

News Release



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Oregon is Trailblazing the Road to Fish Recovery

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delists Foskett speckled dace

PORTLAND, Oregon – One fish, two fish, chub fish, dace fish – partnerships among state and federal agencies are helping recover two species of Oregon fish. The Foskett speckled dace is now being removed from the Federal List of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife, following on the heels of a February proposal to delist the Borax Lake chub, another imperiled fish.

The Foskett speckled dace's remarkable recovery is due to a collaboration among the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other members of the Oregon Desert Fishes Working Group, who secured and restored habitat to ensure long-term protection of the fish.

"The Service is thrilled with Oregon's progress," said Robyn Thorson, the Service's Pacific Region Director. "During the last five years, this is the fourth fish we have officially delisted or proposed for delisting due to recovery in the state. Our commitment to working closely with local and state partners is really paying off, and we can now direct our focus to species that are more in need of recovery efforts."

The Foskett speckled dace is found only in Lake County, in Oregon's Foskett Spring, where it originated, and in the nearby Dace Spring, where it was introduced. The dace lives within a very small geographic footprint in the remnant desert waters of the Great Basin. Its isolated location, low numbers and vulnerability to habitat loss were the primary reasons why the fish was first federally protected under the Endangered Species Act in 1985.

"BLM is proud to have been a part of the Foskett speckled dace recovery effort," said BLM Oregon/Washington Acting State Director Theresa Hanley. "In cooperation with the Service and ODFW, we created habitat and established a second population at nearby Dace Spring, and led open water restoration efforts at Foskett Spring. Our partnership recovery efforts led to an increase in the species distribution and abundance, and ultimately its recovery. BLM will continue to manage the area to ensure it is maintained in a condition that promotes the persistence of the Foskett speckled dace and the unique environments in which it resides," said Hanley.

Thanks to BLM and other conservation partners, the Foskett speckled dace is doing well, and threats have been eliminated or reduced. At Foskett Spring, BLM acquired the springs and surrounding 161 acres, and the ODFW has closely monitored the species and its habitat. Other recovery criteria for the dace have been fully met, and BLM, ODFW and the Service are working collaboratively under a cooperative management plan to ensure this species persists into the future with continued habitat management.

These fish and their unique habitats are an Oregon treasure. Protecting and recovering the Foskett speckled dace has helped protect unique desert aquatic ecosystems that are havens for biodiversity. As these wetlands and species are protected and restored, many other wildlife species have benefitted.

The Foskett speckled dace was proposed for delisting in January 2018. All substantive comments received during the public comment period are addressed in the final notice. For more information on Foskett speckled dace and the link to the Federal Register notice, go to <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/>.

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