

Recovery Plan for Vernal Pools of Southern California

[\[Click here to view document\]](#)

Original Approved: September 3, 1998

Original Prepared by: USFWS, Portland, OR

Recovery Criteria Clarification

Section 4(f)(1)(B)(ii) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) requires that each recovery plan developed for a listed species incorporates, to the maximum extent practicable, “objective, measurable criteria which, when met, would result in a determination...that the species be removed from the list.” Recovery criteria therefore serve as guidelines to assist in determining when a species has recovery to the point that it may be downlisted to threatened or that the protections afforded by the Act are no longer necessary and the species may be delisted.

The Service published the Recovery Plan for Vernal Pools of Southern California in 1998. The plan identified eight management units that together contain the listed species that are the focus of the recovery strategy. The plan also identifies specific vernal pool complexes within those management units that are necessary for stabilizing populations (49 complexes; Appendix F) or reclassifying populations (25 complexes; Appendix G), along with specific downlisting criteria.

In addressing delisting criteria, the original recovery plan stated:

Delisting of each of the species may be considered in the future and is conditioned on the downlisting criteria shown above, improvement (stabilized or increasing population trends) at all currently known sites; restoration, protection, and management of the minimum habitat area and configuration needed to ensure long-term viability; and reestablishing historic but locally extinct species populations when needed to ensure viability. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must also determine that the following factors are no longer present, or continue to adversely affect, *Eryngium aristulatum* var. *parishii*, *Pogogyne abramsii*, *Pogogyne nudiuscula*, *Orcuttia californica*, and the Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of their habitat or range; (2) over utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting their continued existence (50 CFR 424.11).

In the interest of ensuring these criteria are clearly articulated, we are amending the following clarification to the existing recovery plan. This amendment does not represent a revision of the delisting criteria, it simply provides more specific terminology. Delisting for the species covered by the 1998 recovery plan may be considered when the downlisting criteria have been met and:

1. All 74 geographic areas and associated vernal pool complexes as identified in Appendices F and G of the 1998 Recovery Plan under each of the specific management areas are protected and managed to ensure long-term viability.
2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must determine that the following factors are no longer present, or continue to adversely affect, *Eryngium aristulatum* var. *parishii*, *Pogogyne abramsii*, *Pogogyne nudiuscula*, *Orcuttia californica*, and the Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of their habitat range; (2) over utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural and manmade factors affecting their continued existence (50 CFR 424.11).
3. Population trends for all seven taxa continue to be stable or increasing for 10 consecutive years after threats have been sufficiently ameliorated or managed (completion of delisting criterion 2) prior to consideration for delisting.

These criteria ensure that the underlying causes of decline are addressed and allow sufficient time to verify population stability. We will continue to update or revise these criteria as new information becomes available or if new threats to the species become apparent. When delisting or downlisting a species, we first propose the action in the *Federal Register* and seek both public comment and peer review. Our final decision is announced in the *Federal Register*.

Approved: _____



Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date: _____

10/1/19