

**File Code:** 1920**Date:** October 26, 2015**Route To:****Subject:** Carson National Forest's Potential Species of Conservation Concern for Regional Forester Review and Concurrence**To:** Cal Joyner

The Carson National Forest (NF) has completed its assessment to identify potential species of conservation concern (SCC) within the plan area, to meet the requirements set forth in 36 CFR § 219.9(c). The forest identifies 6 federally listed species and 26 potential SCC as being at risk, due to the departure of ecological conditions that support these species and the resultant concern for these species' capability to persist in the plan area over the long term. Per FSH 1909.12, Chapter 10, section 12.52b, item 1b, the Carson NF's potential SCC list is submitted for your review and concurrence (Attachment 1).

The potential SCC list has been reviewed and commented on by the Regional Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants staff; the Regional Planning staff; and the public (through the Assessment Report). A comprehensive screening process was used to generate the potential SCC list; which was designed to best meet the criteria for identifying SCC set forth in FSH 1909.12, Chapter 10, section, 12.52c. The criteria for identifying SCC are:

1. The species is native to, and known to occur in, the plan area.
2. The best available scientific information about the species indicates substantial concern about the species' capability to persist over the long term in the plan area.

In generating the potential SCC list, the Biological Lead for the Carson NF's Forest Plan Revision (FPR) Team developed an initial species list that identified 1,384 potential SCC for the state of New Mexico (NM). Several data sources were used to develop the initial list, which included: 1) species with a NatureServe status ranking of G, N, or T 1, 2, or 3 and S 1 and 2; 2) species identified as recently delisted or having a positive 90-day finding in NM by the USFWS; 3) species listed as threatened or endangered by the State of NM and by adjacent tribes; 4) species listed as sensitive species on the Southwestern Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list and on adjacent federal agency lands; 5) species identified as those of greatest conservation need by the NM Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy; 6) rare plants as identified by the NM Rare Plants Technical Council; and 7) the Migratory Birds List by the USFWS.

Utilizing survey data, wildlife databases, and in-person interviews with wildlife biologists from the Forest Service, other government agencies, and other entities, 66 of the 1,384 initial potential SCC were identified as occurring within the plan area. Best available scientific information was used to determine which of the potential 66 SCC species occurring on the Carson NF are secure within the plan area, and their continued long-term persistence within the plan area are not at



risk. This analysis removed 40 species from the list and left 26 potential SCC.

Each of the 26 potential SCC and 6 federally listed species were then associated with a habitat type on the Carson NF and a risk assessment was conducted to evaluate habitat, population, and threat factors for each of the species. The results of the risk analysis will help determine areas where coarse and fine filter plan components will be needed during plan development, to ensure or contribute to the continued persistence of SCC and federally listed species on the Carson NF.

The 26 potential SCC meet the requirements set forth in CFR § 219.9(c). Upon your approval, the potential SCC will be considered as the FPR process moves forward to develop plan components that provide the ecological conditions necessary to sustain the species.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.



JAMES D. DURAN
Forest Supervisor
Carson National Forest

Attachment (1)

cc: Steve Hattenbach, Bob Davis, Matt Turner, Ernie Taylor