

December 23, 2005

Christmas Steelhead Ruling Scrooges Alameda Creek Trout

The National Marine Fisheries Service today announced final Endangered Species Act listing decisions for 10 populations of west coast steelhead trout, including the Central California Coast (CCC) population, which encompasses Alameda Creek. NMFS' decision reaffirms the threatened status of CCC steelhead, which were originally listed under the ESA in August 1997, but excludes resident rainbow trout and landlocked steelhead trout above dams.

NMFS had proposed in June of 2005 to include resident trout and some landlocked steelhead, including those in Alameda Creek, as part of the CCC steelhead trout population based on genetic evidence that Alameda Creek's resident fish are similar to adult ocean-run steelhead.

The ACA is looking into a legal challenge of this flawed listing and exclusion from critical habitat. Other conservation and fishing groups will likely challenge the new listing policy as well.

Read the ACA press release at: http://www.alamedacreek.org/Press_Releases/index.htm

Anti-Endangered Species Bill in Senate

Late last week, Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) introduced a bill to radically undermine the Endangered Species Act. Senate bill S. 2110, cynically titled the "Collaboration and Recovery of Endangered Species Act," would completely derail the endangered species listing program, remove protections for endangered species habitat, and cut federal oversight of projects that threaten endangered species. This is the companion bill to Richard Pombo's assault on the Act. Read the Center for Biological Diversity's press release on the bill at www.biologicaldiversity.org/swcbd/PRESS/crapo_s2110_12_15_05.html. A full explanation and full text of the Crapo bill is also available at www.biologicaldiversity.org.

What to Do if You Spot Steelhead in Lower Alameda Creek

It's getting to be steelhead season and winter storms will likely bring steelhead back into Alameda Creek. I have posted information on the ACA web page on what to do if you spot fish. Go to www.alamedacreek.org and click on "If You Spot Fish in the Creek" in the upper right corner. I will be on vacation from this Thursday through January 6, so if you spot steelhead during this time please contact Pete Alexander, the East Bay Regional Park District fisheries biologist.