

# Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for Five Southeastern Fishes

## About the Document

**Title:** Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for the Cumberland Darter, Rush Darter, Yellowcheek Darter, Chucky Madtom, and Laurel Dace.

**Summary:** We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), propose critical habitat for the Cumberland darter (*Etheostoma susanae*), rush darter (*Etheostoma phytophilum*), yellowcheek darter (*Etheostoma moorei*), chucky madtom (*Noturus crypticus*), and laurel dace (*Chrosomus saylori*) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). The proposed critical habitat of the Cumberland darter is located in McCreary and Whitley Counties, Kentucky and Campbell and Scott Counties, Tennessee; the proposed critical habitat of the rush darter is located in Etowah, Jefferson, and Winston Counties, Alabama; the proposed critical habitat of the yellowcheek darter is located in Cleburne, Searcy, Stone, and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas; the proposed critical habitat of the chucky madtom is located in Greene County, Tennessee; and the proposed critical habitat of the laurel dace is located in Bledsoe, Rhea, and Sequatchie Counties, Tennessee.

**Type of Review:** Influential

## Timeline of the Peer Review (Estimated Dates):

**Draft document disseminated:** Summer 2011

**Peer review initiated:** Summer 2011

**Peer review completed by:** Winter 2011

**Date Document will be finalized:** Summer 2012

## About the Peer Review Process:

The Service will solicit written comments from at least six independent scientific reviewers. Formal request for peer review will be made by individual letters to experts with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, University of Alabama, Auburn University, the Geological Survey of Alabama, Conservation Fisheries, Inc., Tennessee Tech University, and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Reviewers will be selected by the Service for their recognized expertise in these fishes and their habitats. This review will occur concurrently with the public comment period for the proposed action. The public comment period is anticipated to be open sometime in the summer of 2011.

The Service will use the information received from the peer review, as appropriate, to develop the final critical habitat rule for the five fishes.

## **About Public Participation:**

Public comments on the five fishes proposed critical habitat rule will be sought with a Federal Register announcement expected in the summer of 2011, and the distribution by mail and press release of this announcement to interested parties. This comment period will end 60 days from the date it publishes in the Federal Register. The peer review plan is made available on this website to allow the public to comment and monitor our compliance with the Office of Management and Budget's "Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review."

## **Contact:**

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