

“...among the most at risk of extinction in the near future.”

2.23.2016 email reply to Federal Legislative Delegation: Species become endangered because of poor decisions by experienced people that may have had the best intentions at the time.

Our environment is on the edge of imbalance with two endangered species within this study area: the northern long eared bat and Atlantic salmon. We don't know where the bats are, but we do know where the Atlantic salmon are as 2B-2 crosses two streams containing “Atlantic salmon which is listed as an endangered species with designated critical habitat in the study area (NOAA, NMFS 2012).”

2B-2's cumulative impacts to surface waters are documented as: “4,900 feet of streams; unknown impacts from stormwater runoff.” DEIS

Will this unknown stormwater runoff impact, road chemicals, winter brining and salting operations and emissions from some 12,000 vehicles per day by 2040 unbalance the Atlantic salmon designated critical habitat environment causing irreparable damage to an already endangered species?

The real truth is we don't know, but I contend that the experts don't really know either and the problem is that the impacts will not be measurable for tens of years into the future and by then it may already be too late to reverse the damage.

Do we need a connector—one that doesn't meet purpose and needs—so much as to take such a risk with a species already at “risk of extinction”?



NOAA FISHERIES
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

[Species in the Spotlight: Survive to Thrive](#)

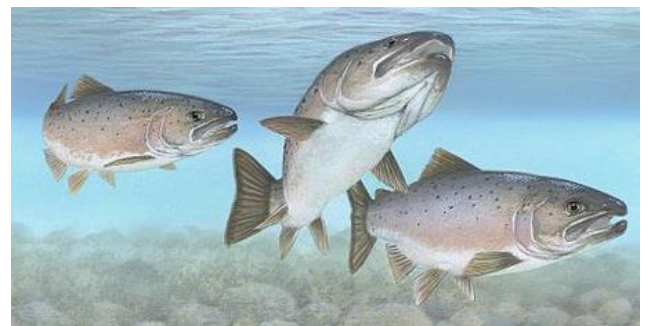
February 10, 2016

As we begin the fifth decade of administering the ESA, we rededicate ourselves to ensuring we do not lose any species on our watch. The ESA has been successful in preventing species extinctions—less than 1 percent of the species listed under the ESA have been delisted because of extinction. While we have recovered and delisted a small percentage of listed species since 1973, we would likely have seen hundreds of species go extinct without the ESA.

Of all the species NOAA protects under the ESA, we consider **eight** among the most at risk of extinction in the near future. As a result, we have launched our “Species in the Spotlight: Survive to Thrive” initiative, a concerted agency-wide effort to spotlight and save these highly at-risk species.

The eight “Species in the Spotlight” are:

- Atlantic Salmon Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment (DPS)
- Central California Coast Coho Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU)
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale (DPS)
- Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle
- Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook (ESU)
- Southern Resident Killer Whale (DPS)
- White Abalone



To put endangered Atlantic salmon in perspective: over 1900 species are listed in the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NOAA has jurisdiction over 130 endangered and threatened species—the Atlantic salmon in the Gulf of Maine is in NOAA's top 8 species “among the most at risk of extinction in the near future.” That is just how endangered this species is!! Should we drive thousands of vehicles per day over designated critical habitat and take the chance that it will not cause irreparable harm? The sad truth is if MaineDOT selected an alternative that satisfied the “east of Route 46” system linkage need—instead of deferring 2B-2's valid system linkage need for 20 years—Atlantic salmon would not be impacted! This assault on the environment is MaineDOT's failure to satisfy their own criteria...