



Contact: Jim Milbury
562-980-4006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2010

NOAA Seeks Public Input on Draft Recovery Plan for Central California Coastal Coho Salmon

Informational workshops planned in Fort Bragg, Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz

NOAA's Fisheries Service is requesting the public's input on a draft plan published in today's *Federal Register* that will serve as a roadmap for restoring endangered Central California Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) to coastal rivers and streams along the California coast.

Coho salmon were once abundant in the tributaries along the central coast of California, from Aptos Creek near Santa Cruz in the south, to Punta Gorda above Fort Bragg in the north. Historical records estimate population levels were as high as 125,000 as late as the 1940's. But as human population and development increased along the desirable coastal areas, coho salmon numbers plummeted to less than 6,000 and were listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 1996.

"These fish have a difficult time overcoming the natural perils of drought, poor ocean conditions and predation," said Charlotte Ambrose, a fisheries biologist and recovery coordinator for NOAA Fisheries Service in Santa Rosa, Calif. "We must at least give them the habitat necessary to survive, and this recovery plan, with the help of the local community, can do just that."

The ESA requires a recovery plan be developed when a species is listed under the statute as either threatened or endangered. An endangered species is one at risk of becoming extinct and a threatened species is one likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future. All recovery plans are made available in draft form and public comments are solicited before the plan is finalized, ensuring that the public has an opportunity to provide input in the recovery planning process.

NOAA's Fisheries Service Southwest Region plans to conduct workshops in Fort Bragg, Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa to provide the public with an opportunity to learn more about the contents of this draft recovery plan and offer any feedback or comments.

Workshops will be held at the locations and dates listed below:

March 31, 2010
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Fort Bragg City Hall
416 N. Franklin Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

April 8, 2010
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Seymour Center at Long
Marine Lab
La Feliz Room
100 Shaffer Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

April 9, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Wells Fargo Center for the
Arts
Carston Cabaret Room
50 Mark West Springs Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Public comment and information relevant to this recovery plan may be submitted at the workshops by any of the methods listed below but before 5:00 p.m. May 17, 2010.

Email:

CohoRecovery.swr@noaa.gov. (No files larger than 5 megabytes can be accepted)

Mail:

Charlotte A. Ambrose
National Marine Fisheries Service
777 Sonoma Avenue, Suite 325
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Attn: Recovery Coordinator/CCC Coho Salmon Public Draft Recovery Plan Comments

Hand delivered:

National Marine Fisheries Service
777 Sonoma Avenue, Suite 325
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Attn: Recovery Coordinator/CCC Coho Salmon Public Draft Recovery Plan Comments
(Business Hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Facsimile:

707-578-3435. Please include the following on the cover page of the fax: Attn: Recovery Coordinator/CCC Coho Salmon Public Draft Recovery Plan Comments.”

Electronic copies of this draft plan may be downloaded from the following internet site:

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/coho_recovery_plan_031810.htm

If you do not have online access, you can receive a CD copy by contacting Ms. Andrea Berry at 1-866-300-2948 or by emailing a request to andrea.berry@noaa.gov with the subject line “CD ROM Request for CCC Coho Salmon and Recovery Draft Plan.”

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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On the Web:

Central California Coast Coho Salmon Recovery Plan:

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/coho_recovery_plan_031810.htm

Recovery plans for California and Southern Oregon salmonids:

<http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery>

Other ESA recovery plans: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery>

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>