

USFWS Announces the Initiation of 5-Year Reviews for
Two Species

NEWS RELEASE
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
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For Immediate Release

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U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE ANNOUNCES THE INITIATION OF
5-YEAR REVIEWS FOR TWO SPECIES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today it is initiating 5-year reviews for the black-footed ferret and the pallid sturgeon to ensure that the listing classification of these species is accurate as required by the Endangered Species Act.

To assist in its reviews, the Service is seeking the latest scientific and commercial information from the public, government agencies, tribes, industry and the scientific and conservation communities.

"This is an opportunity for the scientific community and other members of the public to actively engage in the evaluation of some of our threatened and endangered species," said Ralph Morgenweck, regional director of the Service's Mountain-Prairie Region. "The black-footed ferret and pallid sturgeon are the first two of several species this region will comprehensively review," Morgenweck added.

Periodic status reviews of all listed species are required by the ESA to determine whether a species' classification as threatened or endangered is still appropriate. The Service is seeking any new information that has become available since the time of listing of these species. If the best scientific and commercial data are not consistent with the current classification of any species, the Service will recommend a change in the species' federal classification. A species could be recommended for reclassification from endangered to

threatened (downlisting), from threatened to endangered (uplisting), or for removal from the federal list of threatened and endangered species (delisting). Any recommended change in classification would be subject to a separate rulemaking process that includes opportunities for public review and comment. If no change in classification is recommended, the species would remain under its current listing status.

Information that is considered in a status review includes:

- Species biology, including but not limited to, population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics and genetics;
- Habitat conditions including, but not limited to, amount, distribution and suitability;
- Conservation measures that have been implemented that benefit the species;
- Threat status and trends; and
- 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.

For more information on the status reviews, please see the Federal Register, dated July 8, 2005.

To submit information or comments on the black-footed ferret, please send to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (attn: black-footed ferrets), 420 S. Garfield Avenue, Suite 400, Pierre, SD 57501, (605)224-8693, x24.

To submit information or comments on the pallid sturgeon, please send to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (attn: pallid sturgeons), 2900 4th Avenue North, Room 301, Billings, Montana 59101, (406)247-7365. Additional information or comments for black-footed ferrets and pallid sturgeons must be received by September 6, 2005.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions

of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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