



News Bulletin

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Arizona Ecological Services Field Office

www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/

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Service Reopens Comment Period on Revised Jaguar Critical Habitat Proposal, Draft Economic Analysis and Draft Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reopening the comment period for its proposed designation of critical habitat for the jaguar (*Panthera onca*) under the Endangered Species Act. Comments are being solicited on the [proposed critical habitat designation](#), including the most recent revisions, and the draft economic analysis and draft environmental assessment of the proposed designation. Comments will be accepted through Sept. 13.

The additional comment period is in response to multiple requests for an extension of the July 1 – Aug. 9 comment period. On Aug. 15 (following the close of the most recent jaguar critical habitat comment period), U.S. District Court - Columbia granted Fish and Wildlife Service's motion extending the deadline for publishing a final critical habitat designation to Dec. 16, 2013. This rescheduled final rulemaking date will allow for an additional 15-day comment period reopening.

The Service has [proposed](#) to designate 858,137 acres in southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico as critical habitat for the jaguar. That proposal was informed by information and modeling conducted by a Service-assembled, bi-national, scientific Jaguar Recovery Team.

Critical habitat is a term in the Act that identifies geographic areas containing features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species, and which may require special management considerations or protection. Federal agencies that undertake, fund or permit activities that may affect critical habitat are required to consult with the Service to ensure such actions do not adversely modify or destroy designated critical habitat. Designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership, or establish a refuge or preserve, and has no impact on private landowners taking actions on their land that do not require federal funding or permits.

Previously submitted comments on the critical habitat proposal need not be resubmitted, as they will be fully considered in preparation of the final decision. Comments must be received or postmarked on or before Sept. 13, 2013, and can be submitted by one of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the critical habitat proposal and associated draft analyses to Docket No. FWS-R2-ES-2012-0042; or

- U.S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R2–ES–2012–0042; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

More information on the proposed rule, maps, supporting analyses, and other details about the jaguar is available online at: <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Jaguar.htm>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

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