

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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October 29, 2019

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Comments Sought on Streaked Horned Lark Recovery

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Availability of Draft Plan

PORTLAND, OR - Actions to help recover a threatened prairie bird are outlined in a draft Recovery Plan for the Streaked Horned Lark, released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). The Service is seeking input on recovery measures suggested in the plan through an open 60-day public comment period ending December 30, 2019.

Recovery plans are developed for plants and animals listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). These plans provide a blueprint of recommended actions for state, federal, corporate and other managers to improve the status of listed species so they reach the point of no longer need the protection of the ESA.

The streaked horned lark, a subspecies of the horned lark, is found exclusively in western Washington and Oregon. It is a ground-nesting bird found in open grasslands, sparsely vegetated areas in the Willamette Valley and on Puget Sound prairies, on sandy islands in the Columbia River, and along the Washington coast.

In October 2013, the streaked horned lark was listed as threatened under the ESA due to threats posed by the loss or degradation of its prairie ecosystem, coastal habitats and sandy islands. As a result of the widespread control of the natural fire and flooding, much of the lark's native habitats have disappeared. The bird now finds habitat on a variety of working lands including agricultural fields in the Willamette Valley, training ranges at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, airports throughout its range, and dredge material placement sites in the lower Columbia River. In the five years since listing, many conservation actions have been implemented by the Service and its partners, and as a result, the status of the lark has improved.

Goals included in the draft recovery plan focus on restoring a self-sustaining population of streaked horned lark within its current range. In addition, the population should be well-distributed where suitable habitat is protected and managed to support larks. One of the main actions recommended in the plan is acquisition of habitats that can be managed specifically for lark conservation. The plan also recommends additional research into the species' needs and threats to its survival; development of

incentive programs for agricultural producers to create and maintain appropriate lark habitat on working lands, and public education and outreach.

To review the draft Recovery Plan, visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/species/recovery-plans.html>.

Instructions on how to comment can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>. All relevant information received from the public, government agencies, the scientific community, industry, and other interested parties will be considered and addressed in the final recovery plan.

The draft Recovery Plan for the Streaked Horned Lark is supported by the Streaked Horned Lark Biological Report and the Recovery Implementation Strategy, which are all available at <https://www.fws.gov/pacific/ecoservices/endangered/recovery/larkrecovery.html>

More information on the streaked horned lark is available at <http://www.fws.gov/ofwo/>.

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