



News Release

Public Affairs Office
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103
505/248-6911
505/248-6915 (Fax)

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Contacts: Aubry Buzek, 512-962-0289, aubry_buzek@fws.gov

Draft Recovery Plan Available for the Sharpnose and Smalleye Shiner

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is announcing the availability of a draft recovery plan for the sharpnose and smalleye shiners, two small minnows found in north-central Texas. The draft recovery plan is based on a recently updated Species Status Assessment intended to inform recovery planning for the species.

Listed as endangered on August 4, 2014, the sharpnose shiner and the smalleye shiner are considered in danger of extinction throughout their entire ranges, based on the immediacy, severity and scope of the threats from the loss of habitat due to fragmentation and reduced water quantity and quality. Both the sharpnose and smalleye shiners have experienced significant population declines, primarily because of river fragmentation and the alteration of natural stream flows. Efforts to improve water quality and quantity in the Brazos River will benefit not only the shiners but the surrounding communities as well.

“We are working collaboratively with our partners including Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Brazos River Authority, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Environmental Protection Agency, local municipalities, private landowners and others to recover these two native Texas fish species,” says Amy Lueders, the Service’s Regional Director. “The draft recovery plan identifies the actions and timeframes that will move us forward in recovering the shiners.”

Small minnows native to arid prairie streams of Texas, the two shiners are currently restricted entirely to the contiguous river segments of the upper Brazos River basin in north-central Texas. Historically, sharpnose and smalleye shiners existed throughout the Brazos River and several of its major tributaries within the watershed. The sharpnose shiner also historically occurred in the Colorado River and the Wichita River in Texas. Both species need wide, shallow, unobstructed flowing waters to meet their life history requirements for survival, growth and reproduction.

While they are not regulatory, recovery plans provide a framework for the recovery of a species so that Endangered Species Act protection is no longer necessary. The draft recovery plan describes actions that are considered necessary for recovery of the two shiners, establishes downlisting and delisting criteria and estimates the time and cost to implement recovery actions for the species.

The Service encourages the public to comment on the recovery plan, [found here](#). The public will have 60 days to comment on the draft recovery plan. Public comments will be accepted through January 23, 2021.

America's fish, wildlife, and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. We are working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species.

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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