

## THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE PROPOSAL TO DELIST THE CANADA LYNX

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In 2000, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the contiguous U.S. distinct population segment (DPS) of the Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) because of the inadequacy, at that time, of regulatory mechanisms in federal management plans. Since then, federal agencies have formally amended most management plans in the DPS's range to adopt science based conservation measures for lynx or continued to implement conservation agreements in collaboration with the Service. State and Tribal agencies have also worked to conserve lynx populations and important habitats. Research and monitoring conducted since the DPS was listed suggest that resident lynx are naturally rarer and populations smaller in much of the west than previously thought, but they are more abundant in Minnesota and Maine. The 1999-2006 release of lynx into southwestern Colorado has established a resident population there. The Service recently completed a peer reviewed species status assessment (SSA) for the DPS that evaluated the available scientific information and incorporated the opinions of recognized lynx experts to assess the status and viability of DPS populations. Although the threat for which the DPS was listed has been addressed by improved regulatory mechanisms, the SSA recognized that continued climate warming is likely to reduce lynx populations and distribution in the Lower 48 over the long term. However, the Service concluded that the DPS is not at risk of extirpation in the reasonably foreseeable future and is therefore proposing to delist the DPS.