

The Act requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. We will consider all information presented during the public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised recovery plan. Substantive technical comments may result in changes to the recovery plan. Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plan, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individual responses to comments will not be provided.

*Deinandra conjugens* is an annual plant in the family Asteraceae. It was federally listed as a threatened species on October 13, 1998 (63 FR 54938). The species occurs in southwest San Diego County, California, and in northern Baja California, Mexico. It occurs predominantly on clay soils, subsoils, or lenses (isolated areas of clay soil), which typically support grasslands, but may support some woody vegetation.

Agriculture and urban development, invasion of nonnative species, and habitat fragmentation and degradation have resulted in the loss of suitable habitat across the species' range. The species' self-incompatible breeding system (an individual plant cannot pollinate itself, so successful reproduction requires pollination between genetically unrelated plants), its annual habit, and the extensive fragmentation of remaining populations potentially create additional threats from random population fluctuations, reduced populations of pollinators, a subsequent reduction in cross pollination and gene flow between populations, and a decline in genetic variation. Maintenance of the genetic variability within the species, through cross-pollination, may be critical to long-term survival.

Within San Diego County, the species occurs entirely within the Multiple Species Conservation Planning (MSCP) area, primarily within three associated subarea plans: the City of San Diego Subarea Plan, the County of San Diego Subarea Plan, and the City of Chula Vista Subarea Plan. These subarea plans provide for the conservation of *Deinandra conjugens* and many other listed and non-listed species by developing a reserve system with a monitoring and management

framework, and protecting key populations. Additional measures outlined in the draft recovery plan will enhance the species' ability to achieve recovery.

This draft recovery plan recognizes efforts by the local jurisdictions to conserve *Deinandra conjugens* under the MSCP, and includes additional conservation measures designed to ensure *D. conjugens* will continue to exist, distributed throughout its extant and historic range. Recovery is dependent upon the conservation of sufficient habitat to sustain populations of *D. conjugens*, as well as populations of its primary pollinators; maintaining genetic variability within the species; and connect conserved populations to ensure gene flow (through cross pollination).

The ultimate goal of this recovery plan is to delist *Deinandra conjugens* through implementation of a variety of recovery actions including: (1) stabilizing and protecting habitat supporting known populations within the conserved areas under the MSCP; (2) surveying for new populations; (3) assessing status of known populations; (4) adaptively managing and monitoring conserved areas; (5) identifying research needs and conducting studies on biology and ecology of the species; and (6) developing and implementing a community outreach plan.

#### Public Comments Solicited

We solicit written comments on the draft recovery plan described. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered in developing a final recovery plan.

#### Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: November 28, 2003.

**D. Kenneth McDermond,**

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Draft Revised Recovery Plan for the 'Alalā (*Corvus hawaiiensis*)

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability for review and comment.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("we") announces the availability of a draft revised recovery plan for the 'Alalā, or Hawaiian Crow (*Corvus hawaiiensis*) for public review. This endemic Hawaiian bird, a member of the family Corvidae, is now believed to be extinct in the wild and survives only in captivity. The 'Alalā was listed as an endangered species in 1967 (32 FR 4001). The original recovery plan for the 'Alalā was published in 1982.

**DATES:** Comments on the draft revised recovery plan must be received on or before February 17, 2004 to receive our consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the draft revised recovery plan are available for inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the following locations: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 3-122, Honolulu, Hawaii 96850 (telephone 808-792-9400) and Hawaii State Library, 478 S. King Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813. Requests for copies of the draft revised recovery plan and written comments and materials regarding this plan should be addressed to the Field Supervisor, Ecological Services, at the above Honolulu address. An electronic copy of the draft revised recovery plan is also available at: <http://endangered.fws.gov/recovery/index.html#plans>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jay Nelson, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above Honolulu address.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Recovery of endangered or threatened animals and plants is a primary goal of our endangered species program and the Endangered Species Act (Act) (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). Recovery means improvement of the status of listed species to the point at which listing is no longer appropriate under the criteria set out in section 4(a)(1) of the Act. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for downlisting or delisting listed species, and estimate time and cost for implementing the measures needed for recovery.

The Act requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. We will consider all information presented during the public comment period prior