



News Release

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Excess Threatened Gila Trout to be Stocked for Recreational Angling

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will stock approximately 10,000 threatened Gila trout that currently average five inches to waters near Silver City, New Mexico. The stockings are planned to take place during the first week of January. These fish will grow to the catchable nine-inch range by Memorial Day weekend, the official start of summer.

In partnership with the Gila National Forest, Arizona and New Mexico game and fish departments, and Trout Unlimited, the Service has met recovery stocking goals set for 2015. The trout to be stocked early next year are in excess to those recovery needs and have been made available to support the recreational fishing opportunities specifically allowed for this species under programs managed by the states of Arizona and New Mexico.

Originally listed as endangered in 1966, the Gila trout has been the subject of multi-agency and angler cooperative recovery efforts for decades. As a result of improved species status, in 2006 the trout was down listed from endangered to threatened. Under Endangered Species Act “threatened” status, the Service worked cooperatively with the States to provide for recreational take of trout while partners continue to work toward full species recovery. That special provision essentially stated that any Gila trout that were found to be unneeded for identified recovery streams could be used to support recreational angling.

For the 2015 recovery efforts, the Service’s Mora National Fish Hatchery in northern New Mexico, the only facility currently propagating the trout, produced over 50,000 Gila trout for recovery efforts. Thousands of those fish were stocked into identified recovery habitats. Some of these habitat areas included locations in Arizona where Gila trout have not existed since the 1800s. All recovery habitats capable of supporting the Gila trout in New Mexico were stocked.

Having provided fish needed for recovery goals, Mora National Fish Hatchery will stock excess fish in the Gila River Forks area and in Lake Roberts, two areas identified by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish in the State’s recreational management plan for the trout.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwsHQ, watch our YouTube

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Photo support for Gila trout is available by contacting Jessie Jobs (505-248-6970 jessie_jobs@fws.gov)