

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/05/09/2791407/rattlesnakes-may-go-on-endangered.html>

Miami Herald

Posted on Wednesday, 05.09.12

Rattlesnakes may go on endangered species list

The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- Federal officials are considering whether the eastern diamondback rattlesnake should be declared an endangered species.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Wednesday announced it will review the snake's status. The review is in response to a petition by three environmental groups and snake expert Bruce Means. They say the snake is being endangered by loss of habitat and human predation for their meat and skins in the Southeast.

There are no bag limits on the snakes in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. The reptiles also are targeted by "rattlesnake roundups" in Alabama and Georgia that offer prizes for their capture.

Means said the loss of longleaf pine habitats is threatening rattlesnakes and other species including the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker and indigo snake.