

Title: California Steelhead: Management News and Stock Status Update 2023

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Abstract

California has six Distinct Population Segments (DPS) of steelhead as determined by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Currently, four DPS are listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and one is listed as endangered. Since our last meeting in 2021, several important steelhead management actions have occurred. NMFS and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) each received a petition to list summer steelhead in the Northern California DPS as endangered under the Federal and State ESA, respectively. NMFS determined that listing Northern California summer steelhead as endangered was not warranted. However, Northern California summer steelhead were added to the list of endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) by the California Fish and Game Commission in June 2021. Other management news includes the following: Southern California steelhead were designated as candidate species under CESA, which triggered the CDFW to conduct a status review, NMFS is finalizing 5-year status updates for the five ESA listed California steelhead DPS, CDFW and NMFS have finalized a new monitoring framework for steelhead in Southern California (Fish Bulletin 182). Through brood year 2021, stocks throughout the state appear to be stable, but remain depressed. Based on incomplete return data, trends in Steelhead report card information from 2006-2021 indicate that angler catch typically consists of a higher proportion of natural origin steelhead (>16").