

# U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



## Questions and Answers About Bull Trout Recovery Planning September 2010

### **What is the status of bull trout recovery planning?**

A draft bull trout recovery plan was completed between 2002 and 2004 for bull trout throughout the coterminous United States with certain recovery criteria and specific tasks identified. The plan has not yet been finalized due to higher priority work activities such as designating critical habitat for bull trout and other species. We are reinvigorating our recovery planning process for bull trout now as we conclude our critical habitat designation process for the species.

### **When will the recovery plan be finalized?**

The Service intends to begin revising the draft plan in 2010 and to finalize it as soon as possible consistent with other Service priorities.

### **Will the draft plan be significantly revised?**

The draft plan's recovery criteria may be significantly revised to better account for the need to remove specific threats to bull trout, incorporate newer information about the species conservation, and to quantify progress towards recovery in a measurable, meaningful way. Many of the specific recovery tasks remain a priority. Some tasks may already have been completed and this should be acknowledged, and there may be newly identified tasks to add. Also, the Service has identified new draft recovery units based on our evaluation of discrete and significant bull trout populations.

### **Will affected federal agencies, states, tribes and the public be allowed an opportunity to participate in finalizing recovery planning?**

Yes, we will continue to seek input from our partners and the public in finalizing the plan, and we will announce a formal public comment period on a draft plan and evaluate and incorporate changes into a final plan based on comments received.

**Will there be formal recovery teams guiding plan development and implementation?**

The Service will evaluate interest in and overall value of the development of formal recovery teams for completing the bull trout recovery plan.

**What is a recovery plan?**

A recovery plan is a road map to restoration of a species and their habitats. Recovery plans specify population, distribution or habitat criteria to that must be achieved to accomplish recovery and specific actions necessary to remove threats.

**What does it mean to “recover” a species under the Endangered Species Act?**

Recovery of a species means to remove threats and restore populations and habitat to the point where the protections of the Act are no longer required.

**What is the relationship between critical habitat and recovery planning?**

Critical habitat is a regulatory designation that identifies areas essential to the conservation of a species. It helps protect those key habitats from adverse modification by on-the-ground management actions. Recovery planning is developing a road map identifying specific steps that can be taken to recover bull trout and bring the species to the point where protections of the Act are no longer needed.

**Where can I get more information?**

[http://www.fws.gov/pacific/bulltrout.](http://www.fws.gov/pacific/bulltrout)