



June 23, 2008

California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Additional information regarding the status of the American pika in California

To the California Fish and Game Commission,

We write to bring to the Commission's attention recent scientific testimony regarding the status of the American pika in California. On June 6, 2008, the California Department of Fish and Game hosted a seminar on "the effects of climate change on ecological resources in California." A complete video of the proceedings is available online at <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/events/research.html>. The following statements are from presentations by two of the researchers invited by the California Department of Fish and Game to present at the seminar, Dr. Judsen Bruzgul, Stanford University, and Dr. Craig Moritz, University of California, Berkeley.

"Another issue that really is affecting the survival of these wild populations are these alpine species that really have reached an elevational limit in terms of where they can go and find viable habitat. The mountain only goes so high. And, in fact, recent studies across the West on pika population in the alpine--this is a relative of the rabbit you find up in the tallus fields in the alpine—**[pika] have dramatically decreased in number, the populations have disappeared in many, many areas that they [pika] have historically been found.** In many cases, because of isolation, because of habitat changing right from under them, they **[pika] are considered functionally extinct in this ecosystem.**"

Dr. Judsen Bruzgul, Stanford University (found on the Webex recording at 00:22:00).

"A number of high-elevation species are retracting upwards. Here's just a couple of examples, the golden-mantled squirrel, and the pika's already been mentioned [in the previous presentation by Dr. Bruzgul]. So, these were already high-elevation species in Grinnell's time, but they've moved up. Therefore, **their range has contracted.**"

Dr. Craig Moritz, University of California, Berkeley, Grinnell Resurvey Project

(found on the Webex recording at 00:49:50). The graphic in Dr. Moritz's presentation indicated an "upward range retraction" of "700 ft" for the pika in the Yosemite area of the Grinnell Resurvey Project.

This testimony lends further support to the Center for Biological Diversity's petition to list the American pika as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act. We urge the Commission to consider carefully this testimony prior to adopting findings regarding the petition, and we expect that this letter and a transcript of the seminar will be included in the administrative record underlying any findings adopted by the Commission.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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