

Mic

Trump administration rolls back protections for endangered species



Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Win McNamee/Getty Images

By A.P. Joyce
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On Friday, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced that they may soon make major changes to the way they enforce laws protecting endangered species, rolling back or weakening some key provisions in those laws.

The new rules would make it harder for species at risk of becoming endangered to receive protections under the act, and would change the way the federal government designates “critical habitats” for endangered species.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan said in a statement that the changes are aimed at “reducing the regulatory burden on the American people.”

But environmental and conservation groups are already blasting the new rules. Brett Hartl of the Center for Biological Diversity called the changes “a rubber stamp for powerful corporate interests” in a statement posted on the organization’s website.