

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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# News Release



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## Plan to Guide Recovery of Santa Ana Sucker Completed

*Final recovery plan will serve as a roadmap for restoring native California fish  
so it no longer requires federal protections*

*Carlsbad, Calif* -- A recovery plan to help restore healthy populations of the threatened Santa Ana sucker within its range was released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The plan was developed in collaboration with state, local and federal partners that includes local landowners, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and local water districts.

Santa Ana suckers, small freshwater fish, are found in portions of the San Gabriel, Los Angeles and Santa Ana River watersheds in southern California. Ensuring conservation of the Santa Ana sucker will not only protect a native California fish, but benefit people and countless other wildlife species by ensuring clean, healthy watersheds in southern California.

As a result of loss, alteration, and degradation of its habitat from altered stream hydrology, introduction of nonnative species that prey on the sucker, and operations of dams and installation of barriers that modify its habitat, the Service listed the sucker in 2000 as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is actively engaged with numerous federal, state and local partners to further recovery of the Santa Ana sucker," says Paul Souza, Director of the Service's Pacific Southwest Region. "Recovering this native southern California fish will benefit other species and will also ensure a healthy environment for local communities within these watersheds."

Each of the watersheds that support populations of the sucker is identified as a Recovery Unit. Within the Recovery Units are smaller Management Units that are the focus of recovery activities.

"We have a strong partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to further conservation of California's wildlife," said Leslie MacNair, California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Inland Deserts Regional Manager. "Recovery of the Santa Ana sucker will take a coordinated effort from a diverse array of partners."

The recovery plan lays out a strategy to recover the fish that includes: developing and implementing a rangewide monitoring protocol to accurately and consistently document populations, occupied habitat and threats; conducting research designed to inform management actions and recovery; increasing abundance and establishing a more even distribution of Santa Ana sucker within its current range by reducing threats to the species and its habitat; and expanding populations of the Santa Ana sucker by restoring habitat and reestablishing occurrences within its historical range.

Recovery plans are not regulatory documents and do not require any agency or landowner to implement specific actions.

The final recovery plan incorporates comments and information received during the 60-day comment period that followed release of the draft plan on November 24, 2014.

The Santa Ana sucker will be considered successfully recovered if adequate amounts of suitable habitat are restored, protected and managed within each Recovery Unit to support all life stages of the species and provide protection against catastrophic events; and population trends are demonstrated over 15 consecutive years to be stable or increasing, with adult and juvenile fish in all Recovery Units.

The final recovery plan is available online at: [SASU Final Recovery Plan](#). To receive a CD copy of the final recovery plan, please contact Bradd Bridges, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250, Carlsbad, CA, 92008; telephone (760) 431-9440.

[Click this link for photos of the Santa Ana sucker](#)

Additional information about the Santa Ana sucker is available on our [ECOS website](#).

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov/cno](http://www.fws.gov/cno). Connect with our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/usfwspacificsouthwest>, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSPacSWest>, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at [http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws\\_pacificsw/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws_pacificsw/)*

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