

Federal Government Proposes Important Fish Protection

March 25, 2019



Bull Trout, the provincial fish of Alberta. Photo © Trout Unlimited Canada

The federal government has [proposed to list a number of aquatic species](#) under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), including Alberta's Athabasca rainbow trout as endangered and bull trout as threatened. Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) and Trout Unlimited Canada (TUC) welcome this important step towards protection and urge the federal government to move forward with listing and recovery actions without delay.

Lesley Peterson, Provincial Biologist with TUC said, "Several of Alberta's native fish species have been in trouble for decades from the impacts of habitat destruction, invasive species and fishing pressure. The decision to list at-risk fish species would provide the government with the tools to protect their habitat and prioritize recovery work. As well, recently announced funding commitments from the federal government for native fish habitat restoration will help to put

Alberta's native trout on a path to recovery.”

“The original intent of SARA, which stated that species should be listed within nine months of being assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada has been completely compromised, considering bull trout continue to decline while they have waited 7 years to be placed on the list,” added Joanna Skrajny, AWA Conservation Specialist. “While it’s definitely better late than never, AWA hopes that the federal government will make up for lost time by finalizing the listing and expediting critical habitat designation for these species.”

Both organizations recognize the importance of a number of recent initiatives including:

- the Alberta government’s science-based triage approach to fisheries recovery that is currently under review;
- large scale recovery projects such as an emergency fish rescue and restoration of [31 illegal OHV crossings in 20km of bull trout habitat in Rocky Creek](#); and
- efforts to address habitat issues through sub-regional plans and the current proposal to establish the West Country Public Land Use Zone.

Federal listing would aid recovery work by providing legal protection of these species and their habitat. Along with a 30 day public comment period, [the federal government will make a final decision](#) within 9 months on whether to list the aquatic species in question.

For more information:

Joanna Skrajny, Alberta Wilderness Association, 403.283.2025

Lesley Peterson, Trout Unlimited Canada, 403.875.3264



Dedicated to the conservation of wilderness and completion of a protected areas network, AWA inspires communities to care for Alberta's wild spaces through awareness and action.

[Donate](#)

Copyright © 2019 Alberta Wilderness Association, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).