

Constrictor Snake Ban

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes ban on trade of nine large constrictor snakes.

March 12, 2010, 2 p.m. EST

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a proposed rule on March 12 that seeks to list nine large constrictor snakes as “injurious wildlife” under the Lacey Act, thus prohibiting the importation and interstate trade of the invasive species. The public has 60 days to comment on the proposed rule.

“We greatly value the public’s input and encourage engagement into this rulemaking process,” acting service director Rowan Gould said in a statement. “The control of invasive species, including pythons and other large constrictor snakes, is a key step in our effort to restore the Everglades and protect other vulnerable areas of the country.”

The proposed rule change, which is published in the Federal Register, seeks to ban the following snakes: the Indian and Burmese python, northern African python, southern African python, reticulated python, green anaconda, yellow anaconda, Beni or Bolivian anaconda, DeSchauensee’s anaconda, and Boa constrictor.

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced in January the service’s plan to propose the rule. At that time, he said the Burmese python and the other snakes are destroying some the nation’s most treasured and most fragile ecosystems.

“The interior department and states such as Florida are taking swift and common sense action to control and eliminate the populations of these snakes, but it is an uphill battle in ecosystems where they have no natural predators,” he said. “If we are going to succeed, we must shut down the importation of the snakes and end the interstate commerce and transportation of them.”

The United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK) has issued a warning to its members in which the organization said it is currently analyzing the proposed rule. In the warning, USARK said it has expected this move for some time and plans to announce a course of action shortly.

The proposed rule is available at <http://www.fws.gov/policy/library/2010/2010-4956.pdf>.

Comments may be submitted electronically at www.regulations.gov under Docket No. FWS-R9-FHC-2008-0015 or via U.S. mail or hand-delivery to

Public Comments Processing
Attn: Docket No. FWS-R9-FHC-2008-0015
Division of Policy and Directives Management
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