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Fish and Game Commission



*Wildlife Heritage and Conservation
Since 1870*

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California Fish and Game Commission Notice of Receipt of Petition

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the provisions of Fish and Game Code Section 2073.3, that the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) received on March 25, 2026 a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity to list Mount Pinos sooty grouse (*Dendragapus fuliginosus howardi*) as a threatened or endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

Mount Pinos sooty grouse (MPSG) are part of the part of the Galliformes family, which includes chickens and pheasants, and are among the largest grouse species in North America. Males are gray to blue-gray in color with distinctive red to yellow-orange combs over their eyes, and black tail feathers featuring a light gray band across the tips. They also have yellow unfeathered skin on the sides of the neck. Female MPSG are mottled brown and cream and have a long, dark tail.

MPSG is a highly endemic subspecies that historically ranged from Kings Canyon in the southern Sierra Nevada southward (in Fresno, Tulare, and Inyo counties), and into the “sky island” Tehachapi Mountains, Piute Mountains, and the Frazier Mountain and Mount Pinos regions of Kern and Ventura counties. In winter, MPSG eat the needles of conifers along with buds and twigs. Their spring and summer diet includes more insects, conifer needles, leaves and flowers of herbs, and the leaves, flowers, and berries of shrubs. MPSG generally inhabit coniferous forests in mostly mountainous areas. Most breeding areas are open forests or regenerating burned areas.

On April 6, 2026, pursuant to Section 2073 of California Fish and Game Code, the Commission referred the petition to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department). Pursuant to Section 2073.5, the Department will evaluate the petition and submit to the Commission a written evaluation report with a recommendation. The Commission received the petition on March 25, 2026, and noted receipt of the petition on its April 15-16, 2026 meeting agenda. The Department’s written evaluation of the petition and related recommendation is anticipated to be received in August 2026 and noted on the Commission’s October 14-15, 2026 meeting agenda.

For information about the petition or to submit information to the Department relating to the petitioned species, interested parties may contact Neil Clipperton, CESA and Scientific Collecting Permit Supervisor, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, by mail at P.O. Box

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944209, Sacramento, California 94244-2090, telephone at (916) 373-6620, or email at wildlifemgt@wildlife.ca.gov.

April 20, 2026

California Fish and Game Commission
Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director