



News Release

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Arizona Ecological Services Field Office

www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Extends Request for Desert Bald Eagle Information

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's status review of the bald eagle in the Sonoran Desert area of central Arizona and northwest Mexico is being extended and the agency continues to seek information regarding the status of, and any potential threats to, the Sonoran Desert area bald eagle. The information will be assessed to determine whether continued Endangered Species Act protection is warranted for the eagle. To allow adequate time to consider and incorporate submitted information into the status review – due for publication in October 2009 – information should be submitted on or before July 10, 2009.

As a result of a court order, bald eagles in the Sonoran Desert of central Arizona remain protected as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The bald eagle in other parts of the United States has recovered sufficiently to no longer need protection under the ESA. The Service will: 1) conduct a status review to determine whether recognizing the Sonoran Desert bald eagle population as a Distinct Population Segment (DPS) is warranted, and if so, whether listing the DPS as threatened or endangered pursuant to the Endangered Species Act is warranted; and 2) issue by October 12, 2009, a 12-month finding on the results of the status review.

"The court has extended the date by which we are to make a determination on the status of the bald eagle in the Sonoran Desert," said Steve Spangle, the Service's Arizona Field Supervisor. "This allows us the opportunity to more thoroughly consult with Native American Tribes and seek additional information."

To decide whether the bald eagle in the Sonoran Desert area constitutes a DPS, the Service must determine whether the population may be discrete and significant and threatened with endangerment or extinction.

Scientific and commercial information that supports or refutes the appropriateness of considering the Sonoran Desert area bald eagle to be discrete (separated from other populations of bald eagles due to physical, physiological, ecological, or behavioral factors) or to be significant (such as persisting in an unusual or unique ecological setting or having unusual genetic characteristics) will help inform the Service's determination. Additionally, the Service is seeking information regarding Sonoran Desert area bald eagles' historical and current population status, distribution, and trends; present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of breeding habitat or range; inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

Information can be submitted electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by mail to Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket FWS-R2-ES-2008-0059; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Ste 222, Arlington, VA 22203. Requests for supporting documents can be submitted to Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2321 W. Royal Palm Rd.,

Suite 103, Phoenix, AZ 85021-4951; phone 602/242-0210 or fax 602/242-2513. Additional information is also available at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/BaldEagle.htm> .

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit **www.fws.gov**.

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