

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Phone: 916/414-6600
Fax: 916/414-6713
Website: www.fws.gov/sacramento

News Release



December 1, 2014

Media Contacts:

Robert Moler, (916) 414-6606; robert_moler@fws.gov (California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas)

Brent Lawrence, (503) 807-4886; brent_lawrence@fws.gov (Washington, Idaho, and Oregon)

Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345, ryan_moehring@fws.gov (Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado)

Public Hearing for Proposal to Designate Critical Habitat for Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo to be Held in Sacramento CA December 18, 2014

Sacramento – Thursday, December 18, 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will hold a public hearing on the proposal to designate critical habitat for the western distinct population segment of the yellow-billed cuckoo (western yellow-billed cuckoo).

The public hearing will be held at the DoubleTree Inn; 2001 Point West Way; Sacramento, CA 95815 from 2 – 4 p.m. with doors opening at 1:30 p.m. for those wishing to register to speak at the hearing. At the public hearing, the Service will provide opening statements for 20 minutes that will be followed by a 90-minute opportunity for the public to provide verbal comments. The Service will end the hearing session with a few minutes of closing statements.

On August 15, 2014, the Service proposed to designate critical habitat for the western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) in 80 separate units in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah and Wyoming. At that time, the Service opened an initial 60-day comment period that closed October 14, 2014. The Service reopened the public comment period November 12, 2014, for an additional 60 days that will close January 12, 2015.

Written and verbal testimony on the critical habitat proposal will be accepted at the public hearing. Written comments can also be submitted online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. The docket number for the proposed rule is FWS-R8-ES-2013-0011. Comments can also be sent by U.S. Mail or hand delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-ES-R8-2013-0011; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Headquarters, MS: BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

The Service is seeking information concerning the habitat needs of the western yellow-billed cuckoo and information on the areas identified as proposed critical habitat for the species. The Service is also seeking information on the incremental economic effects of the proposed critical habitat and information on any potential exclusions from the final designation. To access the proposed critical habitat rule, detailed maps of the proposed critical habitat units, and a specific outline of information requested by the Service, please go to our webpage at: http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/Public-Advisories/WesternYellow-BilledCuckoo/outreach_PA_Western-Yellow-Billed-Cuckoo.htm.

The Service will review all public comments received during the public comment periods and the public hearing and will consider peer reviews of the proposal from independent experts before making a final decision. The Service listed the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species on October 3, 2014, and the rule went into effect on November 3, 2014. A final rule to designate critical habitat is expected in 2015.

People needing reasonable accommodations in order to attend and participate in the public hearings should contact Robert Moler, External Affairs Supervisor, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, as soon as possible by calling 916-414-6606.

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. Connect with our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/usfwspacificsouthwest>, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSPacSWest>, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws_pacificsw/

-FWS-