

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release March 25, 1981

Joy Davis 202/343-5634

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Review To Be Made of Endangered Species Listed in 1975-76. Several hundred species designated as endangered or threatened five years ago are slated for review in order to update the U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. The review, which is required of the Fish and Wildlife Service under provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, was announced in the February 27, 1981, Federal Register.

The status of each species will be examined to determine if it still belongs in the category in which it was listed in 1975 or 1976. Species' Critical Habitat will also be reviewed. Interested individuals, groups, or agencies with pertinent information of value to the classification of the affected species are asked to send their comments to the Director (OES), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. Additional information, including a list of the 202 species, is available from the same office. All comments must be received by June 29, 1981.

* * *

Cold Weather Increases Manatee Mortality. Cold weather has again taken its toll on the endangered manatee in Florida. During January and February of this year, 41 dead manatees were reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Gainesville Laboratory according to Dr. Jim Baker, the Service's manatee coordinator. This is the highest number reported since the same period in 1977 when 44 dead manatees were found. Both 1977 and 1981 were exceptionally cold during these two months in Florida.

Manatees become stressed when water temperatures drop below 70 degrees Fahrenheit. When the weather turns cold, they congregate near the warm outflows of power plants or natural warm water springs. However, if they exhaust their food supply consisting of aquatic vegetation in these areas, they are forced to forage in colder water. While they may survive the cold period itself, they may succumb later to pneumonia or other stress-related diseases.

The winter range of this endangered species, whose U.S. population is currently estimated to number about 1,000, is mainly the Florida peninsula. During the summer months, it extends northward to the State's panhandle on the Gulf coast and up to North Carolina on the Atlantic Coast.

* * *

over

National Waterfowl Management Plan Available. The Fish and Wildlife Service has published a draft "National Waterfowl Management Plan for the United States." The plan sets forth the policies, goals, and objectives for U.S. waterfowl management; explains how waterfowl are managed; describes the current status of waterfowl; sets long-term population objectives for various species; and identifies future research and management needs. The document is intended to guide the efforts of Federal, State, and private agencies that cooperate with the Service in migratory bird management activities. The plan will contribute to the eventual development of a comprehensive North American waterfowl management plan.

Copies of the National Waterfowl Management Plan are available from the Director (MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. Public comments are invited and should be sent to the above address by May 1, 1981.

* * *

Questions About Managing Streamside Areas Answered in New Publication. The numerous but often unrealized benefits of wisely managing streamside areas have been outlined in Streamside Areas--Management Dividends, a new brochure published by the Fish and Wildlife Service's Biological Services Program. The publication, which will be of special interest to Western landowners, explains possible ways restored riparian habitats can be useful, from farming to fishing. It describes typical signs of damage and how such areas can be improved. Some of the Federal and State agencies involved in streamside research and management are listed so that landowners can find out what technical or cost-sharing assistance is available in their areas. The Service prepared the brochure with the cooperation of the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S.D.A. Cooperative Extension Service, and Colorado State University. Single copies are available without charge from the Publication Request Manager, Western Energy and Land Use Team, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Creekside 1 Building, Redwing Rd. Ft. Collins, CO 80526.

* * *

Procedures for Designating Endangered Species Explained. The listing process which gives endangered and threatened species official protection under the U.S. Endangered Species Act has been summarized by the Fish and Wildlife Service in a new pamphlet. A description of the legal process and criteria for listing a species is included in the pamphlet, which is intended primarily for scientists, universities, other government agencies, and conservation groups that wish to petition.

Copies of Placing Animals and Plants on the List of Endangered and Threatened Species may be obtained by writing to the Director (OES), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

X X X