

GILA TROUT
(*Oncorhynchus gilae*)

STATUS: Threatened (71 FR 40657, July 18, 2006) without critical habitat.

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: A deep-bodied trout with fine, profuse black spotting on its body and dorsal and adipose fins. Adults are golden- to greenish-yellow in color. Dorsal, anal, and pelvic fins are edged in white.

HABITAT: Found in small, high mountain streams at an elevation of approximately 1,524 to 3,048 m (5,000 to 10,000 ft). Feeds on insects and occasionally small fish.

RANGE: Historical: Occurred in the Verde River and its tributaries in Gila and Greenlee counties, Arizona, and in the headwater streams of the Gila and San Francisco rivers in New Mexico. Gila trout was extirpated from Arizona around 1900, but has recently been repatriated.

Current: Fish stocked into Dude Creek (Gila County) in September 1999 and Raspberry Creek (Greenlee County) in November 2000. An introduced population previously existed in Gap Creek (Yavapai County) in Prescott National Forest in Arizona, but has also been extirpated. In New Mexico, populations are still found in several creeks.

REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Impacts include loss of habitat, hybridization with introduced rainbow trout, and predation by exotic brown trout.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto National Forests (Arizona) and Gila (New Mexico) National Forests.

NOTES: A Recovery Plan was completed in January 1979, revised in January 1984 and December 1993, and is currently being redrafted. A copy of the 1993 Recovery Plan is available online at: http://fws.gov/southwest/es/arizonaes/Gila_trout.htm

The Gila trout was downlisted from endangered to threatened on August 17, 2006.

With the reclassification to threatened status, a special rule under section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act was established, allowing the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the Arizona Game and Fish Department to promulgate special regulations in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allowing recreational fishing of Gila trout.

Listed as a Species of Special Concern by the State of Arizona.