



Rivera, Jose <jose_rivera@fws.gov>

Fwd: Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes

9 messages

Donald Progulskes <donald_progulskes@fws.gov>

Fri, Nov 22, 2019 at 5:02 PM

To: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>, nikki_colangelo@fws.gov, Constance Cassler <constance_cassler@fws.gov>, Tim Breen <timothy_breen@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>

FYI

Bob

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Williams, Larry" <larry_williams@fws.gov>

Date: November 22, 2019 at 3:33:58 PM EST

To: Jay Herrington <jay_herrington@fws.gov>, Sean Blomquist <sean_blomquist@fws.gov>, Donald Progulskes <donald_progulskes@fws.gov>, Roxanna Hinzman <Roxanna_Hinzman@fws.gov>, Heath Rauschenberger <Heath_Rauschenberger@fws.gov>

Cc: John Tupy <john_tupy@fws.gov>, Annie Dziergowski <Annie_Dziergowski@fws.gov>, "Baird, Tera" <tera_baird@fws.gov>, "Gonzalez, Rafael" <rafael_gonzalez@fws.gov>, "Elmore, Michele" <michele_elmore@fws.gov>

Subject: Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes

Florida Project Leaders,

As you all know, we've been working on a programmatic consultation key for indigo snakes, and a major issue in developing that key has been the question of what is an appropriate radius around an indigo snake occurrence, within which we would consider indigo snakes reasonably certain to occur. The team working on the key is currently recommending:

-a radius of 5 miles north of the frostline

-a radius of 2.4 miles south of the frostline

These distances represent maximum linear distance traveled by indigo snakes in studies north and south of the frostline; and the intention is to apply that distance as a radius around the occurrence. I am scheduling an opportunity where we can discuss these recommended distances with our Regional Section 7 Coordinator and our agency's Science Integrity Officer to get their review and advice on whether these distances would withstand legal and science integrity reviews. That discussion cannot be scheduled until January, and in the meantime our offices have many consultations (at least 26, likely more) that need an answer to this radius question.

So in this interim period we will use these distances:

-a radius of 1.7 miles north of the frostline

-a radius of .62 miles south of the frostline

These distances represent the average diameter of indigo snake home ranges documented in studies north and south of the frostline. These distances will be applied as a radius around an occurrence. Within that radius we will consider indigo snakes to be reasonably certain to occur (i.e. present). Using this approach we allow for the fact that we never know if an indigo snake occurrence is near the center or edge of its home range.

This constitutes my approval to use secondary evidence (in this case, standard home ranges) as the basis for presence in consultations involving indigo snakes.

As soon as possible we'll schedule the discussion with the Science Integrity Officer and Section 7 Coordinator regarding the recommendation to use maximum linear distance traveled. I look forward to that discussion. Please let all your teams know I greatly appreciate their work developing the key and answering these associated questions.

Larry

--

Larry Williams
State Supervisor for Ecological Services
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1339 20th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3559
Ph: 772-469-4285
Fax: 772-778-0683
larry_williams@fws.gov

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Progulskes, Donald <donald_progulskes@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 10:33 AM

1/28/2020

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - Fwd: Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes

To: FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

All - Below is an email sent by Larry W. last Friday on approved interim distances for indigo snake consultations. Please review and consult your supervisors if needed. We have a conference call scheduled on January 9, 2020 to have further discussions on indigo snake consultation issues. Thanks.

Bob

Bob Progulske
Everglades Program Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1339 20th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Office: 772-469-4299
Cell: 772-559-7167
Fax: 772-562-4288
email: donald_progulske@fws.gov

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Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 11:05 AM

To: "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>, FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

All –

It will be helpful to have a consistent response to all Corps and Applicants. I am drafting some canned language to communicate this approach to the Corps. I hope to have that out to you today, following the PARC/ES Manger's meeting at noon.

Thank you,

ashleigh

Ashleigh Blackford
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Supervisory Wildlife Biologist
Planning & Resource Conservation - East
South Florida Ecological Services Office
1339 20th Street - Vero Beach, FL 32960
phone: 772-469-4246
cell: 772-532-2978
ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov

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Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 11:06 AM

To: Constance Cassler <constance_cassler@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>, "Breen, Timothy" <timothy_breen@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>

Cc: Roxanna Hinzman <roxanna_hinzman@fws.gov>, "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>, Annie Dziergowski <annie_dziergowski@fws.gov>

Canned Language for your consideration/review.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is developing a revised consultation Key for the eastern indigo snake. While the Key is being developed the Service has identified an interim approach on how we determine when the eastern indigo snake is reasonably certain to occur over the landscape, and thus evaluation under the Endangered Species Act would be warranted. Within the jurisdiction of the South Florida Ecological Services Office, we will buffer known indigo snake occurrence records with a radius of 0.62 miles. This represents the average diameter of indigo snake home ranges documented in studies south of the frost line. Based on this approach, the Service has determined that the eastern indigo snake is not reasonably certain to occur within the action area, thus no further consultation on this species is warranted.

ashleigh

Ashleigh Blackford

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Supervisory Wildlife Biologist

Planning & Resource Conservation - East

South Florida Ecological Services Office

1339 20th Street - Vero Beach, FL 32960

phone: 772-469-4246

cell: 772-532-2978

ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov

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From: Progulske, Donald <donald_progulske@fws.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 25, 2019 10:33 AM

To: FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

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Breen, Timothy <timothy_breen@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 11:15 AM

To: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>

Cc: Constance Cassler <constance_cassler@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>, Roxanna Hinzman <roxanna_hinzman@fws.gov>, "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>, Annie Dziergowski <annie_dziergowski@fws.gov>

Ashleigh:

This looks fine....should we add the actual mean home range that is being used? Maybe insert after "...average diameter of indigo snake home ranges (???)"

Tim

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Tim Breen

Supervisory Biologist, Everglades North Team

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

South Florida Ecological Services Field Office

1339 20th Street

Vero Beach, FL 32960-3559

772-469-4239 - office
772-538-2982 - cell
772-562-4288 - fax

timothy_breen@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/verobeach>
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Cassler, Constance <constance_cassler@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 2:54 PM

To: "Breen, Timothy" <timothy_breen@fws.gov>

Cc: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>, Roxanna Hinzman <roxanna_hinzman@fws.gov>, "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>, Annie Dziergowski <annie_dziergowski@fws.gov>

A few small edits:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is developing a revised consultation Key for the eastern indigo snake. While the Key is being developed the Service has identified an interim approach ~~on how we~~ on how we for determining when the eastern indigo snake is reasonably certain to occur over the landscape, and thus evaluation under the Endangered Species Act would be warranted. Within the jurisdiction of the South Florida Ecological Services Office, we will buffer known indigo snake occurrence records with a radius of 0.62 miles. This represents the average diameter of indigo snake home ranges documented in studies south of the frost line. Based on this approach, the Service has determined that the eastern indigo snake is not reasonably certain to occur within the Project's action area, thus no further consultation on this species is warranted.

Connie

Constance L. Cassler, Ph.D.
Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist
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Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 4:15 PM

To: FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

Cc: Annie Dziergowski <annie_dziergowski@fws.gov>, Tera Baird <tera_baird@fws.gov>, "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>

All –

As promised please see standard language below. Please use the following statements to communicate the interim guidance on eastern indigo snake to the Army Corps or other Applicant when the action area of a proposed project falls outside of the buffered area.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is developing a revised consultation Key for the eastern indigo snake. While the Key is being developed, based on guidance in a November 22, 2019, email from the State Supervisor (subject: *Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes*) the Service has identified an interim approach on how we determine when an eastern indigo snake is reasonably certain to occur, and consultation under the Endangered Species Act is appropriate.

In accordance with this guidance, the South Florida Ecological Services Field Office buffered known eastern indigo snake occurrence locations with a radius of 0.62 miles. The action area of your proposed project falls outside of the buffered area; therefore, the eastern indigo snake is not reasonably certain to occur, and no further consultation on this species is warranted.

Please work with your supervisor if you have additional questions.

Thank you,

ashleigh

Ashleigh Blackford

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Supervisory Wildlife Biologist

Planning & Resource Conservation - East

South Florida Ecological Services Office

1339 20th Street - Vero Beach, FL 32960

phone: 772-469-4246

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ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov

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From: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 25, 2019 11:05 AM

To: 'Progulske, Donald' <donald_progulske@fws.gov>; FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

Subject: RE: Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes

All –

It will be helpful to have a consistent response to all Corps and Applicants. I am drafting some canned language to communicate this approach to the Corps. I hope to have that out to you today, following the PARC/ES Manger's meeting at noon.

Thank you,

ashleigh

Ashleigh Blackford

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Supervisory Wildlife Biologist

Planning & Resource Conservation - East

South Florida Ecological Services Office

1339 20th Street - Vero Beach, FL 32960

1/28/2020

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - Fwd: Approved distances for consultations involving indigo snakes

phone: 772-469-4246

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From: Progulske, Donald <donald_progulske@fws.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 25, 2019 10:33 AM
To: FW4 Vero Beach SFFO <fw4_vero_beach_sffo@fws.gov>

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Progulske, Donald <donald_progulske@fws.gov> Tue, Nov 26, 2019 at 10:32 AM
To: "Williams, Larry" <larry_williams@fws.gov>
Cc: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>, Bob Progulske <Bob_Progulske@fws.gov>, Constance Cassler <constance_cassler@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>, Nikki Lamp <nikki_lamp@fws.gov>, Roxanna Hinzman <roxanna_hinzman@fws.gov>, Tim Breen <timothy_breen@fws.gov>

Larry - We have some differences of opinion in the Office among supervisors on how to implement the interim guidance, so I would appreciate some clarity. You state that the home ranges represent the secondary evidence. To be clear, if there is suitable contiguous habitat outside of the home range circle, is it appropriate to include that habitat as part of the effects and take analysis? The Dec. 14, 2018 RCTO guidance you provided mentions suitable habitat as a secondary evidence component, but with this interim indigo snake guidance you do not mention that and you clearly state that the standard home ranges represent the secondary evidence. Thanks.

[Quoted text hidden]

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Larry Williams <larry_williams@fws.gov> Wed, Nov 27, 2019 at 10:28 AM
To: "Progulske, Donald" <donald_progulske@fws.gov>
Cc: Ashleigh Blackford <ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov>, Bob Progulske <Bob_Progulske@fws.gov>, Constance Cassler <constance_cassler@fws.gov>, Jose Rivera <jose_rivera@fws.gov>, Miles Meyer <miles_meyer@fws.gov>, Nikki Lamp <nikki_lamp@fws.gov>, Roxanna Hinzman <roxanna_hinzman@fws.gov>, Tim Breen <timothy_breen@fws.gov>

Bob,
We will not consider indigo snakes to be present outside the circle.

Larry

Sent from my iPhone
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