



News Release

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Service Announces Availability of the Recovery Plan for the Ocelot, First Revision

Plan Focuses on Cross Border Management Units in Texas and Arizona

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is announcing the availability of the final recovery plan, first revision for the endangered ocelot. The plan was developed by the Bi-national Ocelot Recovery Team, which is comprised of experts from both the United States and Mexico, and it updates the original 1990 recovery plan to reflect current species information as well as address the changed social and economic landscapes in Texas, Arizona, and northern Mexico.

The ocelot is an elusive wildcat. Its range includes Texas, Arizona, Mexico, Central America, and South America. Fewer than 100 ocelots exist in the U.S. and are found primarily in south Texas at Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge ; Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge north of Brownsville; and on at least two private ranches several miles to the north. Ocelots have also been seen in Arizona. The ocelot is listed as endangered throughout its range. The ocelot is listed as endangered by the State of Texas and is protected from hunting and live collection in Arizona where it is listed as a species of “special concern.”

The primary known threats to the ocelot are habitat conversion, fragmentation, and loss associated with agriculture and urbanization, resource extraction, and, to some extent, border security activities. As a result of habitat loss and fragmentation, mortality from collisions with vehicles represents a significant threat to ocelots as they travel across the landscape. In addition, the loss of genetic diversity due to the small size and isolation of the ocelot populations in Texas is negatively impacting the species.

The major focus of the updated final Recovery Plan for the Ocelot, First Revision, is on two U.S.-Mexico management units: the Texas/Tamaulipas Management Unit (TTMU) and the Arizona/Sonora Management Unit (ASMU). Establishing management units is a useful tool for species occurring across wide ranges with multiple populations, varying ecological pressures, and/or different threats in different parts of their range. This plan helps focus efforts to conserve and recover ocelot populations in the northern limits of the species’ range, and establishes specific recovery criteria and actions that will conserve viable ocelot populations in the borderlands.

Recovery plans are guidance and do not obligate the Service or potential partners to undertake the work described in them. However, partnerships are critical for timely implementation of actions required for recovery. The objective of an agency recovery plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of a species so that protection under the Endangered Species Act is no longer necessary. A recovery plan

includes scientific information about the species and provides criteria and actions necessary to be able to reclassify the species to threatened status or remove it from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. Recovery plans help guide our efforts by describing actions we consider necessary for the species' conservation, and by estimating time and costs for implementing needed recovery measures.

The recovery plan is available at: <http://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?scode=A084>.

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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