

Response Statement - Umatilla Dace

December 2, 2010

Common Name: Umatilla Dace

Scientific Name: *Rhinichthys umatilla*

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

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, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Umatilla Dace should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened. The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Umatilla Dace 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 small freshwater fish has a limited distribution in Canada encompassing habitats that have been extensively modified by widespread hydroelectric developments (change from riverine to reservoir habitats, altered flow regimes). It is likely that habitat will continue to be lost and degraded owing to hydroelectric operations, climate change, and increased water extraction. This species is also susceptible to aquatic invasive species that are widespread in the Columbia-Kootenay Rivers' portion of the species' range. Proposed additional hydroelectric and water storage development in the Similkameen River drainage is a potential major threat to habitat quality.

Occurrence: British Columbia

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

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

British Columbia

Applicable federal legislation: Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

Conservation activities underway: The South Okanagan - Similkameen Conservation Program multi-species association has directed efforts towards the protection and restoration of natural habitat, including landowner awareness of stewardship practices that protect habitat for species at risk including portions of Umatilla Dace habitat. A habitat use and life history assessment is presently being completed by BC Hydro as a requirement of the Columbia Water Use Plan; the Water Use Plan also outlines operational requirements that reduce the risk of stranding.