

INFORMATION ON CRITICAL HABITAT LISTING AFFECTING CALIFORNIA SALMON AND STEELHEAD RECOVERY

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS: MARCH 14 2005

Currently, NOAA-Fisheries is soliciting information from the public and agencies on the listing of Critical Habitat in threatened and endangered Evolutionary Significant Units (ESUs) of California salmon and steelhead. NOAA Fisheries' goal is to limit the costs of applying the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to recovering salmonid populations. Since delisting of a subwatershed as Critical Habitat makes it easier for activities to meet legal obligations for protection under the ESA, delisting a basin saves NOAA and affected parties financial resources. Unfortunately, once a basin is delisted regulations are less stringent, and recovering salmonid populations may be adversely impacted by activities impacting water quality, quantity, or habitat necessary for salmonids. Delisting decisions impact the opportunity for restoration and recovery in specific watersheds in California.

The Salmonid Restoration Federation believes that all occupied in-river habitat, essential estuarine and ocean habitat, and upslope habitats that impact salmon population abundance, reproduction, and migration should remain listed as Critical Habitat and be protected. California salmon and steelhead populations in all occupied watersheds require critical habitat protection for recovery of ESUs that allow natural metapopulation dynamics. Multiple subpopulations contribute to salmonid viability and resistance to demographic and stochastic extinction. Some areas currently being evaluated for delisting as critical habitat are in urban areas where community organizations and agencies are dedicating funds and restoration activities to preserving the salmon and steelhead runs found there.

In both urban and rural regions of California healthy runs of imperiled salmonids were once widely distributed and are now slowly rebounding from long-term watershed degradation through restoration and sustainable land practices. California's ESUs contain the most southern distributed populations of these species, and the genetic diversity in these stocks of salmonids will likely be critical to the continued persistence of other more northerly ESUs as ocean and stream warming continues.

The list below contains places considered for delisting of critical habitat. Others areas not listed, but documented in the NOAA Fisheries documents described below, will be included as critical habitat. NOAA Fisheries needs to hear about the importance of these places for spawning, rearing and migration of salmonids to support these critical habitat designations.

The following CALWATER Hydrologic Subareas (HSAs) are occupied by salmonids, but will not be listed as Critical Habitat under the Endangered Species Act.

California Coastal Chinook ESU

Eel River Basin

Bridgeville (HSA 111122)
Eden Valley (HSA 111171)
Black Butte River (HSA 111173)
Wilderness (HSA 111174)

Russian River

Santa Rosa (HSA 111422)

Northern California *O. mykiss* ESU

Mad River Basin

Ruth (HSA 110940)

Eel River Basin

North Fork Eel River (HSA 111150)
Lake Pillsbury (HSA 111163)

California Central Coast *O. mykiss* ESU

Russian River Basin

Santa Rosa Creek (HSA 111422)
Ukiah (HSA 111431, partial exclusion)

Bay Bridges Basin

Berkeley (HSA 220330)

South Bay Basin

Eastbay Cities (HSA 220420, partial exclusion)
San Mateo Bayside (HSA 220440)

Santa Clara Basin

Guadalupe River- San Jose (HSA 220540)

San Pablo Basin

Novato Creek (HSA 220620)
Pinole (HSA 220660)

Suisun Basin

Suisun Bay (HSA 220721)
Benecia (HSA 220731)
Pittsburg (HSA 220733)
Martinez (HSA 220710)

South-California Coast Steelhead ESU

No HSA proposed for delisting at this time.

Spring Run Chinook ESU

Whitmore Basin

South Cow Creek (HSA 550731)

Bull Mountain Basin

Thomas Creek (HSA 552310)

Shasta Bally

South Fork (HSA 552433)

San Joaquin Delta

San Joaquin Delta (HSA 554400)

San Francisco Bay

Bay Channel (HSA 220410)

Yuba River Basin

Mildred Lake (HSA 551713)

Valley-American

Lower American (HSA 551921)

North Diablo Range Basin

North Diablo Range (HSA 554300)

Sacramento Delta

Sacramento Delta (HSA 551000)

Southern California *O. mykiss* ESU

Santa Maria Basin

Santa Maria (HAS 331210)

Cuyama (HAS 331230)

Santa Ynez, Zaca (HAS 331430)

Calleguas Basin

Callegus (HAS 440811)

Central Valley Steelhead ESU

Marysville

Lower Bear River (HSA 551510)

Yuba River

Nevada City (HSA 551720)

Butte Creek

Upper Dry Creek (HSA 552110)

North Valley Floor

Herald (HSA 553111)

Middle Sierra

Sutter Creek (HSA 553240)

North Fork Consumnes (HSA 553223)

Omo Ranch (HSA 553224)

San Francisco Bay

Bay Channel (HSA 220410)

Yuba River

Mildred Lake (HSA 551713)

Bull Mountain

Red Bank Creek (HSA 553221)

North Valley Floor

Lower Mokelumne (HSA 553120)

Sacramento Delta

Sacramento Delta (HSA 551110)

North Diablo Range Basin

North Diablo Range (HSA 554300)

Sacramento Delta

Sacramento Delta (HSA 551000)

SONC Coho salmon ESU

No HSAs proposed for delisting at this time.

How do you find out if your watershed is in a HSA above?

All the information for California ESUs (except Northern California-Southern Oregon coho salmon) is on the NOAA Fisheries-Southwest site at:

<http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/salmon.htm>

All of the documents are useful for finding different information, although the numbers and HSA names are not used in the same place as references, so the following steps make it simple to connect a map of subwatersheds with an HSA.

Use the first 4-digits in the HSA number above to identify the HU with the same 4- digits in the Appendix for the ESU you are interested in checking from the *“Preliminary Findings of NMFS' Critical Habitat Development and Review Teams for Seven Salmon and O. mykiss ESUs in California”*. These appendices will contain a map of the HU to the 6-digit HSA resolution that will let you find your subwatershed.

If you are looking for additional specific information for the HU including geography, size, and where to find more information read the actual *“Appendix”* pdf file. At the end of these documents, of which each ESU has its own, there are tables containing total occupied miles of habitat and a list of management activities impacting spawning, rearing, migration, or a combination of these Primary Constituent Elements (PCEs, life history stages).

How do I submit comments to NOAA?

Your comments can be submitted via email, mail, or fax. The information on how to use these methods is listed in the News Release for the extension of the comment period,

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/news/Critical_Habitat_Extension.PDF.