



# News Release

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas)**  
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## **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO REVIEW STATUS OF SEVEN ENDANGERED SPECIES**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Southwest Region is announcing the initiation of its status review of seven species listed under the Endangered Species Act (Act). The species under review include a mammal, the lesser long-nosed bat; two birds, the black-capped vireo and Yuma clapper rail; and four plants, the Pima pineapple cactus, gypsum-wild buckwheat, Mesa Verde cactus, and Zuni fleabane.

Periodic status reviews of all listed species are required by the Act to determine if the species classification as threatened or endangered is still appropriate. The Service is seeking any new information, since the time of listing of these species, from the scientific community and the public in order to conduct this review. If the best scientific and commercial data are not consistent with the current classification of any species, the Service will recommend a change in its Federal classification. A species could be recommended for reclassification from endangered to threatened (downlisting), or from threatened to endangered (uplisting), or for removal from the Federal list of endangered species (delisting). If the reviews find that status changes may be warranted, the normal reclassification or delisting process will be followed.

The lesser long-nosed bat, which breeds in southern Arizona, was listed as endangered in 1988. Current population estimates of this nectar-feeding species are higher than when it was listed. The importance of protecting maternity sites and the effect of harvesting and grazing on agave plants and associated effects on the bat are issues of special interest in this review.

The Yuma clapper rail was listed as endangered in 1967 in Arizona and in California. The Service is especially interested in information regarding the distribution of listed populations, degree of threat and protection, and the consistency and reliability of survey information in order to consider reclassification of the species.

The Pima pineapple cactus was listed as endangered in 1993. Pima pineapple cactus is known from only Pima and Santa Cruz counties in southern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico. There is scientific debate about whether the species is a valid taxon for listing, and a recently published paper concludes that it is not. Another researcher preliminarily concludes that it is, and his work is ongoing. The Service is asking for review and comment on these two studies as part of its review for the species.

The gypsum wild-buckwheat was listed as threatened (with critical habitat) in 1981. The plant's entire known range is limited to approximately 130 acres of Bureau of Land Management and state lands in Eddy County, New Mexico.

The Mesa Verde cactus was listed as threatened in 1979. The plant occurs in portions of southwest Colorado, northwest New Mexico, and northeast Arizona. Some populations have recently declined, due to infestations with cactus longhorn beetle.

The Zuni fleabane was listed as threatened in 1985. The plant occurs in portions of the Navajo Reservation in Arizona and McKinley and Catron Counties of New Mexico.

The black-capped vireo was listed as endangered in 1987 in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico. New information on breeding populations in Mexico and Texas are of special interest in this species review.

“This is an opportunity for the scientific community and the public to actively engage in the evaluation of the status of some of our nation’s threatened and endangered species” said the Service’s Southwest Regional Director H. Dale Hall.

The Service is asking the public to provide any new information concerning the status of these species including biology, habitat, conservation measures, threats, and any other new data or information. Additional information about the review and affected species is available through the Federal Register Notice at: <http://arizonaes.fws.gov>.

In order for new information to be considered, it should be supported by documentation such as maps, bibliographic references, methods to gather and analyze data, and copies of pertinent publications, reports, or letters by knowledgeable sources. The public will have until May 3, 2005 to provide information for consideration in this review. However, the Service welcomes new information regarding any endangered species at any time.

Information regarding the lesser long-nosed bat, Yuma clapper rail, and Pima pineapple cactus should be sent to the Field Supervisor, Attention 5-year Review, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Ecological Services Field Office, 2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103, Phoenix, AZ 85021.

Information regarding the black-capped vireo should be sent to the Field Supervisor, Attention 5-year Review, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 711 Stadium Drive, Suite 252, Arlington, TX 76011.

Information regarding gypsum wild-buckwheat, Mesa Verde cactus, and Zuni fleabane should be sent to the Field Supervisor, Attention 5-year Review, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office, 2105 Osuna Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87113.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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