Endangered and Threatened Species: Notice of Public Hearings on Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for Seven Evolutionarily Significant Units of Pacific Salmon (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha) and Steelhead (O. mykiss) in California

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public hearings.

SUMMARY: On December 10, 2004, NMFS proposed critical habitat designations for two Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs) of chinook salmon (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha) and five ESUs of O. mykiss (inclusive of anadromous steelhead and resident rainbow trout) in California that are listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The public comment period for these proposals opened on December 10, 2004 and closes on February 8, 2005.

DATES: Written comments on the proposed critical habitat designations must be received by February 8, 2005. In order to provide the public additional opportunity to comment on these critical habitat designation proposals, NMFS will be holding four public hearings in California at the specific dates and locations listed below:


ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the proposed critical habitat designations, identified by docket number 041123329-4329-01 and RIN number 0648-AO04, by any of the following methods:
- E-mail: critical.habitat.swr@noaa.gov. Include the subject line of the message.
- Mail: Submit written comments and information to Assistant Regional Administrator, NMFS, Protected Resources Division, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802–4213. You may hand-deliver written comments to our office during normal business hours at the address given above.
- Fax: 562–980–4027.
- Further Information Contact: Craig Wingert, NMFS, Southwest Region, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802–4213.

The proposed rule, maps and other materials related to the proposal can be found on the Southwest Region’s website at http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 10, 2004, NMFS proposed critical habitat designations for two Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs) of chinook salmon (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha) and five ESUs of O. mykiss (inclusive of anadromous steelhead and resident rainbow trout) in California that are listed as threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (69 FR 71880). The seven ESU of salmon and O. mykiss include:
1. California Coastal chinook salmon,
2. Northern California O. mykiss,
3. Central California Coast O. mykiss,
4. South-Central California Coast O. mykiss,
5. Southern California O. mykiss,
6. Central Valley spring-run chinook salmon, and
7. Central Valley O. mykiss.

The Secretary has already scheduled hearings to allow affected stakeholders and members of the public the opportunity to provide comments directly to agency staff during the comment period (see DATES, above). However, these public meetings are not the only opportunity for the public to provide input on these proposals. The public and stakeholders are encouraged to continue to comment and provide input to NMFS on the proposals (via correspondence, e-mail, and the Internet; see ADDRESSES, above) up until the scheduled close of the comment period on February 8, 2005.

References

Copies of the Federal Register notices and related materials cited herein are available on the Southwest Region’s website at http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov or upon request (see ADDRESSES section above).


P. Michael Payne,
Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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