



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

911 NE. 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS/R1/AES/Classification

SEP 24 2007

Mr. Ron Sims
Executive, King County
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3210
Seattle, Washington 98104

Dear Mr. Sims:

This letter responds to your petition dated July 9, 2007, requesting that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) list Lake Sammamish, Washington, kokanee (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). Your petition was received on July 10, 2007.

Under the provisions of section 4 of the Act, we must make an initial finding as to whether or not a petition to add a species to the endangered species list presents substantial information indicating that the requested action may be warranted. Section 4(b)(3)(A) gives the Service 1 year from the date the petition was received to: decide that the petitioned action is not warranted; decide that the petition action is warranted, but precluded from listing due to higher priority actions; or decide that the petitioned action is warranted and promptly publish a proposed rule.

Species are considered for emergency listing when the immediacy of the threat is so great to a significant portion of the population that the normal listing process is not sufficient to prevent large losses that may result in extinction. To conduct this analysis, we reviewed the information provided in your petition and information retained in our files on the petitioned species, and reviewed each potential threat in terms of imminence, magnitude, and severity of impact. Although the numbers of returning spawning fish in some parts of the population are very low, we do not believe there are any potential threats of such great immediacy, severity, and/or scope that would threaten the species with the imminent risk of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. As a result, our initial review of your petition does not indicate that an emergency situation exists. However, if at any time the conditions change, and we determine that emergency listing is warranted, an emergency rule may be developed.

We appreciate the collective conservation initiatives being implemented by your organizations to conserve Lake Sammamish kokanee, which include actions such as preserving open space, restoring habitat along stream corridors, scientific data collection and analysis, and fish passage assessment. In addition, we share your concerns regarding the species' current numbers in light of the nature of identified threats. We anticipate making an initial finding within 90-days as to whether your petition contains substantial information indicating that the action may be warranted. If warranted, a listing decision would be made during a subsequent status review.

Mr. Ron Sims

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If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Ken Berg, Manager, Western Washington Field Office, 510 Desmond Drive SE, Suite 102, Lacey, Washington 98503, telephone (360)753-9440.

Sincerely

Active 
Regional Director

cc:

The Honorable Ava Frisinger
Mayor, City of Issaquah
Kathy Fletcher, People for Puget Sound
Mat Mattson, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
Mark Taylor, Trout Unlimited
Joanna Buehler, Save Lake Sammamish
Kurt Beardslee, Wild Fish Conservancy