

when we publish our third CoP18-related **Federal Register** notice. You may obtain information on species proposals by contacting the Division of Scientific Authority at the telephone number or email address provided in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Our regulations governing this public process are found at 50 CFR 23.87.

Request for Information and Recommendations on Resolutions, Decisions, and Agenda Items

Although we have not yet received formal notice of the provisional agenda for CoP18, we invite your input on possible agenda items that the United States could recommend for inclusion, or on possible resolutions and decisions of the Conference of the Parties that the United States could submit for consideration. Copies of the agenda and the results of the most recent, or 17th, meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) in Johannesburg, South Africa, which took place from September 24, 2016, through October 5, 2016, as well as copies of all resolutions and decisions of the Conference of the Parties currently in effect, are available on the CITES Secretariat's website (<http://www.cites.org/>).

Observers

Article XI, paragraph 7 of CITES provides: "Any body or agency technically qualified in protection, conservation or management of wild fauna and flora, in the following categories, which has informed the Secretariat of its desire to be represented at meetings of the Conference by observers, shall be admitted unless at least one-third of the Parties present object:

(a) International agencies or bodies, either governmental or nongovernmental, and national governmental agencies and bodies; and

(b) national nongovernmental agencies or bodies which have been approved for this purpose by the State in which they are located.

Once admitted, these observers shall have the right to participate but not to vote."

National agencies or organizations within the United States must obtain our approval to participate in CoP18, whereas international agencies or organizations must obtain approval directly from the CITES Secretariat. We will publish information in a future **Federal Register** notice on how to request approved observer status. A factsheet on the process is posted on our website, at <https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/factsheet-become-observer-to-cites-meeting.pdf>.

Future Actions

As stated above, the next regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18) is scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka from May 23, 2019, through June 3, 2019. The United States must submit any proposals to amend Appendix I or II, or any draft resolutions, decisions, or agenda items for discussion at CoP18, to the CITES Secretariat no later than 150 days (tentatively December 24, 2018) prior to the start of the meeting. In order to meet this deadline and to prepare for CoP18, we have developed a tentative U.S. schedule. Approximately 12 months prior to CoP18, we plan to publish our next CoP18-related **Federal Register** notice announcing tentative species proposals that the United States is considering submitting for CoP18 and soliciting further information and comments on them. Following publication of that notice and approximately 10 months prior to CoP18, we plan to publish a **Federal Register** notice announcing draft resolutions, draft decisions, and agenda items the United States is considering submitting for CoP18 and soliciting further information and comments on them. Approximately 5 months prior to CoP18, we will post on our website an announcement of the species proposals, draft resolutions, draft decisions, and agenda items submitted by the United States to the CITES Secretariat for consideration at CoP18.

Through a series of additional notices and website postings in advance of CoP18, we will inform you about preliminary negotiating positions on resolutions, decisions, agenda items, and amendments to the Appendices proposed by other Parties for consideration at CoP18, and about how to obtain observer status from us. We will also publish an announcement of a public meeting tentatively to be held approximately 3 months prior to CoP18. That meeting will enable us to receive public input on our positions regarding CoP18 issues. The procedures for developing U.S. documents and negotiating positions for a meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES are outlined in 50 CFR 23.87. As noted in paragraph (c) of that section, we may modify or suspend the procedures outlined there if they would interfere with the timely or appropriate development of documents for submission to the CoP and of U.S. negotiating positions.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your

comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. If you submit a hardcopy comment 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.

Author

The primary author of this notice is Clifton A. Horton, Division of Management Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Authority

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

Gregory J. Sheehan,

Principal Deputy Director.

[FR Doc. 2018-04919 Filed 3-9-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2017-N112;
FXES1113090000C2-178-FF09E32000]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 5-Year Status Reviews of the Coqui Llanero, Carolina Heelsplitter, Hell Creek Cave Crayfish, *Aristida chaseae*, Pelos Del Diablo, Smooth Coneflower, Cooley's Meadowrue, and Louisiana Quillwort

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of initiation of reviews; request for information.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are initiating 5-year status reviews of eight species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. A 5-year review is an assessment of the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of the review. Therefore, we are requesting submission of information that has become available since the last reviews of these species.

DATES: To allow us adequate time to conduct these reviews, we must receive your comments or information on or before May 11, 2018. However, we will continue to accept new information about any listed species at any time.

ADDRESSES: For instructions on how to submit information and review information we receive on these species, see Request for New Information under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For species-specific information, see Request for New Information under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Why do we conduct 5-year reviews?

Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*; ESA), we maintain lists of endangered and threatened wildlife and plant species (referred to as the Lists) in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR 17.11 (for wildlife) and 17.12 (for plants). Section 4(c)(2)(A) of the ESA requires us to review each listed species' status at least once every 5 years. Our regulations at 50 CFR 424.21 require that we publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing those species under active review. For additional information about 5-year reviews, go to <http://www.fws.gov/angered/what-we-do/recovery-overview.html>, scroll down to "Learn More about 5-Year Reviews," and click on our factsheet.

Species Under Review

This notice announces our active review of eight species that are currently listed as endangered:

Fish and Wildlife

Coqui llanero (*Eleutherodactylus juanariveroi*) (frog species)
Carolina heelsplitter (*Lasmigona decorata*) (freshwater mussel species)
Hell Creek Cave crayfish (*Cambarus zophonastes*)

Plants

Aristida chaseae (no common name)
Aristida portoricensis (Pelos del diablo)
Echinacea laevigata (Smooth coneflower)
Thalictrum cooleyi (Cooley's meadowrue)
Isoetes louisianensis (Louisiana quillwort)

What information do we consider in our review?

A 5-year review considers the best scientific and commercial data that have become available since the current listing determination or most recent status review of each species, such as:

- A. Species biology, including but not limited to population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, and genetics;
- B. Habitat conditions, including but not limited to amount, distribution, and suitability;
- C. Conservation measures that have been implemented to benefit the species;
- D. Threat status and trends (see the five factors under the heading How Do

We Determine Whether A Species Is Endangered or Threatened?); and

E. Other new information, data, or corrections, including but not limited to taxonomic or nomenclatural changes, identification of erroneous information contained in the List, and improved analytical methods.

We request any new information concerning the status of any of these eight species. Information submitted should be supported by documentation such as maps, bibliographic references, methods used to gather and analyze the data, and/or copies of any pertinent publications, reports, or letters by knowledgeable sources.

Definitions

A. *Species* means any species or subspecies of fish, wildlife, or plant, and any distinct population segment of any species of vertebrate which interbreeds when mature.

B. *Endangered* means any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

C. *Threatened* means any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

How do we determine whether a species is endangered or threatened?

Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA requires that we determine whether a species is endangered or threatened based on one or more of the following five factors:

- A. The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range;
- B. Overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes;
- C. Disease or predation;
- D. The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or
- E. Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

Request for New Information

To do any of the following, contact the person associated with the species you are interested in below:

- A. To get more information on a species;
- B. To submit information on a species; or
- C. To review information we receive, which will be available for public inspection by appointment, during normal business hours, at the listed addresses.

Fish and Wildlife

- Coqui llanero: Jan Zegarra, by mail at the Caribbean Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, Road 301, Km. 5.1, P.O. Box 491, Boquerón, PR 00622; by fax at 787-851-7440; by phone at 787-851-7297, ext. 220; or by email at caribbean_es@fws.gov.

- Carolina heelsplitter: Morgan Wolf, by mail at the South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200, Charleston, SC 29412; by fax at 843-727-4218; by phone at 843-727-4707, ext. 219; or by email at charleston_recovery@fws.gov.

- Hell Creek Cave crayfish: Mitch Wine, by mail at Arkansas Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 110 South Amity Road, Suite 300, Conway, AR 72032; by fax at 501-513-4480; by phone at 870-269-3228; or by email at arkansas-es_recovery@fws.gov.

Plants

- *Aristida chaseae* and Pelos del diablo: Carlos Pacheco, by mail at the Caribbean Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Road 301, Km. 5.1, P.O. Box 491, Boquerón, PR 00622; by fax at 787-851-7440; by phone at 787-851-7297, ext. 221; or by email at caribbean_es@fws.gov.

- Cooley's meadowrue and Smooth coneflower: Dale Suiter, by mail at the Raleigh Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 551 Pylon Drive, #F, Raleigh, NC 27606; by fax at 919-856-4556; by phone at 919-856-4520, ext. 18; or by email at raleigh_es@fws.gov.

- Louisiana quillwort: Scott Wiggers, by mail at the Mississippi Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6578 Dogwood View Parkway, Jackson, MS 39213; by fax at 601-965-4340; by phone at 228-475-0765; or by email at Mississippi_field_office@fws.gov.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that the entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority: We publish this document under the authority of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: March 2, 2018.

Mike Oetker,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. 2018-04886 Filed 3-9-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-HQ-ES-2018-0004; FF09E15000-FXES111609B0000-189]

John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System; Hurricane Sandy Remapping Project for Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Jersey

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments; notice of public meetings via webcast and teleconference.

SUMMARY: The Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2006 requires the Secretary of the Interior to prepare digital versions of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) maps. We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have prepared proposed digital boundaries for the first batch of CBRS units included in the Hurricane Sandy Remapping Project. This first batch of the project includes a total of 148 CBRS units (112 existing units and 36 proposed new units) located in Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. This notice announces the availability of the proposed boundaries for public review and comment, and also advises the public of upcoming public meetings that will be held via webcast and teleconference.

DATES:

Comment Period: To ensure consideration, we must receive your written comments by July 10, 2018.

Public Meetings: We will hold public meetings via webcast and teleconference on May 8, 2018, and May 9, 2018; see Virtual Public Meetings and Meeting Participation Information under

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for meeting dates, times, and registration information.

Pre-Meeting Public Registration: If you are planning to participate in one of the virtual public meetings (being offered via webcast and telephone only), we request that participants register by emailing by May 1, 2018 (see Meeting Participation Information under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by one of the following methods:

- *Electronically:* Go to the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search for FWS-HQ-ES-2018-0004, which is the docket number for this notice.

- *By hard copy:* Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-HQ-ES-2018-0004; Division of Policy, Performance, and Management Programs; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: BPHC; Falls Church, VA 22041-3808.

We request that you send comments by only one of the methods described above. We will post all information received on <http://www.regulations.gov>. If you provide personal identifying information in your comment, 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Katie Niemi, Coastal Barriers Coordinator, (703) 358-2071 (telephone); or CBRA@fws.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2006 (section 4 of Pub. L. 109-226; CBRRA) requires the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to prepare digital versions of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) maps. We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have prepared proposed digital boundaries for the first batch of CBRS units included in the Hurricane Sandy Remapping Project. This first batch of the project includes a total of 148 CBRS units (112 existing units and 36 proposed new units) located in Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. This notice announces the availability of the proposed boundaries for public review and comment, and also advises the public of upcoming public meetings that will be held via webcast and teleconference.

Background on the Coastal Barrier Resources System

Coastal barrier ecosystems are inherently dynamic systems located at the interface of land and sea. Coastal barriers and their associated aquatic habitat (wetlands and open water) provide important habitat for fish and wildlife, and serve as the mainland's first line of defense against the impacts of severe storms. With the passage of the CBRA in 1982 (16 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), Congress recognized that certain actions and programs of the Federal Government have historically subsidized and encouraged

development on storm-prone and highly dynamic coastal barriers, and the result has been the loss of natural resources; threats to human life, health, and property; and the expenditure of millions of tax dollars each year.

The CBRA established the CBRS which originally comprised 186 geographic units encompassing approximately 453,000 acres of relatively undeveloped lands and associated aquatic habitat along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts. The CBRS was expanded by the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 (CBIA; Pub. L. 101-591) to include additional areas along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts, as well as areas along the coasts of the Great Lakes, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. The CBRS now comprises a total of 862 geographic units, encompassing approximately 3.5 million acres of land and associated aquatic habitat. These areas are depicted on a series of maps known as the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System maps.

Most new Federal expenditures and financial assistance that would have the effect of encouraging development are prohibited within the CBRS. Development can still occur within the CBRS, provided that private developers or other non-Federal parties bear the full cost. In his signing statement, President Reagan stated that the CBRA "simply adopts the sensible approach that risk associated with new private development in these sensitive areas should be borne by the private sector, not underwritten by the American taxpayer."

The CBRS includes two types of units, System Units and Otherwise Protected Areas (OPAs). System Units contain areas that were relatively undeveloped and predominantly privately owned at the time of designation, though they may also contain areas held for conservation and/or recreation. Most new Federal expenditures and financial assistance, including Federal flood insurance, are prohibited within System Units. OPAs are predominantly comprised of conservation and/or recreation areas such as national wildlife refuges, state and national parks, and local and private conservation areas, though they may also contain private areas not held for conservation and/or recreation. OPAs are denoted with a "P" at the end of the unit number. The only Federal spending prohibition within OPAs is the prohibition related to Federal flood insurance.

The Secretary, through the Service, is responsible for administering the CBRA, which includes maintaining the official