



## Frequently Asked Questions *Final Rule to Delist Oregon Chub*

### **What action is being taken by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

The Service is removing the Oregon chub (*Oregonichthys crameri*) from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Animals because it has recovered and no longer meets the definition of threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Along with the final delisting, the Service is removing the species' critical habitat designation throughout its range. A post-delisting monitoring plan, which will assess whether the Oregon chub continues to meet recovery goals, is also part of this action.

### **What is an Oregon chub, and where is it found?**

The Oregon chub is a small minnow in the *Cyprinid* family and exists only in the Willamette River Basin of Oregon in floodplain habitats with little or no water flow, such as beaver ponds, side channels and flooded marshes. These habitats generally have considerable aquatic vegetation to provide cover for hiding and spawning.

### **When was this fish listed, and does it have critical habitat?**

The Oregon chub was listed as endangered in 1993, and a recovery plan was published in 1998. Critical habitat was designated on March 10, 2010. The species' status improved, and on April 23, 2010, the Service changed the ESA classification of the Oregon chub from endangered to threatened. In 2013, the Service concluded that the chub fully met all recovery criteria outlined in the species' final recovery plan and proposed it for delisting in January 2014.

### **Why was the Oregon chub listed as endangered in 1993?**

The primary factors that threatened Oregon chub were loss of habitat, predation by and competition with nonnative fishes, and the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms. The threats that led to the species' listing have been removed or lessened over the last 20-plus years.

### **How is this delisting possible?**

Partnerships have been the foundation of the Oregon chub's recovery. The Oregon Chub Working Group, made up of federal and state agency biologists, academicians, tribes, and land managers, was formed prior to listing the species and has been a proactive force improving the conservation status of the Oregon chub. Service partners include the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, McKenzie River Trust, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, local watershed councils, and private landowners. Many private landowners have contributed to the recovery by managing habitats to support Oregon chub, and in some cases, creating habitat to support introductions of the species on their property. These collaborative partnerships are excellent examples of how the

ESA functions to recover endangered species.

**Why does this matter to me as an Oregonian?**

Oregon chub recovery demonstrates better management of the river system for multiple benefits, including recreation, flood control, salmon recovery, water quality and overall ecosystem function, which in turn support Oregon's economy.

**I don't live in Oregon. Why does this matter to me?**

The ESA is the last line of defense for species facing extinction. With every species that is lost, however small or seemingly insignificant, we leave our children and their children beyond a more impoverished planet, and deprive them of the opportunity to benefit from healthy ecosystems and a vibrant biodiversity. Delisting a species due to recovery is an achievement to be celebrated because we have honored our commitment to the future generations. Delisting recovered species also means the Service can focus its limited resources on other species still facing the risk of extinction.

**How does this help other species such as salmon, trout or waterfowl species?**

As the management of the Willamette River has improved to mimic more natural river conditions, many species have benefitted. Oregon chub do better in side channel habitats when the natural cycle of flows and temperature of river water is closest to normal. Likewise, listed salmon and steelhead, as well as non-listed species such as coastal cutthroat trout, lamprey species and other aquatic fauna all benefit from a Willamette River that functions as naturally as possible. For example, by encouraging beaver ponds and the creation of off-channel or isolated ponds for Oregon chub habitat, waterfowl species have access to a larger number of secure habitats.

**How does a fish get removed from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Animals?**

When a species is put on the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Animals, the Service develops a recovery plan that includes specific recovery goals. Reviews of the species' status are conducted every five years. Once we determine the recovery goals are met and threats no longer prevent the population from persisting into the future, the species can be proposed for delisting. After we consider comments from the public during a formal rulemaking process, and are sure the proposal is warranted, the species is removed from the list.

**Have other fish been delisted from the ESA?**

This is the first fish delisted due to recovery, which means the fish has a healthy, thriving population and no longer requires the protection of the ESA. Other fish have been delisted, one (coastal cutthroat trout) as a result of taxonomic revision and four (Amistad gambusia, Tecopa pupfish, blue pike and longjaw cisco) due to extinction. The Modoc sucker of northern California and southern Oregon is currently proposed for delisting.

**How many other species have been removed from the Endangered Species List?**

In the 40-plus years since the ESA was signed, 28 species have successfully recovered and been removed from the endangered species list. See [http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\\_public/reports/delisting-report](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/reports/delisting-report).

**How many other fish are currently on the Endangered Species List?**

As of January 6, 2015, there are 163 fish species listed under the ESA in the United States. Of these, 92 are listed as endangered, and 71 are listed as threatened. In addition, there are 19 foreign species listed –16 endangered and three threatened. See [http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\\_public/pub/Boxscore.do](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/pub/Boxscore.do).

**Aren't fish listed under the ESA managed by NOAA Fisheries?**

Not necessarily. Generally, species such as salmon and steelhead that spend the greater part of their life in salt water are managed by NOAA Fisheries, in the U.S. Department of Commerce. Fish that spend most or all their lives in fresh water, such as the Oregon chub and bull trout, are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in the Department of the Interior.

**Could the fish become endangered again?**

Threats to this species have been lessened, and populations are stable so that the species is not currently and is not likely to again become a threatened species. There is a rigorous nine-year monitoring plan proposed that will assess the status of the chub and ensure that this species maintains its recovery.

**Are other species in Oregon and the United States being recovered?**

Several Oregon species have been recovered or are on the path to recovery. The Douglas County population of the Columbian white-tailed deer was delisted in 2003, and the Modoc sucker is currently proposed for delisting. Recent status reviews have recommended reclassification from endangered to the less critical threatened status for the Lower Columbia River population of Columbian white-tailed deer, and the Borax Lake chub in southeast Oregon.

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