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Tuesday, October 23, 2012
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FWS and NOAA Extend Comment Period on Proposed Revisions to Critical Habitat Economic Impact Analyses

Sweeping Changes Could Impact Private Property Owners, Jobs, Economy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) granted a request by House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) to extend the comment period of the FWS and NOAA Fisheries Proposed Revisions to Critical Habitat Economic Impact Analyses for an additional 90 days. Chairman Hastings initially requested the 90 day extension in a [letter](#) sent to FWS Director Dan Ashe and NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco on October 19, 2012.

FWS and NOAA, the two Federal Agencies responsible for overseeing the Endangered Species Act (ESA), released a proposal in August that would drastically change the process for analyzing the economic impacts of critical habitat designations under the ESA. The proposed regulation was initially open for public comment for 60 days. Due to the potential impacts the major policy changes would have on private land owners, the economy and jobs, along with concerns over how the Obama Administration is currently conducting economic analyses on regulations it proposes, Chairman Hastings sent a letter requested that the comment period be extended for an additional 90 days to allow sufficient time for stakeholders and interested parties to provide meaningful input.

“Given the Committee’s ongoing concerns with the Obama Administration’s methodology for conducting critical habitat economic analysis, and the potential of the Administration’s proposed rule changes to cause significant economic impact throughout the country, I’m pleased that FWS has granted the request for a 90 day extension of the comment period. This will allow more time for Congress and other affected parties to review and provide input on these major, unilateral policy changes,” **said Chairman Hastings.**

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