



Interior Fraser Steelhead Trout at Risk of Extinction

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Due to the extreme decline of mature spawning Thompson and Chilcotin River Steelhead Trout, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has conducted an emergency threat assessment. COSEWIC concluded today that the two populations of sea-going Steelhead Trout are at imminent risk of extinction. Both populations were assessed as Endangered following the seldom-used fast-track emergency assessment process.

The BC Wildlife Federation, and other angling groups, have all been sounding the alarm about the decline of the iconic Interior Fraser Steelhead (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*). BCWF President Harvey Andrusak said, "We fully support the call for emergency listing of the Thompson Chilcotin river system's breeding steelhead under the federal *Species At Risk Act* (SARA). We are pleased that an independent committee has confirmed that the species need to have all the protection afforded by the SARA in order to save these fish from extinction."

Under SARA (s. 29 – Emergency listing), the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (MECC) *must make a recommendation* to the Governor in Council (Cabinet) that the species be added to the *List of Endangered Wildlife in Canada* (Schedule 1 of SARA) as a Species At Risk.

Once the Interior Fraser Steelhead Trout are recommended for listing, COSEWIC is required to prepare a status report on the species within one year, confirming or reclassifying the at-risk status of the species. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) will undertake a regular listing process to confirm or reconsider the emergency listing, including thorough consultations with Indigenous groups and stakeholders.

A decision by the Governor in Council to list Interior Steelhead Trout as Endangered may have immediate and significant impacts on a variety of activities which threaten the population, including fisheries, development, and other resource use. The main threats include inadvertent bycatch of adults by net fisheries targeting Pacific salmon and poor ocean conditions. The record small numbers of overwintering BC Interior Steelhead Trout begin to lay their eggs later this spring.

How can you help save the Interior Fraser Steelhead Trout?

[Email the Minister of Environment and Climate Change](#), The Honourable Catherine McKenna, in support of this Emergency Listing. Talk to your Member of Parliament and tell them to support the emergency SARA Listing - [Click Here to Find Your MP](#)

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Read the COSEWIC emergency assessment [HERE](#)