

# Federal protection sought for Sierra red fox

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

A conservation group on Wednesday asked the federal government to protect the Sierra Nevada red fox under the Endangered Species Act, a move that may have broad effects on land management.

The petition came from the Center for Biological Diversity. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service now has 90 days to review the petition, and then 12 months to make a ruling.

The Sierra Nevada red fox is one of the rarest mammals in North America. Until recently, only a few dozen were known to exist at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

But in August, U.S. Forest Service biologists found a handful more than 200 miles away, near Sonora Pass, a discovery later confirmed through genetic tests.

The fox once existed throughout the Sierra Nevada, but its numbers were decimated by trapping, logging and development.

**Read the whole story**