



News Bulletin

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Arizona Ecological Services Field Office

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

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Jaguar Critical Habitat Determination to be Informed by Scientific Models

-Fish and Wildlife Service Convenes Specialists to Outline Recovery Needs-

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), together with the Jaguar Recovery Team, will develop a recovery outline for jaguars in the northern portion of their range. The recovery outline, together with scientific population and habitat analyses, will be considered in the preparation of a U.S. critical habitat proposal for the endangered cat in spring 2012.

In [January 2010](#), the Service anticipated publication of a proposed critical habitat designation in January 2011. However, due to scant information and limited access to expertise on the biology of jaguars in northern Mexico and the U.S., the Service has determined that developing and referencing an effective recovery strategy for the northern jaguar would facilitate determining an appropriate and scientifically supported critical habitat proposal. Therefore, the critical habitat proposal has been postponed until spring 2012. Public comment will be sought at that time.

A bi-national Jaguar Recovery Team has been assembled and the Service is working with the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission/International Union for the Conservation of Nature to conduct a population viability analysis (PVA) and a population and habitat viability assessment (PHVA) for the jaguar. These analyses will assist in determining factors that limit the viability of the northern jaguar and may help define the demographics and numbers of jaguars needed for a sustainable population in northern Mexico and the southwestern U.S. The PVHA will use information from the PVA to determine those recovery actions that would be most effective for achieving a viable population, and will also provide information relevant to our determination of jaguar critical habitat.

The Jaguar Recovery Team will develop a recovery outline by spring 2011. The PVA and PHVA reports and recovery outline will be made available to the public at that time. The recovery planning process will be completed following the completion of the critical habitat designation.

Critical habitat is a term in the Endangered Species Act that delineates key areas for conservation of a threatened or endangered species which may require special management considerations or protection. Designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership, 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. Federal agencies that undertake, fund or permit activities that may affect critical habitat are required to consult with the Service to ensure that such actions do not adversely modify or destroy critical habitat.

Additional information on jaguar conservation in the U.S. is available at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Jaguar.htm>. Scientific and commercial information relevant to jaguar recovery can be emailed to JaguarRecovery@fws.gov.

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.

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