

Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program-Update

ISSSSP List Update News-Delayed Again

The ISSSSP list update was delayed once again. The main reason for this was to reduce the number of times that the Regional Office/State Office would request field review of draft lists.

Many things occurred throughout this past year that influences revision of our agency SSS lists. In December 2008, the Washington Office of the BLM revised the BLM 6840 Manual that establishes policy for Special Status Species. This included a change in the BLM's criteria for determining inclusion as a Sensitive species. This required the ISSSSP to review our existing interagency criteria for any possible changes in order to be consistent with this new policy while remaining consistent with FSM 2670. The result is that we do have minor changes that affect the SSS criteria and resulting list. Also, the Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center (ORNHIC) updated their list in April 2009 and Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) updated their list in May 2009. Changes to species ranks and species removals/additions to their list of rare species for each state have been incorporated into the agency draft SSS lists.

This month, the ISSSSP will send out a draft Special Status Species (SSS) list with the new draft criteria for field review. The field units will

then have six weeks for review. The review should focus on:

1. The SSS draft criteria and whether they are consistent with the new BLM 6840 Sensitive Species criteria and existing FSM 2670,
2. Changes that application of the new criteria have to the SSS list,
3. Identifying Documented and Suspected occurrence information for new species added to the list, and
4. Updates to Documented or Suspected occurrence information for species that have been on the list.

When we receive comments back, the ISSSSP will review comments, make corrections to documented and suspected occurrence status, and resolve any issues related to the draft ISSSSP list criteria. A final list with new final criteria will be transmitted early in 2010.

For additional information, please contact Carol Hughes.

ORNHIC List Update – Coming in 2010

The Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center (ORNHIC) is in the process of compiling information in order to update their Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species or Oregon list with expectations of a new publication in spring of 2010.

A group of botanists met in Corvallis on the Oregon State University campus (October 23, 2009) to review species information and recommend rank and list changes. Sue Vrillakas and John Christy will review and compile the comments and consider this information for the 2010 update.

If you have information that may affect the species rank/status within the state, please be sure to contact Sue Vrillakas, sue.vrillakas@oregonstate.edu, with vascular plant information and John Christy, john.christy@oregonstate.edu, with fungi, lichen and bryophyte information.

If you have information on fauna species, please contact Eleanor Gaines, eleonor.gaines@oregonstate.edu.

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Key Points in this issue:

- ISSSSP List Update to occur winter 2009-2010
- Priority species and key information gaps to be determined by field this spring.
- Project Proposals for FY11 funding due in April 2010
- New work group for Townsend's big-eared bat to start in 2010

Inventory and Monitoring

FY09 projects are still being wrapped up. There were more than 40 separate ISSSSP inventory, monitoring, habitat modeling, or taxonomic resolution projects in FY09. Nearly the same number of projects are being funded in FY10. The FY09 project reports will soon be posted on the ISSSSP web page - <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/inventories/reports.shtml>

Last spring was the first time fungal proposals were accepted. Nine proposals were submitted for the Fungi Work Group to evaluate. Seven of the proposals were selected for funding. The majority of the proposals were for fungal surveys.

Arthropod Highlight

In northeastern Washington, surveys for invertebrates, even the charismatic Lepidoptera (butterflies) and odonates (dragonflies and damselflies), have been ad hoc in nature. The Colville National Forest has coordinated limited surveys for odonates since 2005, though most of the surveys were located at low or mid elevations. In 2009, the ISSSSP funded Chris Loggers from the Colville National Forest to document odonates that occupy high-elevation wetlands on the Colville National Forest. Of more than 40 high-elevation wetlands identified, 5 sites were selected to survey in 2009. Each site was surveyed 3 times: early, mid- and late summer/early autumn during warm, sunny weather and during periods of the day that covered flight times of various odonates. Thirty-two different species were found. At each site the first specimen of each species captured was photographed. The sensitive species *Aeshna subarctica* was found at 2 new sites. Three new county records were made for the species *Aeshna juncea*, *A. sitchensis*, and *A. umbrosa*. The July capture of *Coenagrion interrogatum* and September captures of *Somatochlora minor*, *A. sitchensis* and *A. subarctica* extended the known flight dates for these species in Washington.

Specimen Identification Services

Almost 1200 vouchers were submitted to the ISSSSP this past fiscal year for expert identification. Of these, 975 were from field units (see table). The remainder

Bryophytes	Lichens	Fungi	Mollusks
149	548	201	77

Please send vouchers to Darci Rivers-Pankratz, the ISSSSP Inventory Coordinator Assistant. Darci will get the specimen vouchers to the correct expert for ID verification. Darci's contact information and vouchering guidelines are at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/inventories/identification.shtml>. The ISSSSP Program covers the costs of expert ID verification for mollusks, lichens, bryophytes, and fungi. We will establish contacts for identification of other invertebrates so let us know if there are particular species or groups of invertebrates we should focus upon.

For additional information about ISSSSP inventory or monitoring efforts, please contact Kelli Van Norman.

Mollusk Highlight

In 2008, the salamander slug (*Gliabates oregonius*), also known as the axetail slug, was added to the sensitive species list. Following its inclusion on the sensitive species list, biologists on the McKenzie River Ranger District, Willamette National Forest reviewed previous mollusk surveys conducted under the "Survey and Manage Program". In their review they found a high number of reported detections of salamander slugs in the upper portion of the Blue River drainage. The reports showed detections of 139 individuals at 86 locations during surveys 1998-1999 connected with a timber sale planned in that area, but no vouchers were collected. One third of the salamander slug sites were resurveyed in fall 2008. Salamander slugs were located at 15 of 36 sites (42%) where they had been reported found in 1998-1999 with a total of 34 individuals. Vouchers were sent to Tom Burke, William Leonard, and Lyle Chichester for verification. From external appearance the slugs match the description of *G. oregonius*. However, internal examinations do not match. *Gliabates oregonius* is the only species of *Gliabates* and there are no readily apparent look-alikes. If the individuals are not *G. oregonius*, then it is possible they represent a previously undescribed species.

Fungi Highlight

There have been very few rare fungal surveys east of the Northwest Forest Plan in Oregon and Washington. In September 2009 Paula Brooks from the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, led a baseline fungal survey effort. She was joined by volunteers from the Southern Idaho Mycological Association and a handful of FS/BLM botanists who conducted the surveys at 13 different sites and collected mushrooms. A contract mycologist was present at base camp to help identify specimens. They also had a photography station and each voucher was photographed. Despite September being quite dry, they found 107 species with one being potentially rare and another newly documented in the Pacific Northwest.



Program Planning

Priority species and information gaps

In 2005, the ISSSSP asked field units to help identify priority species and information gaps in order to determine the most important tasks for the program to work on and fund. It's time to update the information field units previously provided, as many tasks have been accomplished, priorities may have changed, and species have been added to the list since our initial query.

In order to get updates from the field for each of the Sensitive species a questionnaire will be sent out after the updated SSS list is finalized this winter. (This had been planned for last year, but has been delayed by the draft list process-see page 1 of this update).

Field units will be asked to update information previously provided and identify new priorities, as needed. Over the course of the summer, this information will be processed to help identify new high priority species and information gaps to work on over the next few years. The end product will be an update to the ISSSSP internal "Implementation Guide", which will serve as an action plan for ISSSSP personnel, and will be a useful tool for field units when submitting projects through the annual ISSSSP Project Proposal Process.

FY11 ISSSP Project Proposals

A call for proposals will come out in February, with a likely due date in April. Proposals should focus on priority species, and priority information gaps, using the SSSS Implementation Guide to help identify potential projects. Last year about 60 projects were submitted (10 for fungi) for SSSS funding, with approximately \$400K going to field units to cover selected projects.

For more information contact Rob Huff or Kelli Van Norman

Conservation Planning

Ongoing work

Work on the following is in various stages of progress:

- Conservation Strategies: *Penstemon peckii*, *Calochortus longebarbatus* var. *peckii*, *Botrychium pumicola*, *Cyrtopodium fasciculatum*, *Sisyrinchium sarmentosum*, *Castilleja chlorotica*, *Kalmiopsis fragrans*.
- Conservation Assessments: *Achnatherum wallowaensis*, *Achnatherum hendersonii*, *Sidalcea hirtipes*, *Arcostaphylos hispidula*, *Penstemon glaucinus*, *Pogogyne floribunda*, Van Dyke's salamander, Inland tailed frog, Cascade torrent salamander, Cope's giant salamander, Gray flycatcher, Great gray owl.
- Species fact sheet: 8 lichens, 1 fungi, 32 invertebrates, 2 birds, 1 plant
- Site management plans: *Artemisia campestris* ssp. *borealis* var. *wormskioldii*, *Amasincia carinata*, *Sisyrinchium hitchcockii*, *Horkelia congesta*, Townsend's big-eared bats (2).

Completed documents

Since the last ISSSP update (April 2009), a number of conservation planning documents have been completed. Here's a select list of documents posted on our website since the last update:

- Conservation Planning Tools: Links to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife GAP analysis products; Oregon Explorer tools; and a mollusk relocation guide;
- Updated or new species fact sheets for 24 invertebrates, 4 fungi, 43 bryophytes (including photographs for many), 13 lichens (with maps for some), and 2 vertebrates.
- Conservation Assessments: Western painted turtle, Western pond turtle, Sharp-tailed snake, and an update to the Foothill yellow-legged frog CA.

Conservation highlight: Site Management Plans

These Plans can be used to identify current conditions and threats at a rare species location, a desired longer-term condition, and actions needed to move towards that goal. The Plans can serve as future foundations for requesting monies from ISSSSP for restoration and habitat management work. Currently Plans are in draft stage for a couple of federal candidate species: 12 locations of the Mardon skipper in southwestern Oregon, and 14 sites of the Oregon spotted frog (out of approximately 45 sites total for this species). Plans can identify timelines, personnel, costs, and NEPA needs. To see a site management plan format check out:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/planning-documents/site-management.shtml>

For more information about Conservation Planning documents and work, contact Rob Huff.

West Coast Fisher Conservation Assessment and Strategy

The Draft Conservation Assessment has been revised to consider and incorporate comments received during peer-review and selected internal and external review. The final assessment was sent back to the Fisher Science Team and the Fisher Steering Committee in early December for final review prior to submission for publication.

The final draft Conservation Strategy will be sent to the Science Team and Steering Committee in early January. In the early part of 2010 the strategy will be tested on projects, initially in the southern portion of the assessment area and southern Oregon. For more information contact Bob Naney at rnaney@fs.fed.us 509-996-4072 or Laura Finley @ laura_finley@fws.gov. Bob is the FS/BLM co-lead for the project along with Laura Finley, USFWS.

Sensitive Species Work Groups

Work groups are short term teams that identify high priority information and conservation gaps, to assist in the management of the species in accordance with SSSS policies. The ISSSSP then funds tasks to address those gaps. Work Groups have been focused on species of high conservation or management concern, particularly those with much complexity or potential disagreements on approaches. Products created by the work groups are posted on the ISSSSP website.

There are currently 7 different work groups: Oregon spotted frog, Columbia spotted frog, Mardon skipper, Fungi, Oregon slender salamander, *Bridgeoporus nobilissimus*, and White-headed and Lewis' woodpeckers.

In FY10, a new work group for Townsend's big-eared bat will be initiated.

For additional information contact Rob Huff or Kelli Van Norman.

Data Management-NRIS TESP

Two one day Geospatial Interface (GI) workshops are being scheduled for March 9 and 10, 2010 at the Regional Office in Portland. These one day workshops will focus on introducing students to the GI Client for use in reporting and analyzing NRIS TESP/IS data. NRIS TESP/IS users will be notified when all the course details have been worked out and the workshop is available in AgLearn for registration. Anyone interested in attending the workshop will have to register through AgLearn. **Contact Russ Holmes or Shawna Bautista if you have any questions.**

Jasa Holt from the Washington DNR will be working for Region 6 in FY10 to review and edit legacy data migrated into NRIS TESP. She will be contacting Forest Botanists throughout the fiscal year to coordinate this work and will begin with the Mt Baker Snoqualmie. This is a long-term project which we expect will take up to two years. **Contact Russ Holmes with questions.**

ISSSSP Website

Many new documents have been posted on the website. If looking for information on a particular species, you can easily navigate the website by navigating to the Index by Species and selecting the taxa group of interest. Species are listed alphabetically and then the products available under the species names.

The website includes Species Fact Sheets, Conservation Assessments, Conservation Strategies and Agreements, Site Management Plans, Agency Direction and Species Lists, and Inventory and Monitoring reports, and Identification Service information. The website address is: www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfnw/issssp/

For additional information about the website, please contact Carol Hughes.

Contact Information and Feedback

We're looking for feedback. Is this newsletter helpful? Is the format okay, or would you recommend something different? What other kind of information or topics would you like to hear about?

Please send any comments you have to Rob Huff, Rob_Huff@blm.gov

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