



News Release

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Service Completes Review of Petition for Blind Texas Cave Arachnid *Bone Cave Harvestman to undergo rigorous status review*

Following its review of an Endangered Species Act (ESA) petition to delist the Bone Cave harvestman, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that the petition presents substantial information indicating that delisting may be warranted. The Bone Cave harvestman is an eyeless relative of the spider found in only two counties in Texas. Following a status review, the Service will issue a 12-month finding indicating whether delisting the species is warranted in accordance with the ESA.

The Service previously published two “not-substantial” 90-day findings for the Bone Cave harvestman that were challenged in court. Given the previous litigation and the court’s March 28, 2019, opinion that the Service did not apply the correct standard when evaluating the petition, we reassessed the petition to delist the species.

The finding does not trigger a change in the current status of the Bone Cave harvestman. Rather, it initiates a more thorough review of all the biological information available for the species. To ensure the status reviews are comprehensive, the Service is looking for information from the public.

If you have new scientific or commercial data or other information concerning the status of, or threats to, the Bone Cave harvestman, please provide the information by one of the following ways:

(1) *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter docket number FWS-R2-ES-2017-0018. Then, click on the “Search” button. After finding the correct document, you may submit information by clicking on “Comment Now!”

(2) *By hard copy:* Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R2-ES-2017-0018, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike; Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

The Bone Cave harvestman inhabits subterranean limestone caves in Williamson and Travis counties in Texas. It depends on high humidity, stable temperatures and nutrients derived from the surface. The species was listed as endangered in 1988 due primarily to habitat loss from increasing urbanization.

For more information on the ESA listing process, including 90-day findings and status reviews, please go to www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/listing.pdf.

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.

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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