

approval if a satisfactory parent company or similar guarantee is provided?

(6) Any other aspect of this issue.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Dated: September 18, 1998.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-25408 Filed 9-22-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reopening of Comment Period on 90-Day Finding and Commencement of Status Review for a Petition To List the Westslope Cutthroat Trout as Threatened; Correction

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; correction.

SUMMARY: In document 98-21995 beginning on page 43901 in the issue of Monday, August 17, 1998, make the following corrections:

On page 43902, at the end of the first paragraph in the second column, insert the following sentence: "However, in accordance with the current Service Listing Priority Guidance (63 FR 25502, May 8, 1998) the Service will require 9 months from the date of the finding (June 10, 1998) to complete a thorough biological status review and issue a 12-month finding."

On page 43902, third column, in the third sentence of the first full paragraph, the word "not" should be changed to "now."

Dated: September 15, 1998.

Terry Terrell,

Deputy Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 98-25250 Filed 9-22-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

RIN 1018-AD67

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Proposed Reclassification of Yacaré Caiman in South America From Endangered to Threatened, and the Listing of Two Other Caiman Species as Threatened by Reason of Similarity of Appearance

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to reclassify the yacaré (*Caiman yacare* also known as *Caiman crocodilus yacare*) from its present endangered status to threatened status under the Endangered Species Act (Act) because the endangered listing does not correctly reflect the present status of this animal. The Service also proposes to list the common caiman (*Caiman crocodilus crocodilus*) and the brown caiman (*Caiman crocodilus fuscus*) as threatened by reason of similarity of appearance. The yacaré is native to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Bolivia, and the other two caiman occur in Mexico and Central and South America. These three taxa are listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Listing the two taxa as threatened by reason of similarity of appearance will assist in protecting the yacaré caiman from uncontrolled use.

A special rule is also proposed for these three species that would allow U.S. commerce in caiman skins, other parts and products from individual countries of origin and countries of re-export if certain pre-trade conditions are satisfied for those countries. The several conditions largely pertain to the implementation of a CITES resolution on the universal tagging of crocodilian skins (adopted at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties) as well as conditions complementing the intent of this resolution and provisions to support the sufficiency of management of yacaré populations so that populations will be sustained through time.

In the case where tagged caiman skins and other parts are exported to a second country, usually for tanning and manufacturing purposes, and the processed skins and finished products are exported to the United States, the United States will prohibit imports of skins and products if it determines that

either the country of export or the country or countries of re-export are engaging in practices that are detrimental to the conservation of caiman populations.

The purpose of the special proposed rule is twofold. One is to promote the conservation of the yacaré caiman by ensuring proper management of the commercially harvested caiman species in the range countries and through implementation of trade controls as described in the CITES tagging resolution to reduce commingling of caiman specimens. The rule is also intended to relieve the burden on U.S. law enforcement personnel who must screen difficult to distinguish caiman products to exclude products from endangered or improperly identified species from U.S. commerce.

DATES: Comments from all interested parties must be received by December 22, 1998. Public hearing requests must be received by November 9, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments, information, and questions should be submitted to the Chief, Office of Scientific Authority; Mail Stop: Room 750, Arlington Square; 4401 North Fairfax Drive; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Fax number (703) 358-2276. Comments and other information received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Arlington, Virginia, address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Susan Lieberman, Chief, Office of Scientific Authority, at the above address, by phone at (703) 358-1708, or by E-mail at: Susan_Lieberman@mail.fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) recognizes that substantial populations of crocodilians that are managed as a sustainable resource can be utilized for commercial purposes while not adversely affecting the survival of individual populations of the species. When certain positive conservation conditions have been met, the Service has acted to allow utilization and trade from managed populations of the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), and has allowed the importation of commercial shipments of Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) skins, other parts, and products from several southern and eastern African countries and similar shipments of saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) specimens from Australia (61 FR 32356; June 24, 1996).