



Support Southwest Strategy Threatened and Endangered Species Program Managers (TEPM) Team

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Background:

The Southwest Strategy (SWS) provides an opportunity for DoD and other land-management agencies in Arizona and New Mexico to address issues of shared importance, such as management of federally listed species and species-at-risk (SAR). In 2000, a SWS workgroup was formed to develop and implement strategies for streamlining ESA section 7 consultations and species management in New Mexico and Arizona. This group was first called the Threatened and Endangered Species Program Manager's (TEPM) Team, and is now the Southwest Endangered Species Act (SWESA) Team. The team consists of Federal and Tribal representatives with jurisdiction in Arizona and New Mexico. This project supports SWESA Team objectives to: (1) develop Criteria for Making Effects Determinations (CMEDs) for federally listed species, (2) identify opportunities to co-manage species-at-risk to prevent future listing of these species, and (3) develop outreach to disseminate information about SWESA Team products.

Objectives and Benefits:

Criteria for Making Effects Determinations (CMEDs):

One method for streamlining consultations is development of CMEDs for federally listed species. The CMED is a guide to assess potential effects of a proposed action on a species and is used in conjunction with site-specific information to make final determinations of effects. Development of CMEDs will result in fewer formal consultations, quicker completion of informal consultations, and improved conservation and recovery of federally listed species. Implementation of natural resource projects required by INRMPs at installations with CMED target species will be expedited through a streamlined ESA section 7 consultation process.

Analysis of Interagency Management Opportunities for Species-at-Risk (SAR): Several SWESA Team agencies have initiated development of regional SAR lists. One benefit to DoD in developing management guidance for SAR species is to help recover species-at-risk and identify and provide opportunities for DoD to share in efforts to recover species and avoid the need to list candidate species that could potentially affect military operations.

Development of SWESA Team Outreach Materials: The development and dissemination of CMED and SAR documents to the SWS member agencies is an integral part of the SWESA Team's roles and responsibilities.

Accomplishments:

A final draft of the Considerations for Making Effects

Determinations (CMED) report for the threatened Chiricahua leopard frog (*Rana chiricahuensis*) was completed by the SWESA Team in March 2007, and revised in December 2008. The SWESA Team is now planning for its use by biologists within the range of the Chiricahua leopard frog by developing a CMED training module and protocol to monitor implementation.



Chiricahua Leopard Frog Photograph by Jim Rorabaugh, USFWS

Since completion of the draft Species-at-Risk (SAR) report in September of 2006, and revised in 2008, this report prepared by the SWESA Team has received wide distribution and been utilized by a number of agencies, organizations, and private individuals. The SAR report was also used by DoD in the development of various conservation efforts on military bases in the Southwest, cooperatively developed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Outreach materials about these Legacy SWESA Team products are or will be available for use by all land management agencies and individuals on the following SWESA Team website to facilitate dissemination of this information.

Website address for the Home Page of the SWESA Team:
<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/SWStrategy.htm>

Website address for SWESA Team documents:
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/SWStrategy_Docs.html

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