



Bull Trout Recovery Planning Update

Status Update :: Number Two :: April 2012



5-YEAR STATUS REVIEW

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is required to conduct status reviews every five years for species listed under the Endangered Species Act (Act).

BACKGROUND

The purpose of a status review is to determine whether the current listing status of a species is appropriate. Bull trout were listed as a threatened species under the Act in 1999 across their range in the coterminous United States.

A 5-year status review for bull trout was last completed in 2008. The review considered information that had become available since the original listing of bull trout such as population and demographic trend data, genetics, species competition, habitat condition, adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms, and management and conservation planning. With completion of the 2008 review, the Service concluded that it was appropriate to maintain the threatened status for bull trout as currently listed and evaluate whether distinct population segments exist and merit protections of the Act.

CURRENT STATUS

Currently, the Service is in the process of completing a revised Draft Recovery Plan for bull trout. This draft plan will contain updated information on bull trout that became available since the original 2002/2004 draft recovery plans

and the 2008 5-year status review, including population and demographic data, genetics, species competition, habitat condition, and threats.

Because the draft recovery plan will include an assessment of threats and population status equivalent to that required for a 5-year review, the two processes complement one another. Since the previous bull trout 5-year review was published in 2008, it is now timely to prepare the next one. In order to most effectively complete both processes, therefore, the Service has chosen to initiate the 5-year review concurrently with preparation of the revised draft recovery plan.

During the week of March 4th, 2012, the Service published a *Federal Register* notice initiating 5-year reviews for several species, including bull trout. This notice announced a 60-day public comment period, and requested the public to send relevant information to the Service; information received after the comment period closes may also be considered where feasible. The closing date for public comments is May 4, 2012.

The Service plans to complete the 5-year review document after the revised draft recovery plan is published, taking advantage of the detailed species status assessment presented in the recovery plan.

The 5-year review will consider all information on the status of bull trout that is available, including information that is submitted in response to the 5-year review initiation notice. Where appropriate this information may be incorporated into the bull trout recovery plan.

Look for the next FWS *Bull Trout Recovery Planning Update* (#3) in May, 2012. It will focus on the progress the Service has made toward developing a Draft Recovery Plan.

For further information, please contact:

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