

## Peer Review Plan

**Draft Amendments to the Recovery Plans for *Escobaria minima* (Syn. *Coryphantha minima*) (Nellie's Cory Cactus) and *Echinocereus viridiflorus* var. *davisii* (Davis's Green Pitaya).**

### **About the Document(s)**

**Titles: Recovery Plan for *Echinocereus viridiflorus* var. *davisii* (Houghton) W.T. Marshall (Davis's Green Pitaya), Draft Amendment 1; Recovery Plan for *Escobaria minima* (Baird) D.R. Hunt (Syn. *Coryphantha minima* Baird) (Nellie's Cory Cactus), Draft Amendment 1.**

**Estimated Dissemination Date for Peer Review:**

**April, 2019**

**Purpose:**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has identified best available information that indicates the need to amend recovery criteria for *Escobaria minima* (Syn. *Coryphantha minima*) (Nellie's Cory Cactus) and *Echinocereus viridiflorus* var. *davisii* (Davis's Green Pitaya). In this proposed modification, we evaluate the existing recovery criteria, show amended recovery criteria, and provide the rationale supporting the proposed recovery plan modification. Once finalized, the modifications will be an addendum that supplements the recovery plans, superseding only the affected recovery criteria from the previous recovery plan version.

### **About the Peer Review Process**

**Type of Review:**

Influential

**Timeline for Peer Review:**

Peer review of the draft amendments will be concurrent with the public comment period (30 days) that is identified in a Federal Register Notice of Availability.

**Reviewers:**

The Service will solicit reviews from at least three independent scientific reviewers with expertise in fields related to rare plant conservation. Reviewers will be selected based upon the following criteria:

- **Expertise:** Reviewers have knowledge and expertise in the conservation and management of rare cactus species, plant genetics, or the flora of Brewster County.
- **Independence:** Reviewers are not employed by the Service. Academic and consulting scientists have sufficient independence from the Service or the Department of the Interior.

- Objectivity: Reviewers are recognized by their peers as being objective, open-minded, and thoughtful. The reviewers should be comfortable sharing their knowledge and identifying their knowledge gaps.
- Advocacy: Reviewers are not known or recognized for an affiliation with an advocacy position regarding the protection of this species under the Endangered Species Act.
- Conflict of Interest: Reviewers should not have any financial or other interest that conflicts with or that could impair their objectivity.

### **About Public Participation**

A 30-day public comment period for the draft amendments will begin when the Notice of Availability publishes in the Federal Register. During this period, the public will have the opportunity to review and provide input to the draft recovery plan amendments. The Service will also implement an outreach plan to provide ample opportunity for public involvement in the review process, and the draft amendments will be posted on Service websites with solicitations for public comment.

The draft recovery plan amendments will be available at:

Nellie's cory cactus: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?spcode=Q1UU>

Davis's green pitaya: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?spcode=Q1W0>

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

### **Contact**

For more information, contact Adam Zerrenner, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office; tel. 512-490-0057.