



Frequently Asked Questions *Proposal to Delist Oregon Chub*

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

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to remove the Oregon chub (*Oregonichthys crameri*) from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife. Oregon chub has recovered and no longer meets the definition of threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Along with the delisting proposal, the Service also proposes to remove the species' critical habitat designation throughout its range. A post-delisting monitoring plan, which will assess whether Oregon chub continue 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 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 Endangered Species Act 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.

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 years.

How is this proposed 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. Partners include the Service's Oregon Endangered Species Office, 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, the Service's Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 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 Endangered Species Act is intended to function to recover endangered species.

Why does this matter to me?

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.

How does this help other species like 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 like coastal cutthroat trout, lamprey species, and other aquatic fauna all benefit from a Willamette River that functions as naturally as possible. Similarly, 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 Threatened and Endangered Species List?

When a species is put on the Threatened and Endangered Species List, the Service develops a recovery plan that includes specific recovery goals. Reviews of the species' status are conducted every 5 years. Once we determine that the recovery goals are met and threats no longer prevent the population from persisting into the future, then the species can be proposed for delisting. After we consider comments from the public and are sure the proposal is warranted, the species is removed from the list.

Have other fish been delisted from the ESA?

This would be the first fish delisted due to recovery, which means the fish has a healthy, thriving population. Other fish have been delisted, one as a result of taxonomic revision and four due to extinction.

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

This recovery comes as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) celebrates its 40th anniversary and underscores the success of the ESA. In the 40 years since the ESA was signed, 26 species have successfully recovered and been removed from the endangered species list.

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

As of January 31, 2014, there are 156 fish species listed under the ESA in the United States. Of these, 85 are listed as Endangered and 71 are listed as Threatened. There are an additional 12 foreign species listed as well; 11 Endangered and one threatened. See 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 Department of Commerce. Likewise, fish that spend most or all their lives in fresh water, like Oregon chub and trout species, 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 proposed nine-year monitoring plan that will assess the status of chub and ensure that populations of the Oregon chub continue to maintain a recovered condition.

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

Oregon has been successful in recovering Oregon-specific species as well. The Douglas County population of the Columbian white-tailed deer was delisted in 2003, and 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.

Can we comment on the proposal?

The Service will open a 60-day public comment period when the delisting is proposed in the Federal Register on February 6, 2014, to allow the public to review and comment on the proposal and provide additional information. To provide comments:

(1) Electronically: Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS-R1-ES-2014-0002, which is the docket number for this rulemaking. Then, in the Search panel on the left side of the screen, under the Document Type heading, click on the Proposed Rules link to locate this document. You may submit a comment by clicking on "Comment Now!". Or, (2) by hard copy: Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R1-ES-2014-0002; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

What happens next?

The Service now has up to one year to determine whether the proposal should become final. The final decision whether or not to delist the Oregon chub will be based on the best scientific and commercial data available and consideration of public comments received.

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