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SERVICE SOLICITING PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON DRAFT SONORAN PRONGHORN RECOVERY PLAN

A draft plan to help guide recovery efforts for the endangered Sonoran pronghorn is now available for public review. The plan is a revision of the 1998 Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Plan. The impetus for this revision is new information obtained on Sonoran pronghorn, new identified threats to the species, and new management efforts in the U.S. and Mexico.

The draft recovery plan lays out a strategy to recover the pronghorn that includes protecting habitat; increasing and protecting current populations and establishing at least one new population; removing, reducing, or managing threats to the species; and identifying and addressing priority monitoring and research needs. Criteria have been identified to ensure the long-term conservation and protection of the pronghorn and its habitat to remove it from the list of endangered species.

"Following the 2002, drought-induced Sonoran pronghorn population crash, the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Team realized that the species could be lost from the United States unless the Service and its partners implemented active management for these pronghorn," said Jim Atkinson, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Coordinator. "In addition to intensifying recovery efforts in the U.S., we realize the importance of close collaboration with Mexico. Consequently, this revised Recovery Plan addresses recovery of the species throughout its range in Mexico and the U.S."

The Sonoran pronghorn subspecies was first recognized as endangered in 1967 under the Endangered Species Preservation Act, a predecessor of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The subspecies is currently listed as an endangered species throughout most of its range under the ESA. Additionally, there is a nonessential experimental (10(j)) population of Sonoran pronghorn in Arizona. Primary threats to the species include barriers that limit distribution and movement; dewatering of rivers; loss, fragmentation, and degradation of habitat; human-caused disturbance; and drought.

Recognizing the binational distribution of the species, and the unique challenges and opportunities this presents, two conservation units for the species have been designated, one in the United States and one in Mexico. The U.S. conservation unit includes the subspecies' historical range in southern Arizona and possibly southeastern California. The Mexico conservation unit includes the historical

range of Sonoran pronghorn in Sonora and possibly Baja California, Mexico. Within the conservation units are smaller management units that are the focus of recovery activities.

The notice announcing the availability of the Draft Recovery Plan, second revision, for the Sonoran Pronghorn will publish in the Federal Register on July 2, 2015. Comments and information will be accepted until August 3, 2015. All relevant information received from local, State, and Federal agencies; Tribes; and the public will be considered.

To receive a copy of the draft Recovery Plan, please contact James Atkinson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, 1611 North Second Avenue, Ajo, Arizona, 85321; telephone (520) 387-6483; email James_Atkinson@fws.gov; or download a copy of the plan from the Service's website here.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

1. Submit written comments and materials to James Atkinson, at the above address;
2. Hand-deliver written comments to Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge at the above address or fax them to (520) 387-5359 or email them to email James_Atkinson@fws.gov. Please include "Sonoran Pronghorn Draft Recovery Plan" in the subject line.

Click this link for photos of the Sonoran pronghorn.

Click this link for a video of Sonoran pronghorn at Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge.

Additional information about the Sonoran pronghorn is available on our ECOS website.

As the Division of Ecological Services in the Southwest Region, we work through and with others to achieve conservation of Service trust resources, while focusing on imperiled species. America's fish, wildlife and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. We're working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species. To learn more about the Endangered Species program, go to http://www.fws.gov/endangered/.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov, or connect with us through any of these social media channels:

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