

**Peer Review Plan**  
For the  
Tobusch fishhook cactus (*Sclerocactus brevihamatus* ssp. *tobuschii*) Species Status  
Assessment Report

**About the Document**

**Title:** Draft Species Status Assessment Report for the Tobusch fishhook cactus (*Sclerocactus brevihamatus* ssp. *tobuschii*)

**Dissemination Date:** December 21, 2016

**Purpose:** This Species Status Assessment (SSA) reports the results of the comprehensive status review for the Tobusch fishhook cactus and provides an evaluation of the biological status of the species and its overall viability. The SSA considers the species needs, causes and effects to its biological status, the current conditions of the species, and forecasts future conditions.

**About the Peer Review Process**

**Type of Review:** Influential

**Date of Peer Review:** Peer review is expected to be completed by January 31, 2016.

**Reviewers:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will conduct external peer review of the scientific background information used in the SSA report with at least three independent scientific reviewers with expertise in botany and conservation biology, with emphasis on plant demography and ecology.

Criteria for Reviewer Selection: Peer reviewers will be selected based on the following criteria:

- **Expertise:** Reviewers should have knowledge in one or more of the following areas: botany, plant demography, plant ecology, conservation biology, invasive species, and land management activities and their effects on rare plants.
- **Independence:** Reviewers should not be employed by the Service. Academic and consulting scientists should have sufficient independence from the Service and the Department of the Interior if the government supports their work.
- **Objectivity:** Reviewers should be recognized by their peers as being objective, open-minded, and thoughtful. Reviewers should be comfortable sharing their knowledge and identifying their knowledge gaps.

- **Advocacy:** Reviewers should not be 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:**

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:** Jennifer Smith-Castro (281) 286-8282 ext. 234, or Jennifer\_smith-castro@fws.gov