

Response Statement - Bull Trout, South Coast British Columbia populations

December 18, 2013

Common Name: Bull Trout, South Coast British Columbia populations

Scientific Name: *Salvelinus confluentus*

Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC): Special Concern

How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment: The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will undertake consultations with the government of British Columbia, the Nisga'a Wildlife Committee, the Nisga'a Joint Fisheries Management Committee, the Maa-Nulth Joint Fisheries Committee and the Tsawwassen Joint Fisheries Committee, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Bull Trout, South Coast British Columbia populations, should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Special Concern. The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Bull Trout, South Coast British Columbia populations, to the Governor in Council upon completion of consultations.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC: This freshwater fish exists in five large river systems in this area. The population sizes are unknown for three of the rivers but are likely not large. This is a slow-growing and late maturing species that thrives in cold, pristine waters, and many populations require long unimpeded migratory routes joining spawning to adult habitat. Therefore the species is particularly vulnerable to habitat degradation, fragmentation of river networks by dams, negative effects from the invasion of non-native Eastern Brook Trout, and overharvest. The anadromous life history form found in these populations is unique within this species.

Occurrence: British Columbia

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency

Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:

British Columbia

Applicable federal legislation:

Conservation activities underway: In 1995, the British Columbia Fisheries Program developed a 'Strategic Plan for the Conservation and Management of Char in British Columbia.' The plan has since focused research on inventory, general distribution, genetic diversity, seasonal movements, habitat and interspecific interactions. In 2004 the province of British Columbia published the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy for species at risk outlining specific guidelines for management of Bull Trout habitats and general wildlife measures.