

Dunes Sagebrush Lizard Not Listed As Endangered Species

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By Carrie Jung

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has decided not to list the Dunes Sagebrush Lizard as an endangered species.

The decision was announced today in Washington, DC by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

Tom Buckley is a public information officer with the Fish and Wildlife Service. He says the conservation agreement reached with the oil and gas industry and other land owners was an important factor in the decision.

"Ultimately, within the last few months, enough participation and enough land was put into conservation that we were confident that the lizard would not have to be listed at this time."

But Center for Biological Diversity's Taylor McKinnon says the conservation agreement won't provide any real assurance for the lizard's recovery.



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"It's uncertain whether it will be even implemented in the long run and then even if it is implemented, it's based on purely voluntary measures. Measures whose effect on lizard conservation are largely unknown"

He adds that the decision today was made because of political pressure, not science.