



The Petition Process

For requests to list a species as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act

What are petitions for listing?

Petitions are formal requests to list a species as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The ESA requires that we make and publish specific findings on the petition. We (or the National Marine Fisheries Service for most marine species) must make a finding within 90 days of receiving a petition (to the extent practicable) as to whether or not there is “substantial information” indicating that the petitioned listing *may be warranted*. If this preliminary finding is positive, a status review is conducted. Within one year of receipt of the petition, we must make a further finding that the listing either is or *is not* warranted. A positive one-year finding can be incorporated into a proposed listing or, if a prompt proposal is precluded by other listing activities, the proposal may be deferred. These “warranted but precluded” proposals require subsequent one-year findings on each succeeding anniversary of the petition until either a proposal is undertaken or a “not warranted” finding is made.

