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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**NOAA Seeks Public Comment on Draft Plan to Recover Endangered Steelhead Trout in Southern California**

*Workshops for public comment and information planned in Carlsbad and Santa Barbara*

In today's *Federal Register*, NOAA's Fisheries Service requested the public's input on a draft recovery plan designed to restore and stabilize steelhead trout numbers in coastal streams south of the Santa Maria River to the United States and Mexican border.

This area contains a distinct population of steelhead that may have once numbered over 45 thousand but declined to less than 500 and became listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1997.

"This draft plan provides the framework necessary to recover one of the most endangered fisheries species in the United States, and in a region that contains over one-half the human population of California," said Chris Yates, NOAA's Fisheries Service Supervisor of Protected Resources in Southern California. "It is a challenge that can only be met through participation and collaboration with the public."

The development of a recovery plan is an important first step for the successful rebuilding of species identified as being at risk of extinction. Local knowledge and input from the public on threats or the unique needs of these fish is extremely valuable to ensure the plan is comprehensive and promotes stakeholder involvement.

The California Department of Fish and Game is a primary partner with NOAA in the development and future success of the plan.

"This draft plan provides a comprehensive road map for stakeholders to restore stream habitat, remove barriers and improve water quality in Southern California coastal streams so steelhead can survive, if not thrive, in our urban environment," said Ed Pert, Regional Manager of the South Coast Region with the California Department of Fish and Game.

Workshops planned in Carlsbad and Santa Barbara will provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the contents of the recovery plan and offer suggestions or public comment before a final recovery plan is completed. NOAA fishery biologists will explain what steps they see as necessary to recover steelhead to ultimately remove them from the ESA.

The workshops will be held at the time and locations listed below:

Carlsbad: August 25, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, 6010 Hidden Valley road.

Santa Barbara: September 1, 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Fess Parker's Double Tree Resort, 633 East Cabrillo Boulevard.

Public comment and information relevant to this recovery plan must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 21, 2009. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Email: Send to [SteelheadPlan.swr@noaa.gov](mailto:SteelheadPlan.swr@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line of the email the following: "Comments on Southern California Steelhead Plan."
- Mail: Submit written comments to Penny Ruvelas, National Marine Fisheries Service, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA, 90802-4213

Copies of this plan will be provided on a compact disc upon request. Contact Kimberly Speech at 562-980-4006 or email [Kimberly.speech@noaa.gov](mailto:Kimberly.speech@noaa.gov) with "CD-ROM request for Southern California Steelhead recovery plan" in the subject line. Electronic copies of this plan are also available on-line at [http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/So\\_Cal.htm](http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/So_Cal.htm).

Information on recovery plans for species listed under the ESA may be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery>. Recovery plans for federally listed salmonids throughout California and Southern Oregon may be found at <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/index.htm>.

-NOAA-

On the web:

[Southern California Steelhead](#) Recovery Plan:

[http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/So\\_Cal/Southern\\_California\\_Steelhead\\_Public\\_Draft\\_Recovery\\_Plan.pdf](http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/So_Cal/Southern_California_Steelhead_Public_Draft_Recovery_Plan.pdf)

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

Federal Register Announcement: <http://frwebgate5.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/PDFgate.cgi?WAISdocID=36023381321+4+2+0&WAISSaction=retrieve>