

Utah Reclamation, Mitigation and Conservation Commission; Bureau of Reclamation; Central Utah Water Conservancy District; Army Corps of Engineers; and the Service. The agreement focuses on eliminating or minimizing threats to the least chub and its habitat to the greatest extent possible and on restoring and maintaining populations of least chub throughout its historical range. The Service solicits review and comment from the public on the draft agreement.

**DATES:** Comments on the Draft Conservation Agreement must be received on or before October 27, 1997 to be considered by the Service during preparation of the final conservation agreement and prior to the Service's determination whether it will be a signatory party to the agreement.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to review the Draft Conservation Agreement may obtain a copy by contacting the Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 145 East 1300 South, Suite 404, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115. Written comments and materials regarding the Draft Conservation Agreement also should be directed to the same address. Comments and written materials will be available upon request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Reed E. Harris, Field Supervisor (see **ADDRESSES** section) (telephone 801/524-5001).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The least chub is a small monotypic minnow endemic to the Bonneville Basin in Utah where it was once common and widely distributed. The distribution and abundance of least chub populations have declined steadily over the past 15-20 years, and at the time it was proposed for Federal listing as an endangered species with critical habitat, September 29, 1995 (60 FR 50518), was only known to occur within the Snake Valley in western Utah. The declines in range and abundance of least chub has been attributed to competition and predation from nonnative species and habitat loss and degradation. Shortly after the species was proposed for Federal listing, the Utah Department of Natural Resources initiated development of a Conservation Agreement, working cooperatively with other agencies, in an effort to reduce the threats affecting the least chub.

The Draft Conservation Agreement focuses on identifying, reducing and eliminating significant threats to the

species that warrant its listing as an endangered species with critical habitat, and on restoring and maintaining least chub populations throughout its historical range.

#### Public Comments Solicited

The Service will use information received in its determination on whether it should be a signatory party to the agreement. Comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned government agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested party concerning this draft document are hereby solicited. All comments and materials received will be considered prior to the approval of any final document.

**Author:** The primary author of this notice is Janet Mizzi (see **ADDRESSES** section) (telephone 801/524-5001).

#### Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, the Fish and Wildlife Service Coordination Act of 1964, and the National Memorandum of Understanding (94 (SMU-058)).

Dated: September 18, 1997.

**Terry T. Terrell,**

*Deputy Regional Director, Denver, Colorado.*

[FR Doc. 97-25414 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

**Availability of a Draft Recovery Plan for the Threatened and Rare Native Fishes of the Warner Basin and Alkali Subbasin: Warner Sucker (*Catostomus warnerensis*) (Threatened); Hutton Tui Chub (*Gila bicolor ssp.*) (Threatened); Fosskett Speckled Dace (*Rhinichthys osculus ssp.*) (Threatened); Cowhead Lake Tui Chub (*Gila bicolor vaccaceps*) (Candidate); Warner Valley Redband Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss ssp.*) (Special Concern)**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces the availability of the draft recovery plan for the Threatened and Rare Native Fishes of the Warner Basin and Alkali Subbasin. These fishes include the threatened Warner sucker (*Catostomus warnerensis*), the threatened Hutton tui chub (*Gila bicolor ssp.*), the threatened Fosskett speckled dace (*Rhinichthys*

*osculus ssp.*), the candidate Cowhead Lake tui chub (*Gila bicolor vaccaceps*) and the Warner Valley redband trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss ssp.*) which is considered to be of special concern.

These species inhabit a wide variety of spring, stream, and lake habitats in the Warner Basin of Oregon, California, and Nevada. The Hutton tui chub inhabits a spring system in the Alkali Subbasin of Oregon. The Service solicits review and comment from the public on this draft plan.

**DATES:** All comments on the draft recovery plan received by November 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

**ADDRESSES:** Persons wishing to review the draft recovery plan may obtain a copy by contacting the State Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon State Office, 2600 S.E. 98th Avenue, Suite 100, Portland, Oregon 97266-1398 (telephone 503-231-6179). Written comments and materials regarding the plan should be addressed to the State Supervisor, at the above address. Comments and materials received are available on request for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Antonio Bentivoglio at the above Oregon State Office address and phone number.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystems is a primary goal of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for reclassification or delisting, and estimate the time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act, as amended in 1988, requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review be provided during recovery plan development. The Service hereby publishes a notice that the draft plan is

available for public review during a 60-day comment period.

The Warner sucker inhabits the lakes and low gradient stream reaches of the Warner Valley in southeastern Oregon. The Foscett speckled dace inhabits two springs in the Coleman subbasin of the Warner Valley. The Hutton tui chub inhabits one spring, and may inhabit a second spring, in the Alkali subbasin of the Chewaucan Basin, in southeastern Oregon. The Warner sucker was listed in September of 1985 (50 FR 39117), and critical habitat was designated at that time. The Foscett speckled dace and Hutton tui chub were listed in March of 1985 (50 FR 12305) and at that time the designation of critical habitat was determined to be imprudent.

In addition to these listed species, this plan also addresses the conservation needs of the candidate Cowhead Lake tui chub and the Warner Valley redband trout which is considered to be of special concern. The Cowhead Lake tui chub is native to Cowhead Lake, Modoc County, California, where it inhabits the seasonal waters of the lake and a nearby slough that drains the lake. The Warner Valley redband trout is native to the Warner Valley and is found in the same habitats as the Warner sucker, but also in higher gradient stream reaches upstream of the Warner sucker's habitat.

Most of these species are impacted by a variety of human induced disturbances to their habitats. Activities such as grazing of livestock, timber harvest, road construction, irrigation practices, and the stocking of non-native fish species have all contributed to the declines of, or otherwise increased the risk of extinction of, these species. Recovery and long term conservation of these species will require establishment of self-sustaining populations with adequate distribution in current habitats and, in some cases, the reestablishment of migration corridors among habitats. For spring dwelling species, conservation will additionally require securing spring water sources, research into long-term habitat management needs, and assessment of genetic threats to small populations.

#### Public Comments Solicited

The Service solicits written comments on the recovery plan. All comments received by the date specified above will be considered prior to the approval of the plan.

**Author:** The author of this notice is Antonio Bentivoglio (see Oregon State Office address above).

#### Authority

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: August 30, 1997.

#### Mike Spear,

*Regional Director, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-25419 Filed 9-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-U

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Availability of Draft Recovery Plan for Applegate's Milk-vetch (*Astragalus applegatei*) for Review and Comment

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces the availability for public review of the Technical/Agency Draft Recovery Plan for Applegate's Milk-vetch (*Astragalus applegatei* Peck). This endangered plant is from the Lower Klamath Basin near the city of Klamath Falls, Klamath County, in southern Oregon.

**DATE:** Comments on the draft recovery plan received by November 24, 1997 will be considered by the Service.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the draft recovery plan are available for inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the following locations: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Klamath Falls Fish and Wildlife Office, 6610 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603. Requests for copies of the draft recovery plan and written comments and materials regarding this plan should be addressed to Steven Alan Lewis, Project Leader, at the above Klamath Falls office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Barb Masinton at the Klamath Falls address above (541/885-8481).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Background

Restoring endangered or threatened animals and plants to the point where they are again secure, self-sustaining members of their ecosystems is a primary goal of the Service's endangered species program. To help guide the recovery effort, the Service is working to prepare recovery plans for most of the listed species native to the United States. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, establish criteria for the recovery levels for

downlisting or delisting them, and estimate time and cost for implementing the recovery measures needed.

The Endangered Species Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) (Act), requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. Section 4(f) of the Act as amended in 1988 requires that public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment be provided during recovery plan development. The Service will consider all information presented during the public comment period prior to approval of each new or revised Recovery Plan. Substantive technical comments will result in changes to the plans. Substantive comments regarding recovery plan implementation may not necessarily result in changes to the recovery plans, but will be forwarded to appropriate Federal or other entities so that they can take these comments into account during the course of implementing recovery actions. Individualized responses to comments will not be provided.

*Astragalus applegatei* (Applegate's milk-vetch) is endangered and is currently known from only three populations occurring in the Lower Klamath Basin near the city of Klamath Falls, Klamath County, in southern Oregon. It is restricted to flat-lying, seasonally moist, strongly alkaline soils. Although it is currently replete with introduced grasses and other weeds, the species' habitat was historically characterized by sparse, native bunch grasses and patches of bare soil. Intensive agricultural and urban development of the Klamath River floodplain has resulted in severe depletion and fragmentation of Applegate's milk-vetch habitat. The largest of the three populations continues to face attrition through industrial development on private lands. Virtually all remaining potential (undeveloped) habitat for the species has been seriously modified by a proliferation of weeds, fire suppression, flood control, and land reclamation projects involving extensive construction of drainage ditches and water retention dikes. Threats to the species are exacerbated by the small number of populations in a limited area, which increases the vulnerability of Applegate's milk-vetch to extirpation due to random mortality events. Furthermore, the smaller populations may not have enough individuals to maintain the genetic variability necessary for long-term population viability.