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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NOAA'S National Marine Fisheries Service to host public workshops for the recovery of steelhead in Southern California

ARROYO GRANDE, Calif. – NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) is holding a series of public workshops to gather information in development of a federal recovery plan for Central California steelhead listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This two-day workshop is scheduled for April 18 and 19, 2007 at the South County Regional Center in Arroyo Grande. Workshops have been held previously in Ventura and Carlsbad for their surrounding watersheds. A future meeting is scheduled for the Carmel/Monterey area and will cover the same waterways as the Arroyo Grande workshop.

Development of a recovery plan is important for the successful rebuilding of species identified as being at risk of extinction. Local knowledge from the public on threats or unique needs of these fish is extremely valuable to ensure the plan is comprehensive and includes stakeholder involvement and input. Additional information as the plan develops will be posted on our recovery planning web site listed below.

The first day of the workshop (12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.) will provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the historical populations of steelhead in central and southern California, their current status, and important criteria for steelhead recovery. A representative from the scientific team that developed this information will explain what steps they see as necessary to recover steelhead in the area to eventually remove them from the ESA list of threatened and endangered species.

On the second day (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) attendees will be given a brief overview on the recovery planning process and the threats assessment process. They will then organize into small groups for facilitated discussions on the threats facing steelhead in specific watershed areas. The watershed areas to be discussed will be the interior coast range (the Pajaro, Galiban, Aroyo Seco and Salinas Rivers), the Carmel Basin (Carmel River), and several small streams along the Big Sur Coast and the San Luis Obispo Terrace.

The workshop will be held in the South County Regional Center, 800 Branch Street in Arroyo Grande from 12:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. on April 18, and 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on April 19. Workshop attendance is free, but registration is suggested due to space limitations. On-line registration is available at <http://www.abag.ca.gov/abag/steelhead/recoveryworkshops> and by selecting the appropriate workshop. For those without internet access, or for more information, please call 562-980-4006.

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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>.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries Service, please visit: www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

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On the web:

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

On-Line Registration: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/abag/steelhead/recoveryworkshops>