

**Review List for Endangered Species Recovery Plan development
Under the *Recovery Enhancement Vision (REV)*¹**

To be used to review draft, *not as a preparation checklist*

Plan Name:

Date:

Reviewer:

1. Recovery Plan

- Does the plan include, but is limited to, the 3 statutory elements (criteria, actions, time and cost estimates) plus a brief introduction with a summary of the recovery strategy linking the logic of the recovery strategy to the science in the Species Status Assessment?
- Does the introduction include reference to the Species Status Assessment and explain that is the foundational material on which the plan is based?
- If the plan contains any additional sections, has ARD approval been obtained?

2. Species Status Assessment (SSA) –

- This will be a separate document (which contains the information that was included in the Background section of earlier plans, plus an assessment of viability for the species), and it provides the scientific basis for the recovery plan.
- Is there a **current, up-to-date Species Status Assessment** for the species available and posted on-line for public access?
 - If so, confirm that it has the features identified below and **reference it as supporting information** in the introduction to recovery plan;
 - If not, proceed with **developing, updating, or amending the SSA** (supplying the missing elements for an existing SSA and reference it as supporting information in the introduction to recovery plan;
 - Ensure that the recovery plan has a link to the SSA version upon which it was based.
- Does the SSA provide a **succinct, readable summary** of the basic biology, life history, ecology, distribution, habitat preferences, known intrinsic biological features (including vulnerability to climate change) that might inform or constrain recovery efforts? Does it address the **reliability of and gaps in available information and** identify areas of uncertainty and ongoing conservation efforts?
- Does the SSA include an **assessment of viability**?
- Does it reference other documents rather than including too much technical detail, focusing on presenting **only information pertinent to the species' endangerment, vulnerabilities, recovery and long-term viability** in a succinct and user-friendly format?
- Does the SSA assess the **threats or stressors** identified in the listing rule, and any changes such as additional threats identified since the final listing rule, in a structured, organized approach (**including magnitude and scope**) and **how they affect the species** at the individual, population and species levels? **Is this assessment framed** in a manner that contributes to the development of the recovery strategy and prioritization of recovery actions? **Is climate change** considered?
- Does the SSA lay out the species' needs and threats and stressors (at the individual, population, and species levels) in a way that could be useful for **consultation** biologists?

¹ This document focuses on recovery plans developed under the REV model. If you are with NMFS, or not using the REV model, use the non-REV version of this document.

3. Recovery strategy -

- For REV recovery plans, this will be in the SSA, but **summarized in the Introduction** to the plan for public review and comment.
- Is the proposed strategy **logical, compelling, and strategic**? Does it document the link from the SSA to the strategy and recovery plan?
- Is it **consistent and credible**, based on the biological and scientific factors assessed in the SSA?
- Is the strategy designed in a way to capture the needs of other listed species as appropriate (**landscape considerations**)?
- Does the strategy allow for/include **adaptive management** aspects where appropriate and feasible?
- **If recovery units** are used: (Recovery units are not required)
 - Do recovery units encompass the entire known species in the wild?
 - Rationale presented for number, identification, and distribution of RUs?
 - Is the importance of each RU in avoiding jeopardy to the species justified?
 - Recovery criteria address each recovery unit?
 - Clarify that recovery units are not delistable separately

4. Recovery goals and objectives -

- Are goals (and objectives if present), **logically constructed, and stem from the strategy and SSA provided**?

5. Recovery criteria -

- Are the criteria **objective and measurable**? Biologically appropriate?
- Do they address and are linked to the identified **threats, as indicated by the SSA**? Would the criteria aid in determining whether threats have actually been eliminated or sufficiently reduced, such that the species can recover. Can they be **cross-referenced to the 5 listing/delisting factors**?
- Do they address the **3 R's** as discussed in the SSA? (resilience, redundancy, representation)
- If the species is listed as Endangered, are **delisting, as well as reclassification** to Threatened, criteria included?
- **If** recovery criteria are not provided (this should be a very rare occurrence), does the plan clearly explain why it is not possible at this time to develop such criteria, *and* provide tasks and a time-table for obtaining the information necessary for developing delisting criteria?
- DPSs - recovery plans **can not designate DPSs**. Recovery criteria must address the entire listed entity. If plan/recovery criteria suggest potential for delisting by DPS, the DPS must have been designated via formal rulemaking; if not, the plan must clearly state that delisting by DPS can only occur if and when the population passes the formal DPS identification and listing process.

6. Recovery Actions -

- Do the recovery actions **stem logically from the SSA and recovery strategy**? Do they appear to lead to the species no longer qualifying as endangered or threatened, **as described by the recovery criteria**?
- Are there one or more recovery actions to **address each of the threats** (including climate change adaptation) identified ?

- Are recovery actions **site-specific**?
- Are the actions **framed in “broad brush-strokes,”** with step-down details (‘activities’) for implementation of the actions included in the **Recovery Implementation Strategy (RIS** – see below)?
- Do the actions incorporate an adaptive management aspect, where appropriate?
- If a particular threat cannot be addressed (for example, it may not be practicable to include actions for certain climate change variables), does it explain why not and **provide alternative actions to increase the species resiliency** with respect to the threats that cannot be directly mitigated?
- Are there **“extraneous” actions** that don’t appear to address an identified threat? Why are they there? Should they be deleted? If they are **intended to address an identified threat**, can they be reframed **so the relationship is clear**? Are there actions for **monitoring** the species’ demographic trends, threats and stressors, response to particular recovery actions (can be useful for adaptive management), plan implementation?
- Are the recovery actions described such that **potential partners could recognize their roles**, and be ‘enrolled’ in implementing these actions?
- Do they provide adequate **guidance for s7 biologists**?
- Are the **education and outreach actions** specific to the species’ recovery, or are they rubber stamps and general? If the latter, can they be reframed to more **specifically address a recovery need**, or should they be deleted?
- Is there a **post-delisting monitoring plan** action item?

7. **Time and Costs to Recovery -**

- Does the plan include estimates of the **time and costs to delisting, and reclassification where applicable**? If not, does it document why including time and/or cost estimates is not feasible?
- Are there many actions that have **“TBD”** for a cost estimate? Why? Can this be avoided or reduced?
- Are there many actions that have **“ongoing”** for a time frame? Why? Can this be avoided or reduced?

8) **Recovery Implementation Strategy (RIS) -**

- The RIS is a separate, companion document, developed alongside the Recovery Plan, **which describes the more detailed, strategic activities that are necessary to implement** the recovery plan and priority actions **in the near term**. The RIS is posted on-line but does not go out for public review and comment.
- The RIS should be **reviewed regularly and adjusted as necessary**; it should be **considered for revision when appropriate**, for example **along with** each 5-yr review.
- Does the RIS provide for **adaptive management** of activities where this may be appropriate? Does it include **monitoring protocols and trigger point thresholds** for when an activity may need adjustment and **alternative activities** for implementation under these circumstances?
- Are the recovery activities identified and described in the RIS, such that **potential partners could recognize their roles**, and be ‘enrolled’ in implementing these activities?
- Are **priorities, potential implementation partners, time frames, and cost estimates** identified for each recovery activity in the RIS?

9. Overall -

- Is the plan **logical, compelling, strategic, readable, understandable, and implementable**?
- Would it **make sense to most readers** that **this suite of tasks applied in this order, and judged by these criteria, would likely lead to the recovery and delisting** of a species with this biology and suite of threats?
- If the plan does not include recovery criteria, recovery actions, time estimates or cost estimates; if criteria, actions, and time and cost estimates are not provided for all threats; or if criteria, actions, and time and cost estimates do not address the threats range-wide, **have findings been made as to why doing so is not practicable** (i.e., feasible)?
- Is the plan written in **agency- or scientific-ese**, or could a potential partner/stakeholder read the plan, follow the basic logic, and potentially buy into the recovery program?
- Does the plan **use graphics where possible** instead of confusing or tedious text?
- Are **maps and graphics easy to read**, and can they photocopy clearly?
- Do maps have **legends, readable features, scale, north arrow, property boundaries** (where appropriate)?