



News Release

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Service Completes Finding on Petition to Delist Western Distinct Population of the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

PHOENIX, Arizona, on 9/15/2020, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has completed its review of a petition to remove Endangered Species Act (ESA) protection from the western distinct population segment (DPS) of the yellow-billed cuckoo. After thoroughly reviewing the best available scientific and commercial information, the Service finds that delisting the yellow-billed cuckoo is not warranted at this time and consequently, the DPS will remain listed as Endangered Species Act (ESA) protection from [threatened](#) under the ESA.

On June 27, 2018, the Service published a substantial 90-day finding on the petition submitted by American Stewards of Liberty. The Service found that information provided in the petition that the bird was using additional habitat was sufficient to initiate a full review of the species' status.

However, following a rigorous examination of the best scientific and commercial information available, including new information about the species' distribution throughout its range and input from states, tribes, federal agency partners, academia, industry and citizens, the Service has more information on the location of yellow-billed cuckoo habitat and the bird's breeding areas.

These data indicate that the primary threats to the species identified at the time of listing, including habitat loss and fragmentation, poor water quality, and invasive species, continue to impact the yellow-billed cuckoo western DPS. Recent mining projects in central and southern Arizona are also affecting the species.

“We greatly appreciate the contribution of our partners to the conservation of the species,” said Service Regional Director Amy Lueders. “The Service will continue working with state agencies, federal agencies, academia and others on yellow-billed cuckoo recovery efforts.”

The [western yellow-billed cuckoo](#) is a migratory bird species, traveling between its wintering grounds in Central and South America and its breeding grounds in 12 western U.S. States and six states in Mexico. Adult yellow-billed cuckoos have a fairly stout, slightly down-curved bill; a

slender, elongated body with a long-tailed look; and a narrow yellow ring of colored, bare skin around the eye. The plumage is grayish-brown above and white below, with reddish primary flight feathers. The tail feathers are boldly patterned with black and white below.

The western DPS yellow-billed cuckoo finding will publish in the *Federal Register* on September 16, 2020. All documents and supporting information for the 12-month finding will be available at www.regulations.gov. In the search box enter Docket No FWS -R2-ES-2020-0004 and click “search”. [Additional information on the species is available on our website.](#)

America’s fish, wildlife and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. The Service is actively engaged with 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 visit our website.](#)

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 on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

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