

Limnanthes floccosa subsp. *californica* (Butte County meadowfoam), (2) Suisun song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia maxillaris*), (3) Buena Vista Lake shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*), Santa Catalina shrew (*Sorex ornatus willetti*), Suisun shrew (*Sorex ornatus sinuosus*), and salt march wandering shrew (*Sorex vagrans halicoetes*). All three petitions were found to present substantial information indicating that the requested actions may be warranted. A status review of the Suisun song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia maxillaris*) is initiated herewith. Comments and data on this and the other species (for which status review is already in progress) are requested.

DATES: The findings announced in this notice were made during the period from March 20, 1988, to June 28, 1988. Comments and information should be submitted by February 28, 1989.

ADDRESSES: Information, comments, or questions should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Endangered Species, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1823, Sacramento, California 95825. The petitions, findings, supporting data, and comments are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Harlow, Acting Field Supervisor, at the above address (916/978-4866 or FTS 460-4866).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, (Act) as amended in 1982 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), requires that the Service make a finding on whether a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species presents substantial scientific or commercial information to demonstrate that the petition action may be warranted. To the maximum extent practicable, this finding is to be made within 90 days of the receipt of the petition, and the finding is to be published promptly in the Federal Register. If the finding is positive, the Service is also required to promptly commence a review of the status of the involved species.

In recent months the Service has received and made 90-day findings on the following petitions:

Charlice Danielsen, president of the California Native Plant Society, submitted a petition to the Service to emergency list *Limnanthes floccosa* subsp. *californica* (Butte County meadowfoam) as an endangered species. This petition was dated

February 12, 1988, and received by the Service on February 22, 1988. The petition reported that only four of the original eight known populations remain of this subspecies, which is restricted to vernal pool habitats in Butte County, California. A field survey to precisely delimit the number and distribution of meadowfoam populations recently has been completed. Although reportedly additional population sites were located, the final report regarding the survey result has not been released. All information now available to the Service tends to confirm the petition claim. Therefore, the Service found that this petition did present substantial information indicating that the requested action may be warranted. In the case of positive findings, the Service is required to initiate a status review of the involved species. However, a status review of this taxon already is in progress, as it was included as a category 1 species on the Service's Review of Plants in the Federal Register of September 27, 1985 (50 FR 39559).

Dr. Joe T. Marshall and nine associates jointly submitted a petition to list as endangered the Suisun song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia maxillaris*). An incomplete version of this petition was submitted on November 23, 1987, and a complete petition was received by the Service on December 22, 1987. This subspecies of song sparrow is endemic to the tidal marshes of Suisun Bay, Solano County, California. The petition contained documentation that the subspecies has suffered a loss of approximately 90 percent of its historical habitat from diking and filling activities, and that it currently faces lesser threats from a variety of factors, such as predation and pollution. All information presently available to the Service tends to confirm these claims. The Service, therefore, found that this petition presented substantial information indicating that the required action may be warranted. Additional information is needed, particularly on current threats to this subspecies, before proper status determination can be made. In the case of positive findings, the Service is required to initiate a status review of the involved species. Hence, the Service seeks additional information concerning this song sparrow.

Ms. Doris Dixon, representing The Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals and Nature, submitted a petition to list four species of California shrews, the Buena Vista lake shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*), Santa Catalina shrew (*Sorex ornatus willetti*), Suisun shrew (*Sorex ornatus sinuosus*), and salt

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Findings on Petitions and Initiation of Status Reviews

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of petition findings and status review.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces 90-day findings for three Endangered Species Act listing petitions filed with respect to: (1)

marsh wandering (vagrant) shrew (*Sorex vagrans halicoetes*). This petition was dated April 15, 1988, and was received by the Service on April 18, 1988. Materials attached to the petition, excerpted from a contract report completed for the California Department of Fish and Game, indicated that these shrews have been severely impacted by conversion or degradation of habitats resulting from wetland modification for urban or agricultural purposes, water diversion, and/or introduction of exotic animal species. Information available from Service-funded status surveys for the Catalina shrew, salt marsh wandering shrew, and Suisun shrew, substantiates this claim. Recent sightings of two Buena Vista lake shrews confirm that the subspecies is still extant. The rarity of these animals, however, has restricted the ability of investigators to gather information relating to current distribution and population trends. The Service found that substantial information was presented in the petition and the petitioned action may be warranted for these four taxa. In the case of positive findings, the Service is required to initiate status reviews of the involved species. However, status reviews of the shrews covered by the subject petition already are in progress, as these taxa were included as category 2 species in the Service's Review of Vertebrate Wildlife that was published in the *Federal Register* of September 18, 1985 (50 FR 37958-37967).

The Service would appreciate any additional data, comments, and suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested party concerning the status of these species, particularly the Suisun song sparrow.

Author

This notice was prepared by Dr. Kathleen E. Franzreb, Endangered Species Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1823, Sacramento, California 95825 (916/978-4866 or FTS 460-4866).

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended: Pub. L. 93-205, 87 Stat. 884; Pub. L. 94-359, 90 Stat. 911; Pub. L. 95-632, 92 Stat. 3751; Pub. L. 96-159, 93 Stat. 1225; Pub. L. 97-304, 96 Stat. 1411; Pub. L. 100-478, 102 Stat. 2306; Pub. L. 100-653, 102 Stat. 3825 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); Pub. L. 99-625, 100 Stat. 3500, unless otherwise noted.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened wildlife, Fish, Marine mammals, Plants (agriculture).

Dated: December 22, 1988.

Becky Norton Dunlop,

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

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