



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS–R7–ES–2026–0991; FXES11130700000–267–FF07C00000]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Initiation of 5-Year Status Reviews for the Eskimo Curlew, Spectacled Eider, and Southwest Alaska Distinct Population Segment of the Northern Sea Otter

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

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

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are initiating 5-year status reviews under the Endangered Species Act for the Eskimo curlew, spectacled eider, and Southwest Alaska distinct population segment of the northern sea otter. A 5-year status review is based on the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of the review; therefore, we are requesting submission of any new information on these species that has become available since the last reviews.

DATES: *Comment submission:* Comments will be accepted on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]. Comments submitted electronically using the Federal eRulemaking Portal (see **ADDRESSES**, below) must be received by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on the closing date.

To ensure your comment is received and considered, you must submit it using one of the methods identified in the **ADDRESSES** section of this document. Comments submitted through any method not authorized in this document, or sent to an address not listed here, will not be considered.

ADDRESSES: *Comment submission:* All submissions must include the docket number [FWS–R7–ES–2026–0991] this document. You must submit comments using one of the following methods:

- *Electronic submission:* Federal eRulemaking Portal at: <https://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS–R7–ES–2026–0991, which is the docket number for this action. Then click the Search button. On the resulting page, you may submit a comment by clicking on “Comment.” Please ensure that you have found the correct document before submitting your comments.
- *U.S. mail:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS–R7–ES–2026–0991, Policy and Regulations Branch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

Comments submitted through any method not authorized in this document, or sent to an address not listed here, will not be considered. We will not accept comments via email, fax, or hand delivery. We are not required to consider comments that are submitted after the comment period ends or that are submitted via a method outside of these instructions. Comments containing profanity, vulgarity, threats, or other inappropriate content will not be considered.

For more about submitting information, see **Request for Information** in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For Eskimo curlew and spectacled eider: Dan Rizzolo, by telephone at 907–416–5640 or by one of the methods in **ADDRESSES**.

For the Southwest Alaska distinct population segment of the northern sea otter: Paul Schuette, by telephone at 907–342–5324 or by one of the methods in **ADDRESSES**.

Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TTD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are initiating 5-year status reviews under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) for the Eskimo curlew (*Numenius borealis*), spectacled eider (*Somateria*

fischeri), and Southwest Alaska distinct population segment of the northern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*). A 5-year status review is based on the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of the review; therefore, we are requesting submission of any such information that has become available since the last review for these species in 2021, particularly information on the status, threats, and recovery of the species (86 FR 40615).

Why Do We Conduct 5-Year Reviews?

Under the ESA, we maintain Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (which we collectively refer to as the List) in title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR 17.11 (for wildlife) and 50 CFR 17.12 (for plants). Section 4(c)(2)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(c)(2)(A)) requires us to review each listed species' status at least once every 5 years. Our regulation at 50 CFR 424.21 requires that we publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing that a species is under active review. For additional information about 5-year reviews, refer to our fact sheet at <https://www.fws.gov/project/five-year-status-reviews>.

What Information Do We Consider in Our Reviews?

A 5-year status review considers all new information available at the time of the review. In conducting these reviews, we consider 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 that benefit the species;
- D. Threat status and trends in relation to the five listing factors (as defined in section 4(a)(1) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(a)(1))); 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.

Any new information will be considered during the 5-year review and will also be useful in evaluating the ongoing recovery programs for the species.

In the case of the Eskimo curlew, we concluded in our 2021 5-year review that the probability that the species remained extant was extremely low based on the scarcity of recent sightings and the length of time that has passed since the last sighting that was confirmed with physical evidence. We will therefore focus this 5-year review upon reported sightings or other recent information on the species' possible existence. Thus, we ask, in particular, for information on recent sightings, including indication as to whether corroborating evidence (such as photographs) is available for Eskimo curlew.

Which Species Are Under Review?

Entity listed: Eskimo curlew (*Numenius borealis*).

- **Listing status:** Endangered.
- **Where listed:** Wherever found.
- **Final listing rule (*Federal Register* citation and publication date):** 32 FR 4001; March 11, 1967, under the Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966.

Entity listed: Spectacled eider (*Somateria fischeri*).

- **Listing status:** Threatened.
- **Where listed:** Wherever found.
- **Final listing rule (*Federal Register* citation and publication date):** 58 FR 27474; May 10, 1993.

Entity listed: Southwest Alaska distinct population segment of the northern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*).

- **Listing status:** Threatened.
- **Where listed:** Southwest Alaska, from Attu Island to Western Cook Inlet, including Bristol Bay, the Kodiak Archipelago, and the Barren Islands.

- **Final listing rule (*Federal Register* citation and publication date):** 70 FR 46366;

August 9, 2005.

Request for New Information

To ensure that a 5-year review is complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial information, we request new information from all sources. See *What Information Do We Consider in Our Review?* for specific criteria. If you submit information, please support it with documentation such as maps, references, methods used to gather and analyze the data, and/or copies of any pertinent publications, reports, or letters by knowledgeable sources.

How Do I Ask Questions or Provide Information?

If you wish to provide information for any species listed above, please submit your comments and materials to the appropriate contact in the **ADDRESSES** listed above. You may also direct questions to those contacts (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

Public Availability of Comments

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

Completed and Active Reviews

A list of all completed and currently active 5-year status reviews can be found at:
<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/species-five-year-review>.

Authority

This document is published under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Sara Boario,
Regional Director, Alaska Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

