

for recommending which new studies or methods/metrics developers should use is not identified in the Guidelines. The Service will consider the best way to incorporate new science as it becomes available.

Comment: The Guidelines should adopt a risk-based approach to study duration as opposed to requiring a minimum of 3 years of preconstruction studies.

Response: The Service received many differing opinions on the appropriate duration of preconstruction studies in Tier 3. While some felt that a minimum of 3 years is prohibitive, others felt that it was not long enough. The final Guidelines remove the default of 3 years of preconstruction monitoring and instead recommend that studies be of sufficient duration and intensity to ensure that adequate data are collected to characterize wildlife use of the proposed project area as determined in communication with the Service. This approach allows for data collection commensurate with the level of risk, as opposed to an across-the-board standard that does not take into consideration the circumstances at individual sites.

Comment: The scope of the Guidelines should be “species of concern” as originally used by the Committee in their recommendations, as opposed to “fish, wildlife and their habitats.”

Response: After reviewing the definition of “species of concern,” the Service agrees that this term is most appropriate as it narrows the focus of developer’s studies to species that may potentially be significantly impacted by a wind energy project. The final Guidelines use the term “species of concern” for scope of species covered.

Comment: The Guidelines should not apply to distributed and community-scale wind energy projects. The costs associated with adhering to the Guidelines are prohibitive for smaller scale projects and will stall or prevent the development of small-scale wind energy.

Response: The Service recognizes that studies have not shown small-scale wind energy projects to have significant adverse impacts to wildlife. However, the Service also recognizes that a poorly sited project, no matter the size, has the potential to cause significant impacts. For this reason, distributed and community-scale projects are not “exempted” from the Guidelines. The Guidelines are voluntary. No wind energy developer is bound to follow them. The final Guidelines clarify that, in most cases, small-scale wind energy projects will not have significant adverse impacts, but developers should

still do a Tier 1 and/or Tier 2 analysis using publicly available information (e.g., internet searches) to ensure that the risk for potential impacts is low.

The final Guidelines preserve many elements from the previous drafts including descriptions of the information needed to identify, assess, mitigate, and monitor the potential adverse effects of wind energy projects on wildlife and their habitats; and flexibility to accommodate the unique circumstances of each project. The framework helps developers understand how to avoid or minimize effects to certain species, which is important for compliance with a number of laws, including MBTA, BGEPA, and ESA.

The levels of surveying, monitoring, assessing, and collecting other information will vary among different wind-energy projects due to the diverse geographic, climatological, and ecological features of potential wind development sites. Founded upon a “tiered approach” for assessing potential effects to species of concern and their habitats, the guidelines are intended to promote: Compliance with relevant laws and statutes; the use of scientifically rigorous survey, monitoring, assessment, and research designs proportionate to the potential risk to affected species; the accumulation of comparable data across the landscape; the identification of trends and patterns of effects; and, ultimately, the improved ability to predict and resolve effects locally, regionally, and nationally.

Authority: The authorities for this action are the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*); the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 as amended (16 U.S.C. 703–711); and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended (16 U.S.C. 668–668d).

Dated: March 20, 2012.

Daniel M. Ashe,

Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 2012–7011 Filed 3–23–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS–R4–ES–2012–N032;
FXES11130400000C2]

Recovery Plan for the Endangered *Spigelia gentianoides* (Gentian Pinkroot)

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: We, the Fish and Wildlife Service, announce the availability of the final recovery plan for *Spigelia gentianoides* (Gentian pinkroot), a threatened species restricted to six locations within three counties in the Florida Panhandle and two counties in Alabama. The recovery plan includes specific recovery objectives and criteria to be met in order to reclassify this species from endangered to threatened status under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act).

ADDRESSES: You may obtain a copy of the recovery plan by contacting the Panama City Field Office (PCFO), by U.S. mail at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Ave, Panama City, FL 32405, or by telephone at (850) 769–0552. Alternatively, you may visit the Fish and Wildlife Service’s recovery plan Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/species/recovery-plans.html> or the PCFO Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/panamacity/listedplants.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Vivian Negrón-Ortiz, at the above address, or by telephone at (850) 769–0552, ext. 231.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

We listed *Spigelia gentianoides* (Gentian pinkroot) as an endangered species under the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) on November 26, 1990 (55 FR 49046). *Spigelia gentianoides* is a small herbaceous plant and has two varieties: Var. *gentianoides* is restricted to five locations within three counties in the Florida Panhandle and southern Alabama, and var. *alabamensis* is limited to Bibb County, Alabama. The loss or alteration of habitat is thought to be the primary reason for the species’ decline. The extant plants of var. *gentianoides* are located in fire-dependent longleaf pine-wiregrass and pine-oak-hickory ecosystems. Much of this habitat has been reduced in its range, converted to pine plantation, and managed without fire. Variety *alabamensis* is a narrow endemic, restricted to the Bibb County Glades (open, almost treeless areas within woodlands). Some of the glades are owned and protected by The Nature Conservancy. However, this variety is threatened by potential development of privately owned glades.

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 endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, we are preparing recovery plans

for most listed species. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for conservation of the species, establish criteria for downlisting or delisting, and estimate time and cost for implementing recovery measures.

The 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 requires us to provide a public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment during recovery plan development. We made the draft of this recovery plan available for public comment from March 23 through May 23, 2011 (76 FR 16439). We considered information we received during this public comment period and information from peer reviewers in our preparation of this final recovery plan. Some sections of the recovery plan were edited based on peer reviewer and public comments. However, no substantial changes were made to the final plan.

Recovery Plan Criteria

The goal of this plan is to provide a framework to conserve and recover *S. gentianoides* so it may be reclassified to threatened status. *Spigelia gentianoides* will be considered for reclassification to threatened status when:

- Extant populations and newly discovered sites are identified and mapped;
- Inventories have been conducted across the species' historic sites and/or on new locations;
- Monitoring programs and management protocols on selected populations are established for 15 years to track threats to the species and its habitat;
- Extant populations located on public land are stable;
- The minimum viable population (MVP) size has been determined for each variety;
- Research on key aspects related to demography, reproductive biology, and seed ecology is accomplished; and
- Collect viable seeds from at least 50 percent of the populations for each variety and store them *ex situ* (off site—that is, in designated seed storage facilities).

In addition, the following specific actions must be completed for each variety:

- *Var. gentianoides*:
 - Sizes of populations # 1 to # 4 (out of 5) are increased via prescribed burns until plant numbers are stabilized;
 - At least one new population is found; and

- At least one population is re-established within the historic range.

- *Var. alabamensis*:

- Fifty percent of the Bibb County glades known to support the variety on private land are protected through conservation agreements, easements, or land acquisition.

As reclassification criteria are met the status of the species will be reviewed, and the species will be considered for reclassification to threatened status.

Defining delisting criteria is not possible at this time, given the current low numbers of populations and individuals, lack of information about the species' biology, and the magnitude of current threats from development. Reclassification criteria will be reevaluated and delisting criteria will be created as new scientific data and information become available and recovery actions are implemented.

Authority

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

Dated: January 24, 2012.

Mark J. Musaus,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. 2012-7180 Filed 3-23-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLCO956000.L14200000 BJ0000]

Notice of Filing of Plats

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of filing of plats; Colorado.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado State Office is publishing this notice to inform the public of the intent to file the land survey plats listed below, and to afford all affected parties a proper period of time to protest this action, prior to the plat filing.

DATES: Unless there are protests of this action, the filing of the plats described in this notice will happen on April 25, 2012.

ADDRESSES: BLM Colorado State Office, Cadastral Survey, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215-7093.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Randy Bloom, Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Colorado, (303) 239-3856.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The plat and field notes of the dependent

resurvey in Township 10 South, Range 70 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, were accepted on January 13, 2012.

The plat and field notes of the dependent resurvey and survey in Township 9 South, Range 71 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, were accepted on January 13, 2012.

The plat and field notes of the dependent resurvey and survey in Township 10 South, Range 71 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, were accepted on January 13, 2012.

The supplemental plat, in 4 sheets, of Section 8, in Township 1 North, Range 71 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on January 20, 2012.

The supplemental plat of Section 13, in Township 1 North, Range 72 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on January 27, 2012.

The plat incorporating the field notes, in 2 sheets, of the dependent resurvey in Township 51 North, Range 5 East, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on February 3, 2012.

The plat and field notes of the section subdivision and survey in Township 7 South, Range 95 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, were accepted on February 8, 2012.

The plat and field notes of the corrective dependent resurvey in Township 36 North, Range 11 West, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, were accepted on February 21, 2012.

Randy Bloom,

Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Colorado.

[FR Doc. 2012-7163 Filed 3-23-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLCO956000.L14200000 BJ0000]

Notice of Filing of Plats

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Filing of Plats; Colorado.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado State Office is publishing this notice to inform the public of the filing of the land survey plats listed below.

DATES: The plats described in this notice were filed on March 12, 2012.

ADDRESSES: BLM Colorado State Office, Cadastral Survey, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215-7093.