



IN REPLY REFER TO:

1005

Shuck Harris

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
ECOLOGICAL SERVICES
100 N PARK, SUITE 320
HELENA MT 59601

TAKE
PRIDE IN
AMERICA

January 28, 1994

Dear Cooperator:

In 1991, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received a petition to list the lynx population in the North Cascades of Washington as endangered. On July 1, 1993, the Service found pursuant to Section 4 (b) (3) (A) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533 (b) (A), that substantial scientific or commercial evidence was not available indicating that the lynx population in the North Cascades should be listed as endangered. However, the Service did find that evidence exists indicating that an in-depth status review of the lynx should be conducted throughout its range in the contiguous United States. A notice that the Service has initiated a status survey will be published in the Federal Register in the near future. The Montana Field Office, Ecological Services, has been designated as the Service's lead office for conducting the status survey.

Therefore the Service, through this letter, solicits any information, data, comments, and suggestions from you or your affiliation or agency, regarding the status of the lynx in your region, or elsewhere in North America. This information is essential to determining whether the species warrants listing under the Endangered Species Act.

The Service appreciates any assistance you could provide in this matter. Information and materials should be sent to the above address and be received by April 1, 1994. If you have questions or comments regarding the status review, please contact Lori Nordstrom or Anne Vandehey of my staff, at (406) 449 - 5225.

Sincerely,

Kemper M. McMaster
Field Supervisor
Montana Field Office

cc: PERRY OLSON, Colorado Department of Natural Resources
JERRY CONLEY, Idaho Fish and Game Department
FREDERICK HURLEY, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
ROLAND HARMES, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
ROGER HOLMES, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
PATRICK GRAHAM, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
DONALD NORMANDEAU, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
KENNETH WICH, New York Department of Environmental Conservation
K.L. COOL, North Dakota State Game and Fish Department
RANDY FISHER, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
TIMOTHY PROVAN, Utah State Department of Natural Resources
ANGELO INCERPI, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
PATRICIA MC LAIN (acting), Washington Department of Natural Resources
TOM HAUGE, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
FRANCIS PETERA, Wyoming Game and Fish Department

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Field Supervisor, East Lansing Field Office, East Lansing, MI
Field Supervisor, Twin Cities Ecological Services Office, Bloomington, MN

Identical letter sent to:

Christian Grue, WA Coop Fish & Wildlife Res Unit, Seattle, WA
Ed Forsloff, WA Wildlife Federation, Olympia, WA
Gregg MacDonald, WA Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Redondo, WA
Gregory Schroer, Wildlife Society, WA Chapter, Bellevue, WA
Dr. Michael Scott, ID Coop Fish & Wildlife Res Unit, Moscow, ID
Fred Christensen, ID Wildlife Federation, Boise, ID
Tom Pomeroy, ID Conservation League, Ketchum, ID
Alan Hausrath, ID Environmental Council, Idaho Falls, ID
Thomas Parce, ID Trappers Association, Moscow, ID
Paul Moroz, Wildlife Society, ID Chapter, Meridian, ID
Dr. Joe Ball, MT Coop Wildlife Res Unit, Missoula, MT
David Majors, MT Wildlife Federation, Bozeman, MT
Dale Becker, Conf. Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, MT
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Greg Link, Wildlife Society, ND Chapter, Colfax, ND
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Howard Goldman, Friends of Animals & Environment, Minneapolis, MN
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James Baldock, WI Wildlife Federation, Reeseville, WI
Bruce Bacon, Wildlife Society, WI Chapter, Mercer, WI
Jan Scalpone, Citizens Natural Resource Assoc. Inc, Oshkosh, WI
Robert Laich, MI United Conservation Clubs, Westland, MI
Terry Yonker, MI Audubon Society, Lansing, MI
David Dempsey, MI Environmental Council, Lansing, MI
Richard Holzman, MI Nature Association, Avoco, MI
Dean Brodberg, MI Wildlife Habitat Foundation, Lansing, MI
Terry Blauwkamp, Safari Club International, MI Chapter, Hudsonville, MI
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Deanne Winsor, State Fish & Wildlife Man Board, Albany, NY
Robert Borrelli, The Adirondack Council, Elizabethtown, NY
Ronald Dodson, Audubon Society of NY State, Selkirk, NY
Victor Van Steenburg, Upper Catskill Fur Takers, Jefferson, NY
Charles Smith, Wildlife Society, New York Chapter, Delmar, NY
Fred Mcmenemy, NH Wildlife Federation Inc, Concord, NH
Dean Bensley, Audubon Society of NH, Concord, NH
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Suzanna Liepmann, VT Audubon Council, S Strafford, VT
Dr. William Krohn, ME Coop Fish & Wildlife Res Unit, Augusta, ME

Lawrence Horwitz, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Augusta, ME
Thomas Urquhart, Maine Audubon Society, Falmouth, ME
Gerald Barnes, Sportsman Alliance of Maine, Augusta, ME
Sandy Ritchie, Wildlife Society, Maine Chapter, Oakland, ME
Dr. Stanley Anderson, WY Coop Fish & Wildlife Res Unit, Laramie, WY
Dale Strickland, WY Wildlife Federation, Cheyenne, WY
Walter Gasson, Wildlife Society, WY Chapter, Cheyenne, WY
Shane Smith, Wyoming Outdoor Council, Lander, WY
Dr. John Bissonette, UT Coop Fish & Wildlife Res Unit, Logan, UT
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Jordan Pederson, Wildlife Society, Utah Chapter, Park City, UT
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John Sherman, OR Natural Resources Council, Portland, OR
Kenneth Klarquist, OR Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Portland, OR
Michael Wisdom, Wildlife Society, Oregon Chapter, La Grande, OR
Kirk Horn, US Forest Service, Missoula, MT
Glen Hetzel, US Forest Service, Lakewood, CO
William Burbridge, US Forest Service, Ogden, UT
Hugh Black Jr., US Forest Service, Portland, OR

SIGNIFICANCE OF
WASHINGTON STATE'S LYNX



--the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has had Felis lynx canadensis on a candidate list (Category 2) for possible Threatened/Endangered Species since 1982. It is a Sensitive Species for Region 6 of the U.S. Forest Service, and it is a Candidate Species for the Washington Dept of Wildlife.

--the state of Washington has the largest known resident population of lynx (100 + 50) in the Lower 48 states. However,

- (a) this population density is the lowest in North America (2.2 lynx/100 km²),
- (b) productivity and recruitment remain low, despite closures to harvest in some areas,
- (c) one of Washington's lynx populations (Kettle Range) was virtually eliminated in the mid-1970s.

--the best remaining habitat for lynx in Washington lies in the Okanogan area, which is owned by the public and managed by the U.S. Forest Service (75%) and by the Washington Dept of Natural Resources (25%).

This area provides the last contiguous stands of lodgepole pine at 4500-6000 ft elevation, and it contains all 3 elements necessary for lynx survival, viz.

- (1) forage/hiding/thermal/stalking cover (early successional lodgepole pine forest), provides forage for snowshoe hare, which is 80-90% of the lynx' year-round diet, as well as thermal & stalking cover for the lynx,
- (2) denning cover (150+ yr old Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir, plus down material), provides denning area for females to raise kittens,
- (3) travel corridor (coniferous or deciduous vegetation at least 6 ft high and in swaths at least 300 ft wide), provides connection between all areas providing (1) and (2).

The Okanogan area is also contiguous with lynx habitat in British Columbia, providing a migration route and possible source of lynx for Washington.

--the Okanogan lynx population is at a "low," as evidenced by low numbers, low population density, low recruitment, low productivity, and high kitten mortality. Specifically,

- (a) 22-25 lynx live in the Okanogan Study Area (1795 km²); their number has not increased in the last 10 yrs even though the Area has been closed to the trapping and hound-hunting of lynx,
- (b) there are only 1-2 breeding females, few kittens are born, and only 1 of 8 kittens survives the winter,
- (c) poaching, emigration out of the Area, and death due to natural causes continues to take a toll,
- (d) both male and female lynx have very large home ranges (10-110 km² and ranging up to 300-500 km²)

--the Washington Dept of Wildlife has closed the state to all hunting and trapping of lynx; the Washington Dept of Natural Resources is under no obligation to consider lynx in its current timber sales on documented lynx habitat, including denning sites; the U.S. Forest Service manages Area 12 in the Okanogan National Forest for lynx habitat, but there is no other management for documented lynx habitat in either the Okanogan or Colville National Forests.