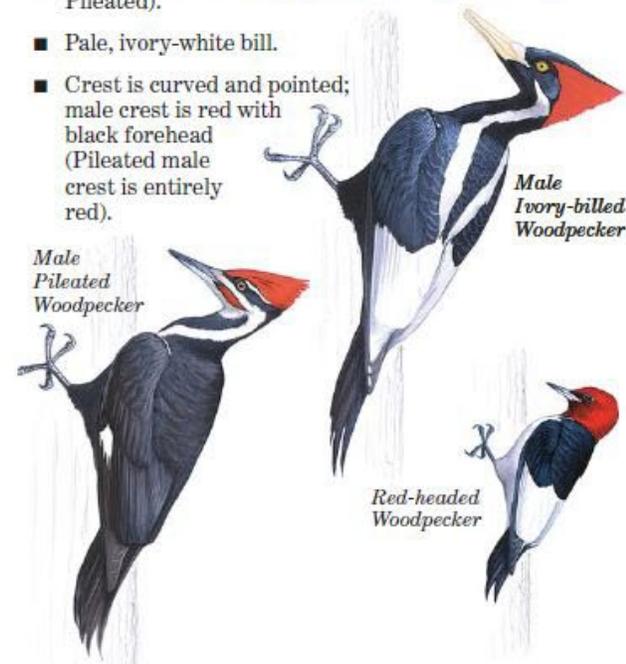
- White trailing edge of wing (vs. dark trailing edge of Pileated).
- Two white stripes converge on lower back.
- Tail feathers longer and more pointed.
- Pale, ivory-white bill.



### At rest

*Distinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker characteristics:*

- Two white stripes converge on lower back.
- Entirely white secondary feathers give appearance of white "saddle" on back.
- Largely dark face and dark chin (vs. white chin of Pileated).
- Pale, ivory-white bill.
- Crest is curved and pointed; male crest is red with black forehead (Pileated male crest is entirely red).



*Female Head*

- Female Ivory-bill crest is entirely black (female Pileated crest resembles male ivory-billed red crest with black forehead – use chin color as distinguishing feature)



# Comments on the Proposed Rule

The public comment period has been reopened and we will accept comments received or postmarked on or before **February 10, 2022**. The public can submit comments and view all documents related to the proposed rule at

<https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FWS-R4-ES-2020-0109>

We are particularly seeking comments on encounters or observations with documentation that can be repeatedly interpreted the same way by independent observers.

# Comments-cont'd

- ▶ File types accepted in [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) include pdf, jpeg, gif, mpg2, tiff, txt, xlsx, and webm.
- ▶ Videos, photographs, or recordings in a file type not accepted by [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) may be emailed to [ivorybilledwoodpecker@fws.gov](mailto:ivorybilledwoodpecker@fws.gov).

# Comment Consideration and Information Review

- ▶ We will review all comments and documents provided.
- ▶ We will make a final determination on whether to proceed with the action as proposed or to withdraw the rule.
- ▶ We will publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

# Verbal Public Hearing: Ground Rules

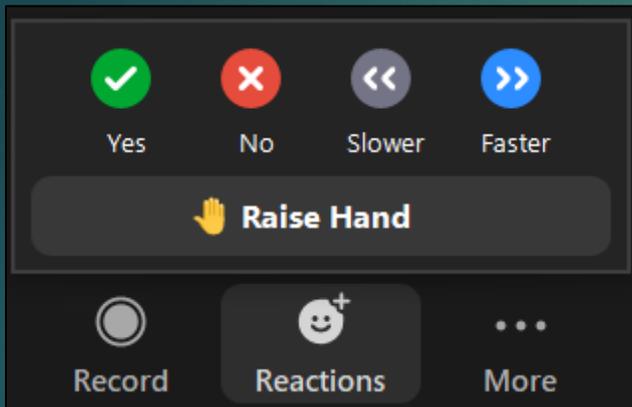
- ▶ The USFWS wants to hear from all members of the public. We will be using the following guidelines:
  - ▶ Be mindful of the length of your comment, so that everyone can speak
  - ▶ Please be respectful of others
  - ▶ Refrain from profanity
- ▶ If guidelines are not followed, your microphone will be muted, and we will move to the next person.

# Verbal Public Hearing: Instructions for Commenters

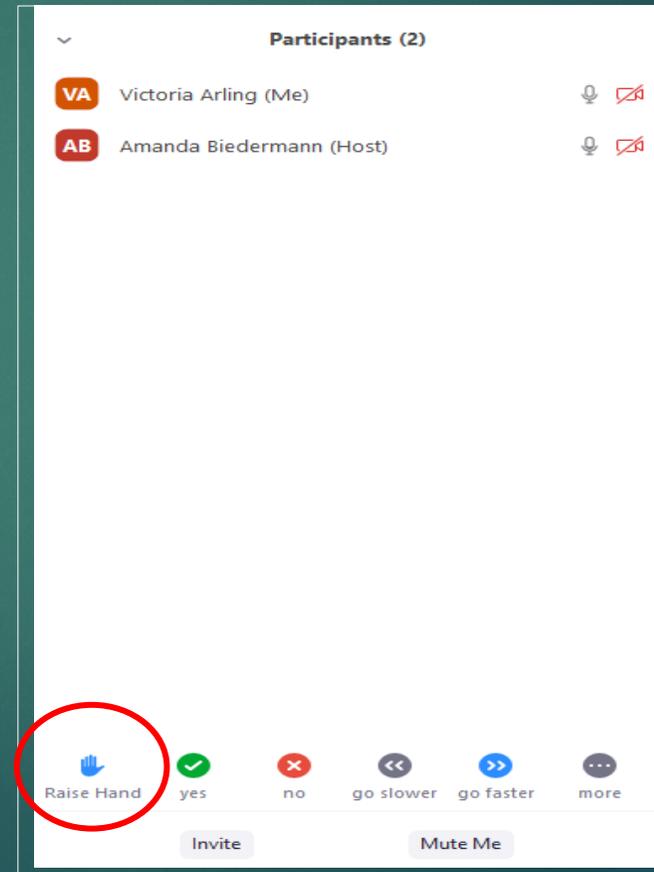
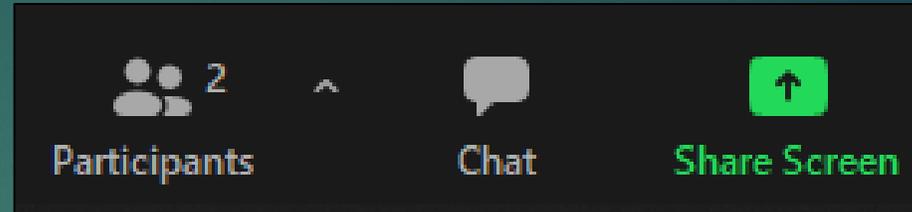
- ▶ Verbal public comments will be accepted in order of registration.
- ▶ When it is your turn, the moderator will call out your name and display your name on the screen.
- ▶ Use the “raise hand” feature at the bottom of your participants list or, if you are calling in through the phone, press \*9 to “raise your hand.”
- ▶ The moderator will then unmute you.
- ▶ Please spell out your first and last name for the record before you provide your comment.
- ▶ Your comment will be included in the project record.

# Instructions (continued)

## Zoom Reactions Icon



## Zoom Participants Icon



To access the raise hand feature, click on the participants list icon at the bottom of your Zoom screen, then click on the raise hand button at the bottom of your participants list. If you are calling in using your phone, press \*9 on your keypad.

If you are having issues with your computer microphone, please dial in to the meeting: **Phone:** 346 248 7799; **Meeting ID:** 818 2279 7785

**Current Commenter:**

**Next Commenter:**

\*If you are unable to offer or complete your verbal public comment during the meeting today, the USFWS encourages you to submit your comment in writing at <https://www.regulations.gov> (In the Search box, enter FWS-R4-ES-2020-0109)

# Thank you!

The USFWS is available to accept verbal public comments until 7:30 pm Central Time.

If you would like to offer a verbal public comment, please let us know by accessing the raise hand feature at the bottom of your participants list, in your Zoom reactions icon, or by pressing \*9 on your phone keypad. You can also chat directly to Clayton McGee.

Written comments can also be submitted at <https://www.regulations.gov> (In the Search box, enter FWS-R4-ES-2020-0109).