U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Participation in Peer Review of Central Texas Mussels

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

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It is essential that a peer reviewer used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of its peer review of proposed listing and proposed critical habitat rules under the ESA report any conflict of interest. For this purpose, **the term "conflict of interest" means any financial or other interest which conflicts with the service of the individual because it (1) could significantly impair the individual's objectivity or (2) could create an unfair competitive advantage for any person or organization.**[1] The term "conflict of interest" means something more than individual bias. There must be an *interest* that could be directly affected by your participation as a peer reviewer.

Conflict of interest requirements are objective standards designed to eliminate certain specific, potentially compromising situations from arising, and thereby to protect the individual (and his or her family members or business associates), the Service, and the public interest. The individual and the Service should not be placed in a situation where others could reasonably question, and perhaps discount or dismiss, the information produced through the peer review simply because of the existence of conflicting interests.

Please provide the information requested below regarding **relevant** organizational affiliations, government service, public statements and positions, research support, and additional information (if any) and complete the signature page following the questionnaire.

[1] This definition and the other information in these instructions are drawn from the National Academy of Sciences Policy on Committee Composition and Balance and Conflicts of Interest for Committees Used in the Development of Reports (May 12, 2003).

1. EMPLOYMENT AND INVESTMENT INTERESTS.

(a) If you are employed or self-employed, could your current employment or self-employment (or your spouse's current employment or self-employment) be directly affected?

(b) Do you have any current or continuing consulting relationships (including, for example, commercial and professional consulting and service arrangements, scientific and technical advisory board memberships, serving as an expert witness in litigation, or providing services in exchange for honorariums and travel expense reimbursements) that are directly related to the subject matter of the possible government regulatory action or inaction?

(c) To the best of your knowledge, could any financial interests of your (or your spouse's) employer or, if self-employed, your (or your spouse's) clients and/or business partners be directly affected?

(d) If you are or have ever been a U.S. Government employee (either civilian or military), to the best of your knowledge are there any federal conflict of interest restrictions that may be applicable to your service in connection with this peer review?

(e) Do you or your spouse or minor children own directly or indirectly (e.g., through a trust or an individual account in a pension or profit-sharing plan) stocks, bonds or other financial instruments or investments that could be affected, either indirectly or by a direct effect on the business enterprise or activities underlying the investments?

If the answer to all of the above questions under EMPLOYMENT AND INVESTMENTS INTERESTS is either "no" or "not applicable," check here ✓ (NO).

If the answer to any of the above questions under EMPLOYMENT AND INVESTMENTS INTERESTS is "yes," check here ____ (YES), and briefly describe the circumstances below.

2. PROPERTY INTERESTS.

(a) Do you, your spouse or minor children own directly or indirectly any property (e.g. real estate, tangible properties or intellectual properties) interests that could be directly affected?

(b) To the best of your knowledge, do any others with whom you have substantial common financial interests (e.g., employer, business partners, etc.) own directly or indirectly any such property interests that could be directly affected?

If the answer to all of the above questions under PROPERTY INTERESTS is either "no" or "not applicable," check here ✓ (NO).

If the answer to any of the above questions under PROPERTY INTERESTS is "yes," check here ____ (YES), and briefly describe the circumstances below.

3. RESEARCH FUNDING AND OTHER INTERESTS.

(a) Could research funding and support for you or your close research colleagues and collaborators be directly affected, or

(b) If you have any research agreements for current or continuing research funding or support from any party whose financial interests could be directly affected, and such funding or support is directly related to the subject matter of the regulatory process, do such agreements significantly limit your ability to independently conduct and publish the results of your research?

(c) Do you have any existing professional obligations (e.g., as an officer of a scientific or engineering society) that effectively require you to publicly defend a previously established position on an issue that is relevant to the proposed rule?

(d) Could your service as a peer reviewer create a specific financial or commercial competitive advantage for you or others with whom you have substantial common financial interests?

If the answer to all of the above questions under RESEARCH FUNDING AND OTHER INTERESTS is either "no" or "not applicable," check here ✓ (NO).

If the answer to any of the above questions under RESEARCH FUNDING AND OTHER INTERESTS is "yes," check here ____ (YES), and briefly describe the circumstances below.

Please **return the form to** [*Contact Information*] **Please retain a copy for your records.**

During your period of service in connection with the activity for which this form is being completed, any changes in the information reported, or any new information, which needs to be reported, should be reported promptly by written or electronic communication to the responsible staff officer.

D. J. Berg
YOUR SIGNATURE

5/24/18
DATE

Reviewed by: _____
[*Regional Liaison*]
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
[*Regional Office*]
[*Title*]

_____
DATE