Composition of the FWS ECOS Species Export: Listing Status, Not a Species Inventory of the United States

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Source git 38fa640 · technical report

Abstract

We tabulate the FWS ECOS Pull Reports species export (format=csv) downloaded 2026-09-20. The file has 11,027 rows. Endangered plus Threatened rows number 2,385 (1,866 Endangered, 519 Threatened). The largest status class is Species of Concern (3,546), then Resolved Taxon (3,454). Listing-year dates in the file, where parseable as a four-digit year from the date field, run from 1967 through 2026, with the single largest year count 324 in 1970. This is an export of FWS-managed entities, including foreign listings and non-listed statuses, not a count of U.S. wildlife species.

1. Introduction

Research question. What is the status mix of the public ECOS species CSV, and how many rows are Endangered or Threatened?

Contributions:

- C1. Status histogram (results/gov/fws_status_counts.csv).
- C2. Listing-year counts (results/gov/fws_listing_year.csv).
- C3. Row total 11,027 and E+T total 2,385 (results/gov/fws_meta.json).

2. Background

ECOS (Environmental Conservation Online System) publishes species entities of interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the ESA and related processes. Status values include listed, proposed, candidate, species of concern, and several error/recovery labels. Each row has Common Name, Scientific Name, an ECOS species URL, ESA Listing Status, entity description, and listing date.

3. Method

One GET of https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/pullreports/catalog/species/report/species/export?format=csv saved as animalstart/fws_ecos_species.csv (1,374,623 bytes). Python csv.DictReader counted ESA Listing Status exactly as spelled. Endangered or Threatened is the sum of those two exact strings. Listing year is the last hyphen-separated token of ESA Listing Date when it is four digits (dates look like 06-14-1976). Blank dates are omitted from the year table. Hardware: same operator workstation as paper 05.

4. Results

Table 1. Status counts (all classes with n at least 13).

esa_status	n
Species of Concern	3546
Resolved Taxon	3454
Endangered	1866
Not Listed	665
Threatened	519
Under Review	325
Status Undefined	324
Recovery	85
Experimental Population, Non-Essential	77
Proposed Endangered	46
Extinction	32
Proposed Threatened	29
Similarity of Appearance (Threatened)	16
Candidate	13

Table 2. Selected listing-year counts (date present).

year	n
1967	76
1970	324
1976	184
1994	132
2013	99
2023	29
2024	19
2025	6
2026	3

A separate taxonomic-group summary CSV (fws_listings_by_tax_group.csv, 1.6 KiB) counts U.S. and foreign listings by group (for example mammals, birds, fishes). That file is a boxscore, not the 11,027-row export.

5. Discussion and threats

Species of Concern and Resolved Taxon dominate; treating the file as "all endangered species" would be wrong. Foreign listings sit in the same table. Duplicate common names and parenthetical synonyms appear in Scientific Name. Year parsing ignores non-hyphen formats. Three 2026 dates are whatever ECOS exported that day, not a complete 2026 listing year. We did not recode subspecies or Distinct Population Segments.

6. Related work

FWS ECOS Data Services and the listed-species Pull Report. ESA listing policy is the Service's, not this paper's. We do not use IUCN Red List numbers here.

7. Ethics

Public ECOS CSV. Scientific names and listing status are not personal data. No geospatial occurrence of living animals is in this export.

8. Conclusion

The ECOS species CSV is a status ledger. In this snapshot, 2,385 of 11,027 rows are Endangered or Threatened; most rows are other ECOS statuses.

9. Artifact appendix

python3 harness/govdata/analyze.py. Outputs: results/gov/fws_*.csv, fws_meta.json.

10. References

- FWS ECOS Data Services. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/services
- ECOS species export URL used 2026-09-20 (Pull Reports, format=csv).