

# GET TO KNOW THE COHO SALMON

**Saving Species Together** ~ *Everyone can help protect species!*



## COHO SALMON

Southern Oregon Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho Salmon are known for their anadromous history, in which breeding and rearing of young take place in rivers for the first year of their life. Then as adults, they migrate to the North Pacific, returning after two years to spawn and die. These Coho salmon originate from rivers from the Mattole River in CA to the South to the Elk River in Oregon to the north.

Coho salmon spend approximately the first half of their life cycle maturing and feeding in streams and small freshwater tributaries. The remainder of the life cycle is spent foraging in estuarine and marine waters of the Pacific Ocean, until they return to small streams with stable gravel substrates, where they spawn (reproduce).

Once abundant, they supported native recreational, and commercial fishing. By the late 1990's, Coho salmon were reduced to only a few remaining places and on the verge of extinction. SONCC Coho were first listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 1997, and restoration efforts have been occurring to rebuild their populations ever since.

### *Threats*

While there is no single factor responsible for SONCC Coho salmon decline, both human activities and natural events have degraded their habitats. Restoration work to reduce threat is underway, but additional emergency measures may be needed to protect genetic diversity.