

## Salmon-Challis Process for Identifying Potential Species of Conservation Concern

The Salmon-Challis National Forest has identified 55 plants, 20 terrestrial animal, and 8 aquatic animals we propose be potential species of conservation concern for the Forest. We are seeking feedback on this list prior to making the final recommendation to the Regional Forester, who has the ultimate decision authority. Below is a summary of the process we used in identifying these species.

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A species of conservation concern is defined in the [2012 Planning Rule](#) as “a species, other than federally recognized threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, that is known to occur in the plan area and for which the Regional Forester has determined that the best available scientific information indicates substantial concern about the species’ capability to persist over the long-term in the plan area” (§ 219.9(c)). They are a tool used to develop forest plan direction that maintains native species diversity and population viability.

The 2012 Planning Rule requires that forest plans developed or revised under the rule “provide the ecological conditions necessary to ... maintain a viable population of each species of conservation concern within the plan area”<sup>1</sup> (§ 219.9(b)(1)). The rule defines a viable population as “A population of a species that continues to persist over the long term with sufficient distribution to be resilient and adaptable to stressors and likely future environments” (§ 219.19).

A coarse filter was used to identify species to review as potential species of conservation concern for the Salmon-Challis. Existing databases were searched for occurrence records on the Forest and native species with the following ranks within existing conservation assessments were identified for more detailed review:

All Taxon:

- [NatureServe](#): Global ranks G or T 1, 2, or 3
- [NatureServe](#): State rank S 1 or 2<sup>23</sup>
- 2016 Idaho Bureau of Land Management [Plant](#) and [Animal](#) Special Status Species for Salmon and Upper Snake Field Offices: Type 2
- [Intermountain Region Regional Foresters Sensitive Species](#) on the Salmon-Challis
- [Northern Region Regional Foresters Sensitive Species](#) on directly adjacent National Forest: Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Bitterroot
- Species of Conservation Concern on directly adjacent National Forests – there are none

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases it may not be “within the inherent capability of the plan area to maintain or restore the ecological conditions to maintain a viable population of a species of conservation concern in the plan area” (§ 219.9(b)(2)). In these cases the forest plan will include components “to contribute to maintaining a viable population of the species within its range” (§ 219.9(b)(2)(ii)).

<sup>2</sup> The Idaho State Wildlife Action was referenced for Idaho fish and wildlife species as it was the most up-to-date source for S-Ranks.

<sup>3</sup> The Idaho Native Plant Society [2016 Rare Plants List](#) was referenced for Idaho plant species as it was the most up-to-date source for S-Ranks.

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- Species the Idaho Department of Fish and Game recommended be reviewed – hoary marmot
- Species the public recommended we review – Rocky Mountain tailed frog and American pika

Fish and Wildlife Species Only:

- [2015 Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan](#): Species of Greatest Conservation Need Tier 1 or 2.

Birds Only:

- [2016 Partners in Flight Watch List for Continental United States and Canada](#): Recover and Reverse Declines watch lists

Arthropods:

- [Xerxes Society Red List](#)

This coarse filter identified 76 plant, 61 terrestrial animal, and 16 aquatic animal species.

A species must be established on the Forest to be considered as a potential species of conservation concern. Therefore, occurrence records, along with other evidence, were reviewed to determine which species were only transient or accidental on the Forest. In addition, where the most recent occurrence record for a species predates 1990, the weight of evidence was used to indicate whether the species is likely still extant on the Forest. Information reviewed include the occurrence records, information on the status of the location where the species was observed on the Forest, and information on the species' life history, demographics, and habitat requirements. A total of 21 plants, 13 terrestrial animals, and 3 aquatic animals were dropped from further consideration through this process. The remaining species were reviewed in detail using the Methods and Guidance for Assessing Evidence to Classify Species as Potential SCC (USFS 2017). These detailed assessments resulted in preliminary recommendations for 55 plants, 20 terrestrial animals, and 8 aquatic animals as potential species of conservation concern for the Salmon-Challis.

The next step in this process is to gather feedback on this preliminary list. After considering this feedback the Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor will identify the species he recommends to the Regional Forester be species of conservation concern on the Forest. The Regional Forester makes the final decision.