

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ANOTHER TROUT SPECIES COMES OFF ENDANGERED LIST

Federal and State restoration efforts have been so successful that another species of trout--the greenback cutthroat--has been removed from the endangered list, a move which could eventually allow the resumption of limited sport fishing of the species, Keith M. Schreiner, Associate Director of the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announced today. Three trout species in the West were removed from the endangered list in July 1975.

"Endangered" means that a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. "Threatened," not nearly so dire a status, means that a species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a portion of its range.

The species occurs only in Colorado, and Federal regulations would permit it to be taken in accordance with the laws of that State. Regulated fishing on streams and lakes which have reached their carrying capacity would actually be beneficial to the population and increase public support for further restoration on public lands.

"The species was originally listed as endangered in 1969 because of threats from hybridization with introduced species of trout and deterioration of its habitat," Schreiner said. "Today biological data indicate that the species is no longer in danger of extinction throughout all or a portion of its range. Greenback cutthroat trout populations now have been located or introduced in a number of waters within its former range in the headwaters of the South Platte and Arkansas River drainages, and efforts to eliminate introduced trout species in selected areas which could hybridize with the greenback cutthroat are succeeding."

The decline of the species proceeded very quickly in the early part of the century due to hybridization and degradation of habitat from mining, logging, grazing, and irrigation projects. Much of the remaining population and habitat are on public lands which appear to be safe from degradation. Efforts are also underway to breed the species at hatcheries and release them to their former ranges.

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