

Introduction

The Middle Columbia Steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) was listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1999. The Conservation and Recovery Plan for Oregon Steelhead Populations in the Middle Columbia River Steelhead Distinct Population Segment¹ (OAR 635-500-6550; **Oregon Mid-C Plan**) was developed through a collaborative, stakeholder process and provides a **blueprint for the recovery** of two (2) extirpated and 10 extant (existing) **Middle Columbia River steelhead** (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*; *O. mykiss*) populations that occupy Oregon tributaries to the Columbia River. The 10 existing steelhead populations spawn and rear in the Fifteenmile Creek, Deschutes, John Day, Umatilla and Walla Walla river basins (Figure 1). Improving the status of Oregon's Mid-C steelhead populations is essential for DPS recovery.

The Oregon Mid-C Plan was approved by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission on February 5, 2010. The plan is consistent with Oregon's Native Fish Conservation Policy (NFCP; OAR 635-007-0502 thru 635-007-0505) and is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-National Marine Fisheries Service's (NOAA-NMFS) U.S. Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. Sections 1531-1544) Section 4(f) Middle Columbia River Steelhead Distinct Population Segment Recovery Plan².

Primary threats limiting Oregon Mid-C steelhead viability include: **hydrosystem** operations and passage, mainstem and tributary **habitat alteration**, and effects from naturally spawning **stray hatchery fish**. Oregon has **two recovery goals** for Mid-C steelhead: (1) **delisting** from the federal threatened and endangered species list under the ESA, and (2) **broad-sense recovery** – recovering Oregon's natural steelhead populations to levels that are self-sustaining, while providing for significant ecological, cultural, social and economic benefits for future generations. Oregon's Mid-C Plan specifies **two distinct types of recovery actions** for steelhead: (1) **monitoring actions**—to assess population viability, threats and limiting factors, and effectiveness of management actions; and (2) **management actions**—the integrated, site-specific, actions needed to reduce the threats and factors limiting steelhead viability across their full life-cycle. Consistent with **Oregon's commitment to adaptive management**, these collective recovery actions define a framework to provide continuous monitoring of Mid-C steelhead populations and their viability, recovery action implementation, and action effectiveness, that is grounded in the best available scientific and technical input. Strategic implementation of the plan's recovery actions through collaborative partnerships at the local, regional and watershed levels is necessary for advancing and achieving the recovery goals for Mid-C steelhead.



Adapted from <http://web.pdx.edu/~rueterj/courses/objects/images/adaptive-management-ESSA.png>

This **progress report summarizes** biological status and trends data and recovery plan action information for **the first seven years of** Oregon's Middle Columbia Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan **implementation**, based on the following questions:

- What are the status and trends of Oregon's Middle Columbia steelhead populations?
- What are the status of and key findings from Oregon's Mid-C steelhead population viability monitoring efforts?
- How do management actions and restoration projects align with recovery plan actions and priorities?
- What are the information gaps, implementation challenges, and/or emerging recovery issues?
- What are the highest priority, recovery recommendations for the near-term (through 2022)?

Population Fact Sheets, Major Population Group Recovery Gaps, & Near-Term Recommendations

Populations are the primary units of recovery action implementation¹. The Fact Sheets (on pages 5–35) answer the above questions for each Oregon population in the Middle Columbia River Steelhead DPS, by summarizing:

- Population status and trends information;
- Primary threats and factors limiting a population's viability;
- Status of recovery plan research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) actions as of December 31, 2016;
- Management action implementation during the period of January 1, 2010—December 31, 2016; and
- Major Population Group (MPG) recovery gaps and high priority, near-term recovery needs to improve viability.

The RM&E data and report information are also incorporated into ODFW stock assessment updates, annual reports, NOAA five-year status updates, and/or peer-reviewed publications to inform management and policy decisions (i.e., adaptive management) regarding Oregon's Mid-C steelhead populations.

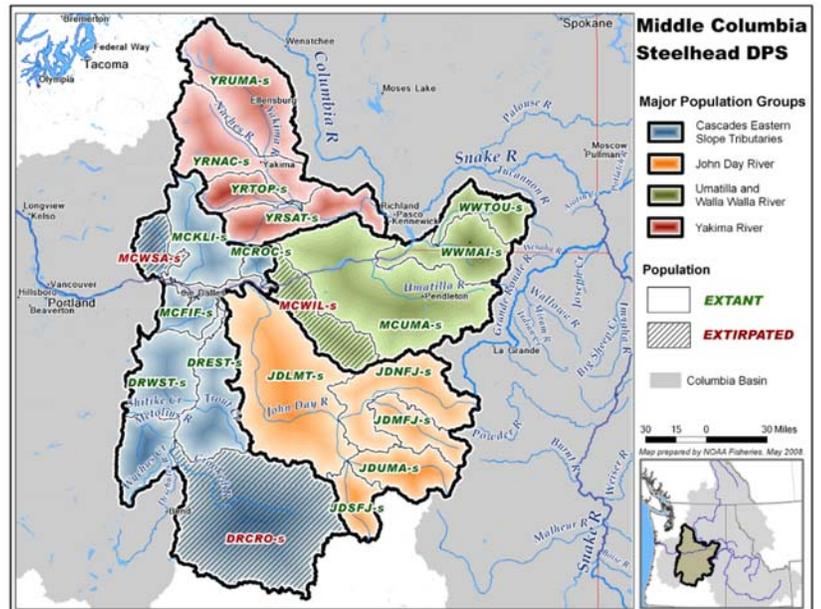


Figure 1. The Middle Columbia River Steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS). Extirpated areas represent the absence of only the anadromous form of *Oncorhynchus mykiss*.