

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife IPaC system instructions

Use the following protocol to determine if any federally listed species or designated critical habitats under USFWS jurisdiction exist in your action area:

Enter your project specific information into the “Initial Project Scoping” feature of the Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) system mapping tool, which can be found at the following location:

<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>

- a. Indicate the action area<sup>1</sup> for the MS4 by either:
  - a. Drawing the boundary on the map or by uploading a shapefile. Select “Continue”
  - b. Select your project type from the dropdown menu on the Activities step and select “Continue” to generate a preliminary species list. For MS4 communities, select “\*\*Other\*\*” as the project type.
- c. On the trust resources list step, you will be provided a list of natural resources of concern, which will include an Endangered Species Act Species list. On this page, select the “Request an Official Species List” and follow the directions indicated. You will be provided with an Official Species list in .pdf format for your MS4. Retain a copy of this letter for your records

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<sup>1</sup> The action area is defined by regulation as all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action (50 CFR §402.02). This analysis is not limited to the “footprint” of the action nor is it limited by the Federal agency’s authority. Rather, it is a biological determination of the reach of the proposed action on listed species. Subsequent analyses of the environmental baseline, effects of the action, and levels of incidental take are based upon the action area.

The documentation used by a Federal action agency to initiate consultation should contain a description of the action area as defined in the Services’ regulations and explained in the Services’ consultation handbook. If the Services determine that the action area as defined by the action agency is incorrect, the Services should discuss their rationale with the agency or applicant, as appropriate. Reaching agreement on the description of the action area is desirable but ultimately the Services can only consult when an action area is defined properly under the regulations.

For storm water discharges or discharge related activities, the action area should encompass the following:

- The immediate vicinity of, or nearby, the point of discharge into receiving waters.
- The path or immediate area through which or over which storm water flows from the municipality to the point of discharge into the receiving water. This includes areas in the receiving water downstream from the point of discharge.
- Areas that may be impacted by construction or repair activities. This extends as far as effects related to noise (from construction equipment, power tools, etc.) and light (if work is performed at night) may reach.

The action area will vary with the size and location of the outfall pipe, the nature and quantity of the storm water discharges, and the type of receiving waters, among other factors.