U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# News Release

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# U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Revised Draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan and Public Comment Period

*Plan builds upon ongoing conservation actions for threatened species.*

In a positive step for the future of bull trout recovery, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is announcing the availability of a Revised Draft Recovery Plan for the Coterminous U.S. Population of Bull Trout. The Service is requesting review and comments on the plan as part of a 90-day public comment period.

Bull trout is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in the lower 48 United States. It occurs in Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and Nevada.

The Revised Draft Recovery Plan updates the recovery criteria proposed in the 2002 and 2004 draft recovery plans to focus on effective management of threats to bull trout, and de-emphasizes achieving targeted population numbers of adult bull trout in specific areas.

“The draft recovery plan is a road map for how to reach bull trout recovery, and it builds on the ongoing efforts by our partners since it was listed in 1999,” said Mike Carrier, state supervisor for the Service’s Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office. The Idaho office is the lead office for developing the recovery plan. “Working with state and federal agencies, Tribes, partners and the public during the next year to finalize the plan is essential. We are actively seeking their review and input.”

The primary revised recovery strategy for bull trout has five key elements:

- Conserve bull trout so that they are geographically widespread across representative habitats and demographically stable in six recovery units;
- Effectively manage and ameliorate the primary threats in each of six recovery units at the core area scale so that bull trout are not likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future;
- Build upon the numerous and ongoing conservation actions implemented on behalf of bull trout, and improve our understanding of how various threat factors potentially affect the species;
- Use that information to work with partners to design, fund, prioritize, and implement effective conservation actions in those areas that offer the greatest long-term benefit to sustain bull trout and where recovery can be achieved; and
- Apply adaptive management principles to implementing the bull trout recovery program to account for new information.

The Service expects to publish a Final Recovery Plan for the Coterminous U.S. Population of Bull Trout by Sept. 30, 2015. The final bull trout recovery plan will include individual Recovery Unit Implementation Plans (RUIP) for each recovery unit. The RUIPs will be developed through collaboration of interested and knowledgeable Federal, Tribal, State, private, and other parties prior to completion of the final recovery plan.

To allow public review and comment on the draft RUIPs for each recovery unit, including the draft Implementation Schedule and total estimated recovery costs, the Service will offer an additional comment period in 2015 prior to completing the final bull trout recovery plan.

The initial public comment period will close Dec. 3, 2014. Comments may be mailed or hand-delivered in writing to Bull Trout Recovery, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, ID 83709; by fax to (208) 378–5262; or emailed to fw1bulltroutrecoveryplan@fws.gov.

For more information or a copy of the plan, visit the www.fws.gov/pacific/bulltrout/.

*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov, or connect with us through any of these channels:*

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