

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Washington Fish and Wildlife Office  
510 Desmond Dr., SE  
Suite 102  
Lacey, WA 98503-1263

# News Release



Contact: Doug Zimmer 360/753-4370

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## **Service Re-Opens Comment Periods for Three Prairie Species in Washington and Oregon**

*Availability of draft economic analysis and Public Information Workshops to be held in Lacey, Washington, and Salem, Oregon; and Public Hearing to be held in Olympia, Washington*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) today announced the reopening of the comment period on its October 11, 2012 proposal to list Taylor's checkerspot butterfly as endangered and the streaked horned lark as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). The action also reopens the comment period for both the accompanying proposed designation of critical habitat for the two species and the December 11, 2012, proposal to list four subspecies of Mazama pocket gopher (Olympia, Tenino, Yelm, and Roy Prairie) and to designate critical habitat for them.

In addition, the Service is providing information inadvertently omitted from the preamble to the October 11, 2012, proposed rule (77 FR 61938) to list Taylor's checkerspot butterfly as endangered and streaked horned lark as threatened and to designate critical habitat.

In an accompanying action, The Service also announced the availability of a draft economic analysis (DEA) of the proposed critical habitat designations. The draft economic analysis addresses the potential economic impacts of critical habitat designation for all six subspecies (collectively, the "prairie species") under consideration in these actions. The draft economic analysis estimates the total costs related to the proposed critical habitat for Taylor's checkerspot

butterfly, streaked horned lark, and four subspecies of *Mazama* pocket gopher in Oregon and Washington to be \$793,574 between the years 2013 to 2033.

The Service has also received a draft Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances from the Port of Portland for conservation of the streaked horned lark at Portland International Airport and at a new mitigation site (Government Island). If this plan is finalized prior to the issuance of our final rule, we may consider the exclusion of this site from the final designation of critical habitat, following evaluation of the agreement according to our criteria as described in our proposed rule.

The reopening of the comment periods allows all interested parties an opportunity to comment simultaneously on the proposed rules and the associated DEA. Comments previously submitted on these proposed actions do not need to be resubmitted, as they will be fully considered in preparation of the final rules. The Service invites public comment on the proposed rules for a 30-day period, and will accept comments received or postmarked on or before May 3, 2013.

Today's announcement includes information concerning a public hearing and two public information workshops on the Service's proposed rules and associated documents. The public information workshops will occur:

- Tuesday, April 16, 2013, between 3-5p and 6-8p, Lacey Community Center, 6729 Pacific Avenue SE, Lacey, Washington 98503
- Wednesday, April 17, 2013, between 6-8p, Salem Library, 585 Liberty Street SE, Salem, Oregon 97301

The Service will also hold a public hearing on Thursday, April 18, 2013, from 3-5p and 6-8p at Office Building 2 (OB2) Auditorium, 1125 Jefferson Street SE, Olympia, Washington 98504 (across Capitol Way from the Legislative Building on the lower level of the building).

The information workshops are a chance for the public to ask questions and discuss the proposed listing and critical habitat designation with Service staff. The public hearing is solely for the purpose of taking official oral testimony. Both oral and written comments carry equal weight.

You may obtain copies of the proposed rules at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2012–0080 for Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark, and at Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2012–0088 for the Mazama pocket gophers; or at this [link](#) (pdf); or by contacting the Washington Fish and Wildlife Office directly (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

*Written Comments:* You may submit written comments by one of the following methods, or at the public information meeting or public hearing:

(1) *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Submit comments on the listing proposal for Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark to Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2012–0080; submit comments on the critical habitat proposal for Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark to Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2013–0009. Submit comments on the listing proposal for Mazama pocket gophers to Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2012–0088; submit comments on the critical habitat proposal for Mazama pocket gophers to Docket No. FWS–R1–ES–2013–0021.

(2) *By hard copy:*

- Submit comments on the listing proposal for Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R1–ES–2012–0080; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.
- Submit comments on the critical habitat proposal for Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly and streaked horned lark by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R1–ES–2013–0009; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.
- Submit comments on the listing proposal for Mazama pocket gophers by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R1–ES–2012–0088; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.
- Submit comments on the critical habitat proposal for Mazama pocket gophers by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R1–ES–2013–0021;

Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ken S. Berg, Manager, Washington Fish and Wildlife Office, 510 Desmond Drive SE, Lacey, WA 98503; by telephone at 360-753-9440; by facsimile at 360-534-9331, or at the Washington Fish and Wildlife website:

<http://www.fws.gov/wafwo/>. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 800-877-8339.

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