

This plan provides a framework for the recovery of Applegate's milk-vetch so it can at least be reclassified from endangered to threatened status, and might eventually no longer need the protection by the Endangered Species Act. This plan summarizes available information about the species, reviews the threats to its continued existence, and lists management actions needed to remove these threats. Immediate actions needed to prevent extinction of Applegate's milk-vetch includes conservation of natural populations and establishment of new populations. Inventories will be conducted to attempt to find undiscovered populations and to find suitable sites to establish new populations. Habitat management will be instituted for populations of this plant, as will monitoring to determine whether populations are likely to persist. Long-term activities necessary to perpetuate this species in its natural habitats include long-term seed storage and propagation to mitigate future population losses and make it possible to maintain genetic variability in small populations that are vulnerable to inbreeding depression and/or allele fixation. Research to define population self-sustainability, improve population establishment and augmentation techniques, assess the efficacy of habitat management strategies, and evaluate the plant's soil and water requirements are all needed to help make appropriate management decisions.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: September 18, 1997.

Don Weathers,

Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Region.

[FR Doc. 97-25420 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Availability of Draft Recovery Plan for Nelson's Checker-Mallow (Oregon and Washington) for Review and Comment

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability and public comment period.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability for public review of a draft recovery plan for the Nelson's checker-mallow (*Sidalcea nelsoniana*), listed as a threatened species on February 12, 1993 (58 FR 8242). The species occurs primarily as scattered populations in two distinct ecological regions—the northern Coast Range and the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Two outlying populations are located in the Puget Trough of Washington.

DATES: Comments on the draft recovery plan received by November 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the draft recovery plan may obtain a copy by contacting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon State Office, 2600 S.E. 98th Ave., Suite 100, Portland, Oregon 97266-1398. Written comments and material regarding the plan should be addressed to the Field Supervisor at the above address. Comments and materials received are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Andrew F. Robinson Jr., Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above address or by phone at 503/231-6179.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystems is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe the site specific management actions considered necessary for conservation and survival of the species, establish objectives and measurable criteria for the recovery levels for downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service, and

other affected Federal agencies, will take these comments into account in the course of implementing approved recovery plans.

Nelson's checker-mallow (*Sidalcea nelsoniana*) is a herbaceous perennial plant species in the mallow family (Malvaceae). Like many of the members of its genus, Nelson's checker-mallow produces mature plants that have either exclusively female flowers or perfect flowers. Nelson's checker-mallow is listed as threatened, with 59 known extant occurrences containing an estimated 27,000 individuals. The species typically occurs in or along the margins of seasonally moist, early successional valley bottom habitats of the Willamette Valley or in mountain meadows in the Oregon Coast Range.

Populations in the Willamette Valley are threatened by agriculture and urban development that has resulted in severe habitat depletion and modification, and the fragmentation of its populations into mostly small, widely-scattered patches. Successional species, primarily resulting from suppression or elimination of natural disturbances such as periodic flooding and fires, are eliminating Nelson's checker-mallow from much of its remaining habitat. In addition to land use threats, Willamette Valley populations are subject to competitive exclusion by exotic species, seed predation by weevils prior to seed dispersal, and increased vulnerability to extirpation due to small population size and genetic isolation, and lack of genetic variation within and among populations.

Land use threats are serious in the Oregon Coast Range, where the meadows occupied by Nelson's checker-mallow are isolated from agricultural and Urban development. The major land use threat in the Oregon Coast Range is inundation by a reservoir planned for Walker Creek, the site of the largest known population of the species. The habitat of several Oregon Coast Range populations is disturbed by recreational use of habitat by motorcyclists.

The objective of this plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of Nelson's checker-mallow so that its protection by the Act is no longer necessary. The plan will be made final and approved following incorporation of comments and material received during this comment period.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan described above. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to approval of this plan.

Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: September 14, 1997.

William F. Shake,

Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

[FR Doc. 97-25421 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Notice of Availability of the Draft Recovery Plan for the Pacific Pocket Mouse for Review and Comment**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability of the draft recovery plan for the endangered Pacific pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris pacificus*) for public review and comment. The Pacific pocket mouse occurs on 3 small parcels on private or federal lands in coastal Orange and San Diego Counties, California. The Service solicits review and comments from the public on this draft plan.

DATES: Comments on the draft recovery plan received by November 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the draft recovery plan may obtain a copy by contacting the Field Supervisor at the following address: Carlsbad Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2730 Loker Avenue West, Carlsbad, California, 92008. Telephone requests may be made by calling (760) 431-9440. Comments and material received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours, at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Loren R. Hays at the above address or telephone (760) 431-9440.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Restoring an endangered or threatened animal or plant to the point where it is again, a secure, self-sustaining member of its ecosystem is a primary goal of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species program. To help guide this effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions necessary for conservation of the species. The plans

additionally establish criteria for downlisting or delisting the species and provide estimates of the time and cost of implementing the necessary recovery measures.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act) requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that public notice be given during plan development to provide an opportunity for public review and comment. The Service will consider all significant information presented during the public comment period prior to the approval of each new or revised recovery plan. The Service and other federal agencies also will consider these comments in the course of implementing approved recovery plans.

The Pacific pocket mouse has an extremely limited distribution in coastal southern California. Less than 150 animals were detected in the 3 known populations from 1993-1995. Pacific pocket mice occur on fine-grain, sandy substrates and inhabit (or inhabited) coastal strand, coastal dunes, river alluvium, and coastal sage scrub habitats growing on marine terraces within approximately 4 kilometers (2.4 miles) of the ocean. The threats to the species include habitat destruction and fragmentation and documented depredation by cats. The conservation, protection, and management of existing populations and occupied and potential habitat are the primary goals of the recovery effort.

Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan described. All significant comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to the approval of the plan.

Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1533(f)).

Dated: August 19, 1997.

Thomas J. Dwyer,

Acting Regional Director.

[FR Doc. 97-25422 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Availability of Draft Recovery Plan for the Micronesian megapode (*Megapodius laperouse laperouse*) for Review and Comment**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability for public review of a draft recovery plan for the Micronesian megapode (*Megapodius laperouse laperouse*). This species is known only from the Mariana Islands and is currently limited to 10 islands in this archipelago with a total population of 1,000 to 1,500 individuals.

DATES: Comments on the draft recovery plan received by December 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the draft recovery plan are available for inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the following locations: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Office, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, room 6307, P.O. Box 50167, Honolulu, Hawaii 96850 (phone: 808/541-2749); the Northern Marianas College Library, P.O. Box 1250, Asterlaje Campus, Saipan, MP 96950 (phone: 670/234-5498, extension 1121/2); and University of Guam, RFK Memorial Library, UOG Station, Mangilao, Guam 96923 (phone: 671/734-9412). Requests for copies of the draft recovery plan and written comments and materials regarding the plan should be addressed to Brooks Harper, Field Supervisor-Ecological Services of the Pacific Islands Office at the Honolulu address given above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Lusk, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Recovery Branch, at the Honolulu address given above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystem is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States, its Territories and Commonwealths. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of the species, criteria for recognizing the recovery levels for downlisting or