

December 24, 2013

## Service Reopens Public Comment Period for Proposal to List the Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo as a Threatened Species

Comments Accepted through February 24, 2014

*Sacramento* - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is reopening the public comment period for 60 days for the proposal to list the western distinct population segment of the yellow-billed cuckoo as a Threatened Species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

On October 3, 2013, the Service proposed to list the western yellow-billed cuckoo 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 initial public comment period for the proposal ended on December 2, 2013.

“We are reopening the public comment period to ensure the public has adequate opportunity to submit comments on this proposal,” said Jennifer Norris, Field Supervisor for the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office. “Public comments help ensure that any final decision made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reflects all of the best science and information available.”

The Service will accept comments through February 24, 2014 on the proposed rule. Comments may be submitted online at the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, docket number 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 Service seeks information regarding any threats to the species and regulations that may address those threats. More information about the proposal and a detailed outline of the information that the Service is specifically seeking can be found on the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office’s website at:

[http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/Public-Advisories/WesternYellow-BilledCuckoo/outreach\\_PA\\_Western-Yellow-Billed-Cuckoo.htm](http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/outreach/Public-Advisories/WesternYellow-BilledCuckoo/outreach_PA_Western-Yellow-Billed-Cuckoo.htm).

Comments previously submitted during the initial public comment period need not be resubmitted.

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 insectivorous and 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. Threats to the western distinct population segment include 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.