

Glenda Wiles

From: Bush, Jodi [jodi_bush@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 8:18 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners; bcarey@co.missoula.mt.us; jcurtiss@co.missoula.mt.us; mlandquist@co.missoula.mt.us; lakecommissioners@lakemt.gov; cscott@flathead.mt.gov; pholmquist@flathead.mt.gov; gkrueger@flathead.mt.gov
Subject: Fwd: Proposal to list the Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Attachments: NR-WYBCpL-2013oct03FINAL.pdf; 78FR61621_20131003 YBC pList.pdf

Dear Commissioner -

Just wanted to make sure you were aware of this proposal on the yellow Billed Cuckoo (YBC) which published on October 3 while the government was out on Furlough. I apologize for the late notice. The news release is attached as is the Federal Register notice.

If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call. You may also call the YBC lead for Montana -Jim Boyd. Jim can be reached at 406.449.5225, ext. 216. Thank you. JB

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo Proposed for Federal Protections

Service Seeks Public Comments by December 2, 2013

Sacramento – On October 3, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposed to list the western distinct population segment (DPS) of the yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the western United States, Canada, and Mexico. In the U.S., the western yellow-billed cuckoo is known to occur in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

“The western yellow-billed cuckoo is distinct from populations in the east and has different habitat requirements,” said Jennifer Norris, Field Supervisor for the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Service. “Populations of western yellow-billed cuckoo, and their nesting habitat along rivers and streams, have been declining over the last few decades. The Service is asking the public to review our proposal to list the western

yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species and submit comments. We need all of the best available scientific information to help us make a final decision that most effectively protects the species.”

The Service is looking for information concerning the western yellow-billed cuckoo’s biology and habitat, threats to the species, and current efforts to protect the bird. To access the proposed rule and a specific outline of information requested by the Service, please go to our webpage at:

http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/Public-Advisories/WesternYellow-BilledCuckoo/outreach_PA_Western-Yellow-Billed-Cuckoo.htm

Comments for the proposal to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species will be accepted through December 2, 2013. Comments may be submitted online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. The Docket Number for the proposed listing rule is FWS–R8–ES–2013-0104. Comments can also be sent by U.S. mail to:

Public Comments Processing

Attn: FWS–R8–ES–2013-0104

Division of Policy and Directives Management

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The western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) is a neotropical migrant bird that winters in South America and breeds in western North America. The yellow-billed cuckoo is an insectivorous bird that lives in riparian woodlands.

While the yellow-billed cuckoo is common east of the Continental Divide, biologists estimate that more than 90 percent of the bird's riparian habitat in the West has been lost or degraded. The listing proposal, which is based on the best scientific data available, cites threats from loss of riparian habitat and habitat fragmentation as a result of conversion to agriculture, dams and river flow management, bank protection, overgrazing, and competition from exotic plants as key factors in the decline of the western yellow-billed cuckoo.

The Service was petitioned to add the western yellow-billed cuckoo to the federal list of threatened or endangered species in 1998. In a review of the status of the species, the Service found that the yellow-billed cuckoo populations west of the Continental Divide in the United States was a DPS and added the species to the candidate list in 2001. The Service’s announcement today officially proposes to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo as a threatened species.