



## United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### **SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS AND SCOTT BAR SALAMANDERS DO NOT WARRANT ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT PROTECTION** *Service Concludes Two Species Are Not Threatened by Habitat Loss*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced that two species of salamander, the Siskiyou Mountains and Scott Bar salamanders, do not warrant Federal protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It was determined that neither salamander is threatened by habitat loss or other substantial threats in any portion of their ranges. The Service made the determination in response to a January 19, 2007 court order.

Both species are endemic to the Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon and northern California. Recent genetic and morphological research has determined that the Siskiyou Mountains and Scott Bar salamanders are distinct species. In addition, the Siskiyou Mountains salamander is divided into two genetic groups, the Applegate salamander in Oregon and a small portion of California, and the Grider salamander, located primarily in California. Roughly 440 Applegate salamander, 76 Grider salamander, and 115 Scott Bar salamander localities are currently known.

The Siskiyou Mountains salamander and Scott Bar salamander are completely terrestrial, medium-sized, slender-bodied salamanders with short limbs and a dorsal stripe. Both salamanders are found within – and are associated exclusively with – rock or talus outcrops in a variety of forest habitats where moisture and humidity are high enough to allow dermal respiration.

The salamanders appear to be associated with, or more abundant in, dense mature forest conditions, but they are regularly found in a wide range of habitat conditions. Recent studies indicate that salamander populations are reduced by intensive habitat disturbances such as clear-cutting, but then recover as vegetation recovers. Less intensive disturbances such as forest thinning do not appear to negatively affect populations.

The salamanders are secretive and spend the majority of the year underground in rock crevices, making population studies difficult. The number of known salamander locations has increased dramatically during the last decade, and large areas of suitable habitat have yet to be surveyed.

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The Service received a petition in 2004 to list the two salamanders and designate critical habitat under the ESA. The Service is required to review such petitions to decide whether it contains substantial scientific information showing listing may be warranted, a process known as a 90-day finding. The Service's initial 90-day finding, published in April 2006, concluded that the two species did not warrant additional review. This finding was challenged and a U.S. District Court ruled that the Service publish a remanded 90-day finding. The new finding concluded that the petition to list the species may be warranted. The Service then proceeded with an additional review, known as a 12-month finding.

A copy of the finding about the Siskiyou Mountains and Scott Bar salamanders is available on the Internet at [www.fws.gov/yreka](http://www.fws.gov/yreka) or by calling the Yreka Field Office in California at (530) 842-5763. Questions about this finding can be sent to Phil Detrich, Field Supervisor, Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office, 1829 South Oregon Street, Yreka, CA, 96097. Questions may also be emailed to: [Siskiyou\\_salamander@fws.gov](mailto:Siskiyou_salamander@fws.gov).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife requests that any new information concerning the status of, or threats to, these species be submitted to the Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office whenever it becomes available.

New information will help the Service monitor these species and encourage their conservation. If an emergency situation develops for these or any other species, we will act to provide immediate protection.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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