

SPIKEDACE
(Meda fulgida)

STATUS: Threatened (51 FR 23769, July 1, 1986) with critical habitat (72 FR 13356, March 21, 2007).

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: A small (3 in (7.6 cm) long), slim fish with silvery sides and a "spine" on the dorsal fin. Breeding males are a brassy golden color.

HABITAT: Found in moderate to large perennial streams, where it inhabits moderate to fast velocity waters over gravel and rubble substrates. Specific habitat consists of shear zones where rapid flow borders slower flow, areas of sheet flow at the upper ends of mid-channel sand/gravel bars, and eddies at downstream riffle edges. Recurrent flooding helps the spikédace maintain its competitive edge over invading exotic species. Typically occupied streams are found under 6,000 feet (1,829 m) in elevation.

RANGE: Historical: Once common throughout much of the Gila River drainage above Phoenix, Arizona, including the Gila, Verde, Agua Fria, Salt, San Pedro, and San Francisco rivers.

Current: In Arizona, populations are found Aravaipa Creek, and are believed to be present in the Verde River, Eagle Creek, and the middle Gila River within Graham, Pinal, Greenlee, and Yavapai counties. In New Mexico, the spikédace is found in the mainstem Gila River, as well as in the lower end of West, Middle, and East forks of the Gila River within Hidalgo, Grant, and Catron counties. Populations were reintroduced in Hot Springs and Redfield canyons in Cochise and Graham counties, and in Fossil Creek, Gila County, in 2007; Bonita Creek in Graham County, Arizona, and the San Francisco River in Catron County, New Mexico in 2008.

Potential: Undiscovered populations may exist in unsampled Gila basin streams.

REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Habitat destruction due to damming, channel alteration, riparian destruction, channel downcutting, water diversion and groundwater pumping; and the introduction and spread of exotic predatory and competitive fish species.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, The Nature Conservancy, the State of Arizona, tribal, and privatelands.

NOTES: A Recovery Plan was completed in September 1991. A copy of the recovery plan and other relevant documents are available online at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Spikedace.htm>. Also, in 2007, we initiated a five-year review and recovery plan update process. These documents will be posted at this website when they become available.