



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

8/27/2021

Agenda item:

Ferruginous Hawk Periodic Status Review (up-list) – Decision

Presenter(s):

Taylor Cotten, Conservation Assessment Section Manager, Diversity Division, Wildlife Program

Background summary:

This rule proposal reclassifies the ferruginous hawk from threatened to endangered in the state of Washington under WAC 220-610-010. Anticipated effects include the additional recognition and prioritization of the conservation need and actions around ferruginous hawk. If the status change is adopted, ferruginous hawk will be removed from WAC 220-200-100 "Wildlife classified as protected shall not be hunted or fished," and added to WAC 220-610-010 "Wildlife classified as endangered species."

The Ferruginous Hawk is largely restricted to grasslands and shrubsteppe habitats. Conversion of native grasslands and arid shrublands to agriculture, urbanization, and the degradation of rangelands have contributed to the loss of nesting and foraging habitat on its breeding range in Washington. Degradation of fall and winter ranges frequented by Washington's hawks in migration and the nonbreeding period has been documented through satellite monitoring. Reductions in prey base on the breeding range and depressed prey populations encountered during migration on fall and winter ranges are likely a significant factor in the decline of Washington's breeding population of Ferruginous Hawks.

The breeding population of Ferruginous Hawks in Washington is in sustained decline. Between 1974 and 2016, there have been significant declines in nesting territory occupancy, nest success, and productivity. Additionally, the percentage of surveyed nesting territories supporting breeding pairs has significantly declined in the core breeding range of the species in Benton and Franklin counties. The distribution of breeding pairs statewide also appears to have contracted since the 1990s. There has been no improvement in habitat conditions or amelioration of primary threats, and therefore the recommendation is to reclassify the Ferruginous Hawk from threatened to endangered status in Washington.

Staff recommendation:

Department staff recommend the ferruginous hawk be removed from the threatened WAC 220-200-100 and moved to the endangered WAC 220-610-010.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome: The changes to the rule above were discussed in the early August FWC meeting.

- Conserve, protect, and recover Washington's native wildlife.
 - Additional recognition to the conservation need of the species.
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Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

None.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

In February 2017, the agency sent out a press release and posted a request on our website to solicit information from the public to be included in the coming Periodic Status Reviews and Status Reports. In accordance with WAC regulations, individuals and organizations had one year to contribute information for the reviews. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) staff included this information as applicable in the status review documents. The documents were then reviewed by WDFW staff and external species experts before 90-day public comment periods on the document and our findings. There were 17 responses to the 90-day public comment period on the Periodic Status Review with 14 comments in support of up-listing to endangered, 2 comments neutral on the status change recommendation, and 1 comment not supporting the recommended status change based on continued persistence on the landscape and possibility of occupancy in marginal habitat.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Adopt WAC 220-200-100 and 220-610-010 as presented by staff.

Draft motion language:

Motion: I move to adopt the recommended rule changes as presented by staff to uplist Ferruginous Hawk from Threatened to Endangered.

Is there a "second"?

If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed.

Post decision communications plan:

Website update
News release
WAC updates