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## News Release

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### **Oregon Chub Proposed as First Fish to be Removed from Endangered Species List Due to Recovery**

*State, federal and private partnerships vital to ESA success story*

PORTLAND, Ore. – Culminating a 20-year partnership with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Army Corps of Engineers and private landowners, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today proposed to remove the Oregon chub from the list of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife under the Endangered Species Act. If finalized, the chub would be the first fish delisted due to recovery.

“For two decades, this extraordinary partnership that includes federal and state agencies, landowners and others stakeholders has served as a model of how we can use the Endangered Species Act as a tool to bring a species back from the brink of extinction,” said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. “The success we have had with the Oregon chub reinforces that, working together, we can recover species that currently are threatened or endangered.”

Dan Ashe, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, added: “This is an excellent example of how the Endangered Species Act is intended to function – partners working together to recover an endangered species. This is a tremendous success that came about from a great vision and a lot of hard work on behalf of the Service and our partners at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as private landowners and many others.”

The Oregon chub, a small minnow found only in the Willamette River Basin in floodplain habitats with little or no water flow, was listed as endangered in 1993 and reclassified as threatened in 2010. The primary factors that threatened Oregon chub were loss of habitat and predation by nonnative fishes. These threats have been lessened over the last 20 years through collaborative partnerships to restore and acquire habitat, promote natural water flows, and conduct education and outreach to local landowners and residents; efforts that were accompanied by the reintroduction of chub into historical habitat.

Just eight known populations with fewer than 1,000 fish were known to exist at the time of listing. Today, the population stands at more than 150,000 fish at 80 locations with a diverse range of habitats.

Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber celebrated the announcement, and credited the successful cooperation between the Service and its partners with improving the conservation landscape for all Oregonians.

"I couldn't be prouder that the first fish species proposed to be delisted under the Endangered Species Act is an Oregon native," said Governor Kitzhaber. "This is a huge compliment to Oregonians and our history of conservation leadership, and an extraordinary testament to the power of collaboration between landowners and local, state, and federal agency employees. The delisting of the Oregon chub is the product of remarkable partnerships by committed people who have advanced Oregon's natural legacy while showing that economic health is not only possible but strengthened by efforts to recover and safeguard native fish and wildlife."

The Endangered Species Act, which just celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, has helped to stop the slide toward extinction for hundreds of species. Twenty-six species have been successfully recovered and removed from the Endangered Species List.

Along with the delisting proposal, the Service also is proposing to remove the species' critical habitat designation throughout its range.

"The partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was instrumental in Oregon chub recovery efforts," said Roy Elicker, Director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. "Their funding of monitoring and restoration activities, combined with the coordination of the safe harbor agreement to protect landowners, are big reasons why we're celebrating this recovery."

Added Paul Henson, State Supervisor, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office: "While the chub isn't an iconic fish species that many think about in the Pacific Northwest, it is a very important part of the ecosystem and indicator of good water quality and ecosystem health. By successfully recovering the chub, we're helping many iconic wildlife species and improving the watershed for all Oregonians."

The Army Corps of Engineers has contributed significant resources to the monitoring and successful management of many Oregon chub populations on their lands and below the multiple flood control and hydroelectric dams associated with their Willamette Valley Project.

Other partners include the Service's Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, USDA Forest Service's Willamette National Forest, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Transportation, McKenzie River Trust, Cities of Salem and Stayton, and Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, all of which manage habitats that support Oregon chub populations.

Many private landowners have contributed to the recovery of Oregon chub by managing habitats on their lands, and, in some cases, creating habitat to support introductions of the species on their property.

Many of the privately owned introduction sites were created or restored under the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Oregon chub populations exist on the William L. Finley and Ankeny Refuges, with Ankeny supporting the largest known population in the Willamette River Basin.

The Service now has up to one year to determine whether the proposal should become final. The Service will open a 60-day public comment period on Feb. 6, 2014, to allow the public to review and comment on the proposal and provide additional information. The final decision whether or not to delist the Oregon chub will be based on the best scientific and commercial data available.

For more information about the Oregon chub and the Federal Register notice, visit <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>.

*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](http://www.fws.gov), or connect with us through any of these social media channels:*

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