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Tiny Mammal May Need Protection

By [LESLIE KAUFMAN](#)

The [Fish and Wildlife Service](#) is beginning a yearlong review to determine whether the pika, an 8-inch-long mountain animal that looks like a rabbit with round ears, should be protected under the Endangered Species Act. It would be the first mammal from the lower 48 states to be considered for protection as a result of changes resulting from [global warming](#). Pikas live on rocky slopes in the West and cannot bear temperatures above 78 degrees for more than a short time. In a 2007 petition, the Center for Biological Diversity said rising temperatures had already caused “dramatic losses” of pika populations at lower elevations.

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