

PART 424—LISTING ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES AND DESIGNATING CRITICAL HABITAT

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AUTHORITY: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 49 FR 38908, Oct. 1, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 424.01 Scope and purpose.

(a) Part 424 provides regulations for revising the Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants and designating or revising the critical habitats of listed species. Part 424 provides criteria for determining whether species are endangered or threatened species and for designating critical habitats. Part 424 also establishes procedures for receiving and considering petitions to revise the lists and for conducting periodic reviews of listed species.

(b) The purpose of the regulations in part 424 is to interpret and implement those portions of the Act that pertain to the listing of species as threatened or endangered species and the designation of critical habitat.

§ 424.02 Definitions.

The definitions contained in the Act and parts 17, 222, and 402 of this title apply to this part, unless specifically modified by one of the following definitions. Definitions contained in part 17 of this title apply only to species under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Definitions contained in part 222 of this title apply only to species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Candidate. Any species being considered by the Secretary for listing as an endangered or threatened species, but not yet the subject of a proposed rule.

Conserve, conserving, and conservation. To use and the use of all methods and procedures that are necessary to bring any endangered or threatened species to the point at which the measures provided pursuant to the Act are no longer necessary, *i.e.*, the species is recovered in accordance with § 402.02 of this chapter. Such methods and procedures include, but are not limited to, all activities associated with scientific resources management such as research, census, law enforcement, habitat acquisition and maintenance, propagation, live trapping, and transplantation, and, in the extraordinary case where population pressures within a given ecosystem cannot be otherwise relieved, may include regulated taking.

Geographical area occupied by the species. An area that may generally be delineated around species' occurrences, as determined by the Secretary (*i.e.*, range). Such areas may include those areas used throughout all or part of the species' life cycle, even if not used on a regular basis (e.g., migratory corridors, seasonal habitats, and habitats used periodically, but not solely by vagrant individuals).

List or lists. The Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants found at 50 CFR 17.11(h) or 17.12(h).

Physical or biological features essential to the conservation of the species. The features that occur in specific areas and that are essential to support the

life-history needs of the species, including but not limited to, water characteristics, soil type, geological features, sites, prey, vegetation, symbiotic species, or other features. A feature may be a single habitat characteristic, or a more complex combination of habitat characteristics. Features may include habitat characteristics that support ephemeral or dynamic habitat conditions. Features may also be expressed in terms relating to principles of conservation biology, such as patch size, distribution distances, and connectivity.

Public hearing. An informal hearing to provide the public with the opportunity to give comments and to permit an exchange of information and opinion on a proposed rule.

Special management considerations or protection. Methods or procedures useful in protecting the physical or biological features essential to the conservation of listed species.

Species. Includes any species or subspecies of fish, wildlife, or plant, and any distinct population segment of any vertebrate species that interbreeds when mature. Excluded is any species of the Class Insecta determined by the Secretary to constitute a pest whose protection under the provisions of the Act would present an overwhelming and overriding risk to man.

Wildlife or fish and wildlife. Any member of the animal kingdom, including without limitation, any vertebrate, mollusk, crustacean, arthropod, or other invertebrate, and includes any part, product, egg, or offspring thereof, or the dead body or parts thereof.

[81 FR 7438, Feb. 11, 2016, as amended at 84 FR 45052, Aug. 27, 2019; 85 FR 81421, Dec. 16, 2020; 87 FR 37771, June 24, 2022]

§ 424.03 Has the Office of Management and Budget approved the collection of information?

The Office of Management and Budget reviewed and approved the information collection requirements contained in subpart B and assigned OMB Control No. 1018-0165. We use the information to evaluate and make decisions on petitions. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control

number. You may send comments on the information collection requirements to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at the address listed at 50 CFR 2.1(b).

[81 FR 66484, Sept. 27, 2016]

Subpart B—Revision of the Lists

§ 424.10 General.

The Secretary may add a species to the lists or designate critical habitat, delete a species or critical habitat, change the listed status of a species, revise the boundary of an area designated as critical habitat, or adopt or modify special rules (see 50 CFR 17.40–17.48 and parts 222 and 227) applied to a threatened species only in accordance with the procedures of this part.

§ 424.11 Factors for listing, delisting, or reclassifying species.

(a) Any species or taxonomic group of species (e.g., genus, subgenus) as defined in § 424.02(k) is eligible for listing under the Act. A taxon of higher rank than species may be listed only if all included species are individually found to be endangered or threatened. In determining whether a particular taxon or population is a species for the purposes of the Act, the Secretary shall rely on standard taxonomic distinctions and the biological expertise of the Department and the scientific community concerning the relevant taxonomic group.

(b) The Secretary shall make any determination required by paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) of this section *solely* on the basis of the best available scientific and commercial information regarding a species' status.

(c) A species shall be listed or reclassified if the Secretary determines, on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available after conducting a review of the species' status, that the species meets the definition of an endangered species or a threatened species because of any one or a combination of the following factors:

(1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range;