

4(b)(1)(A) of the Act directs that determinations as to whether any species is endangered or threatened must be made “solely on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available.”

You may submit your comments and materials by one of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES**. We request that you send comments only by the methods described in **ADDRESSES**. If you submit information via <http://www.regulations.gov>, your entire submission—including your personal identifying information—will be posted on the website. If your submission is made via a hardcopy that includes personal identifying information, you may request at the top of your document that we withhold this information from public review. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. We will post all hardcopy submissions on <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Comments and materials we receive, as well as supporting documentation we used in preparing this proposed rule, will be available for public inspection on <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket No. FWS–R8–ES–2018–0105, or by appointment, during normal business hours, at the Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office (see **ADDRESSES**). Our final determination concerning the November 7, 2019, revised proposed rule (84 FR 60278) will take into consideration all written comments we receive during the open comment periods and comments from peer reviewers. These comments will be included in the public record for this rulemaking, and we will fully consider them in the preparation of our final determination.

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: December 10, 2019.

Margaret E. Everson,

Principal Deputy Director, Exercising the Authority of the Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 2019–27270 Filed 12–18–19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

[4500030115]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 90-Day Findings for Two Species

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of petition findings and initiation of status reviews.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce 90-day findings on two petitions to add species to the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). Based on our review, we find that the petitions present substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned actions may be warranted. Therefore, with the publication of this document, we announce that we plan to initiate status reviews of the Bethany Beach firefly (*Photuris bethaniensis*) and Gulf Coast solitary bee (*Hesperapis oraria*) to determine whether the petitioned actions are warranted. To ensure that the status reviews are comprehensive, we are requesting scientific and commercial data and other information regarding the species and factors that may affect their status. Based on the status reviews, we will issue 12-month petition findings, which will address whether or not the petitioned actions are warranted, in accordance with the Act.

DATES: These findings were made on December 19, 2019. As we commence our status reviews, we seek any new information concerning the status of, or threats to, the species or their habitats. Any information received during the course of our status reviews will be considered.

ADDRESSES: *Supporting documents:* Summaries of the bases for the petition findings contained in this document are

available on <http://www.regulations.gov> under the appropriate docket number (see table under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**). In addition, this supporting information is available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours by contacting the appropriate person, as specified in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Status reviews: If you have new scientific or commercial data or other information concerning the status of, or threats to, the species for which we are initiating status reviews, please provide those data or information by one of the following methods:

(1) *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter the appropriate docket number (see table under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**). Then, click on the “Search” button. After finding the correct document, you may submit information by clicking on “Comment Now!” If your information will fit in the provided comment box, please use this feature of <http://www.regulations.gov>, as it is most compatible with our information review procedures. If you attach your information as a separate document, our preferred file format is Microsoft Word. If you attach multiple comments (such as form letters), our preferred format is a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel.

(2) *By hard copy:* Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: [Insert appropriate docket number; see table under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**], U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: JAO/1N, 5275 Leesburg Pike; Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

We request that you send information only by the methods described above. We will post all information we receive on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Species common name	Contact person
Bethany Beach firefly	Krishna Gifford, 413–253–8619; krishna_gifford@fws.gov .
Gulf Coast solitary bee	Sean Blomquist, 850–769–0552; sean_blomquist@fws.gov .

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 4 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1533) and its implementing regulations in title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (50 CFR part 424) set forth the procedures for adding species to,

removing species from, or reclassifying species on the Federal Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (List or Lists) in 50 CFR part 17. Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the Act requires that we make a finding on whether a

petition to add a species to the List (*i.e.*, “list” a species), remove a species from the List (*i.e.*, “delist” a species), or change a listed species’ status from endangered to threatened or from threatened to endangered (*i.e.*, “reclassify” a species) presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted. To the maximum extent practicable, we are to make this finding within 90 days of our receipt of the petition and publish the finding promptly in the **Federal Register**.

Our regulations establish that substantial scientific or commercial information with regard to a 90-day petition finding refers to “credible scientific or commercial information in support of the petition’s claims such that a reasonable person conducting an impartial scientific review would conclude that the action proposed in the petition may be warranted” (50 CFR 424.14(h)(1)(i)).

A species may be determined to be an endangered species or a threatened species because of one or more of the five factors described in section 4(a)(1) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1533(a)(1)). The five factors are:

- (a) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range (Factor A);
- (b) Overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes (Factor B);
- (c) Disease or predation (Factor C);
- (d) The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms (Factor D); or

(e) Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence (Factor E).

These factors represent broad categories of natural or human-caused actions or conditions that could have an effect on a species’ continued existence. In evaluating these actions and conditions, we look for those that may have a negative effect on individuals of the species, as well as other actions or conditions that may ameliorate any negative effects or may have positive effects.

We use the term “threat” to refer in general to actions or conditions that are known to, or are reasonably likely to, affect individuals of a species negatively. The term “threat” includes actions or conditions that have a direct impact on individuals (direct impacts), as well as those that affect individuals through alteration of their habitat or required resources (stressors). The term “threat” may encompass—either together or separately—the source of the action or condition or the action or condition itself. However, the mere identification of any threat(s) may not be sufficient to compel a finding that the information in the petition is substantial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted. The information presented in the petition must include evidence sufficient to suggest that these threats may be affecting the species to the point that the species may meet the definition of an endangered species or threatened species under the Act. If we find that a petition presents such information, our subsequent status review will evaluate

all identified threats by considering the individual-, population-, and species-level effects and the expected response by the species. We will evaluate individual threats and their expected effects on the species, then analyze the cumulative effect of the threats on the species as a whole. We also consider the cumulative effect of the threats in light of those actions and conditions that are expected to have positive effects on the species—such as any existing regulatory mechanisms or conservation efforts that may ameliorate threats. It is only after conducting this cumulative analysis of threats and the actions that may ameliorate them, and the expected effect on the species now and in the foreseeable future, that we can determine whether the species meets the definition of an endangered species or threatened species under the Act. If we find that a petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted, the Act requires that we promptly commence a review of the status of the species, and we will subsequently complete a status review in accordance with our prioritization methodology for 12-month findings (81 FR 49248; July 27, 2016).

Summaries of Petition Findings

The petition findings contained in this document are listed in the table below, and the basis for each finding, along with supporting information, is available on <http://www.regulations.gov> under the appropriate docket number.

TABLE: STATUS REVIEWS

Common name	Docket No.	URL to Docket on http://www.regulations.gov
Bethany Beach firefly	FWS-R5-ES-2019-0088	https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=FWS-R5-ES-2019-0088 .
Gulf Coast solitary bee	FWS-R4-ES-2019-0089	https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=FWS-R4-ES-2019-0089 .

Evaluation of a Petition To List the Bethany Beach Firefly

Species and Range

Bethany Beach firefly (*Photuris bethaniensis*); Sussex County, Delaware.

Petition History

On May 15, 2019, we received a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity and Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation requesting that the Bethany Beach firefly be listed as endangered or threatened and critical habitat be designated for this species under the Act. The petition clearly identified itself as such and included the requisite identification information

for the petitioner, required at 50 CFR 424.14(c). This finding addresses whether the petition presents substantial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted.

Finding

Based on our review of the petition and sources cited in the petition, we find that the petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted for the Bethany Beach firefly due to potential threats associated with the following: Habitat loss, degradation, or modification (via urban development, wetland conversion, and habitat fragmentation)

(Factor A); overutilization for recreational purposes (Factor B); and other natural or manmade factors (via light pollution, invasive species, pesticide use, and the effects of climate change (sea level rise, increased incidence of severe storms, and increased temperature and phenology changes)) (Factor E). The petition also presented substantial information indicating that the existing regulatory mechanisms may be inadequate to address impacts of these threats (Factor D).

The basis for our finding on this petition, and other information regarding our review of the petition, can be found as an appendix at <http://www.regulations.gov>

www.regulations.gov under Docket No. FWS-R5-ES-2019-0088 under the Supporting Documents section.

Evaluation of a Petition To List the Gulf Coast Solitary Bee

Species and Range

Gulf Coast solitary bee (*Hesperapis oraria*); Jackson County, Mississippi; Mobile and Baldwin Counties, Alabama; Escambia, Okaloosa, Walton, Santa Rosa, and Bay Counties, Florida.

Petition History

On April 2, 2019, we received a petition dated March 27, 2019, from the Center for Biological Diversity, requesting that the Gulf Coast solitary bee be listed as endangered or threatened and critical habitat be designated for this species under the Act. The petition clearly identified itself as such and included the requisite identification information for the petitioner, required at 50 CFR 424.14(c). This finding addresses whether the petition presents substantial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted.

Finding

Based on our review of the petition and sources cited in the petition, we find that the petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted for the Gulf Coast solitary bee due to potential threats associated with the following: Effects from climate change, pesticide spraying, and urbanization (Factor A); and loss of pollination mutualism (Factor E). The petition also presented substantial information indicating that the existing regulatory mechanisms may be inadequate to address impacts of these threats (Factor D).

The basis for our finding on this petition, and other information regarding our review of the petition, can be found as an appendix at <http://www.regulations.gov> under Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2019-0089 under the Supporting Documents section.

Conclusion

On the basis of our evaluation of the information presented in the petitions under sections 4(b)(3)(A) and 4(b)(3)(D)(i) of the Act, we have determined that the petitions summarized above for the Bethany Beach firefly and Gulf Coast solitary bee present substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned actions may be warranted. We are, therefore, initiating status reviews of these species to determine whether the actions are

warranted under the Act. At the conclusion of the status reviews, we will issue findings, in accordance with section 4(b)(3)(B) of the Act, as to whether the petitioned actions are not warranted, warranted, or warranted but precluded by pending proposals to determine whether any species is an endangered species or a threatened species.

Authors

The primary authors of this document are staff members of the Ecological Services Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Authority

The authority for these actions is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: December 5, 2019.

Margaret E. Everson,

Principal Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Exercising the Authority of the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 2019-27338 Filed 12-18-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 191213-0113]

RIN 0648-BJ08

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Greater Amberjack Management Measures

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes to implement management measures described in a framework action to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (FMP), as prepared by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). If implemented, this proposed rule would revise the commercial trip limit in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) exclusive economic zone (EEZ) for greater amberjack. In addition, this proposed rule would revise the boundaries of several Gulf reef fish management areas to reflect a change in the seaward boundary of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi for purposes of management

under the FMP to 9 nautical miles (nm). The purpose of this proposed rule and the framework action is to extend the commercial fishing season for greater amberjack by constraining the harvest rate while continuing to prevent overfishing and rebuild the stock in the Gulf, and to update the boundaries of reef fish management areas to reflect the current state boundaries.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before January 21, 2020.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the proposed rule, identified by “NOAA-NMFS-2019-0088” by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2019-0088, click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to Kelli O’Donnell, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

Electronic copies of the framework action, which includes an environmental assessment, a regulatory impact review, and a Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) analysis may be obtained from the Southeast Regional Office website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/framework-action-greater-amberjack-commercial-trip-limits>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kelli O’Donnell, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, telephone: 727-824-5305, email: Kelli.ODonnell@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf reef fish fishery, which includes greater amberjack, is managed under the FMP. The FMP was prepared by the Council and is implemented by NMFS through regulations at 50 CFR part 622 under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).