



Attn: FWS-HQ-ES-2025-0029
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
PRB/3W, 5275 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

Wyoming Native Plant Society

P.O. Box 2449, Laramie, WY 82073

Re. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Regulations Pertaining to Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (50 CFR Part 17; section 4(d) and section 4(b)(2))

December 19, 2025

Dear Madam or Sir,

We maintain that a “blanket rule” is crucial to maintain for newly-listed threatened plant species. It is not good enough to say that the intent to create species-specific rules takes the place of a default rule.

Species-specific rules require staff time. There is an acute shortage of botanical expertise in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, though significant numbers of Threatened species are plants. This proposed rule would further encumber the Service and mean that newly-listed Threatened plant species would essentially be placed in limbo rather treated with transparency and efficiency.

We are also submitting comments on FWS-HQ-ES-2025-0048 and see these proposals as closely related. We urge retaining the phrase “without reference to possible economic or other impacts of such determination” as essential to maintain the intent of the Endangered Species Act. Economic considerations are essential for the public to know, but they are not in listing and delisting decision standards, critical habitat decision standards or Section 7 consultation standards. This is necessary to carry out all different segments of the Endangered Species Act consistent with the extinction-risk focus of decisions under the Act.

As such, we reject the proposed measure to exclude areas from critical habitat designation if they are on federal lands or on other lands with a conservation agreement. This would be a blank check for removing most or all critical habitat designations. In states such as Wyoming, the only places where Threatened and Endangered plant species are protected under the Act is on federal lands, or otherwise where federal actions are involved.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Heidel, Chair

Conservation Committee