
Umatilla Dace

Rhinichthys umatilla

Actinopterygii — Cypriniformes — Cyprinidae

CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Apparently secure (G4)
Statewide: Unranked (SNR)
ESA: No status
USFS: Region 1: No status; Region 4: No status
BLM: No status
IDFG: Unprotected wildlife

BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Lack of essential information pertaining to status.

TAXONOMY

Nelson et al. (2004) officially recognized Umatilla dace as a distinct species based on work by Peden and Hughes (1988, 1989). Previously, this species along with *Rhinichthys falcatus* (leopard dace) was considered as a subspecies of *R. osculus* (speckled dace). Although considered a subspecies of speckled dace, it would be most likely identified in the field as a leopard dace according to species key and pictures in Wydoski and Whitney (2003). At this time, it is unknown if past Idaho records of leopard dace represent Umatilla dace, leopard dace or both.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

The distribution of this species is unknown in Idaho. Prior to 2005, members of this species were classified as leopard dace and/or speckled dace. Wydoski and Whitney (2003) report that Umatilla dace are found in Idaho in the Boise, Salmon, Snake and Little Wood rivers, although they do not define the records.

POPULATION TREND

Information on population status is unknown. Most previous IDFG records combine all the dace samples including the more common speckled dace and longnose dace (*R. cataractae*) into a single category.

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Wydoski and Whitney (2003) report that Umatilla dace are benthic fish found in relatively productive, low-elevation streams. They inhabit streams with clean substrates of rock, boulders and cobble where water velocity is strong enough to prevent siltation from embedding interspaces. Umatilla dace reach 7–10 cm (3–4 in) in length. Mature fish probably spawn in July to early August. Diet is unknown but likely to consist of small aquatic insects.

ISSUES

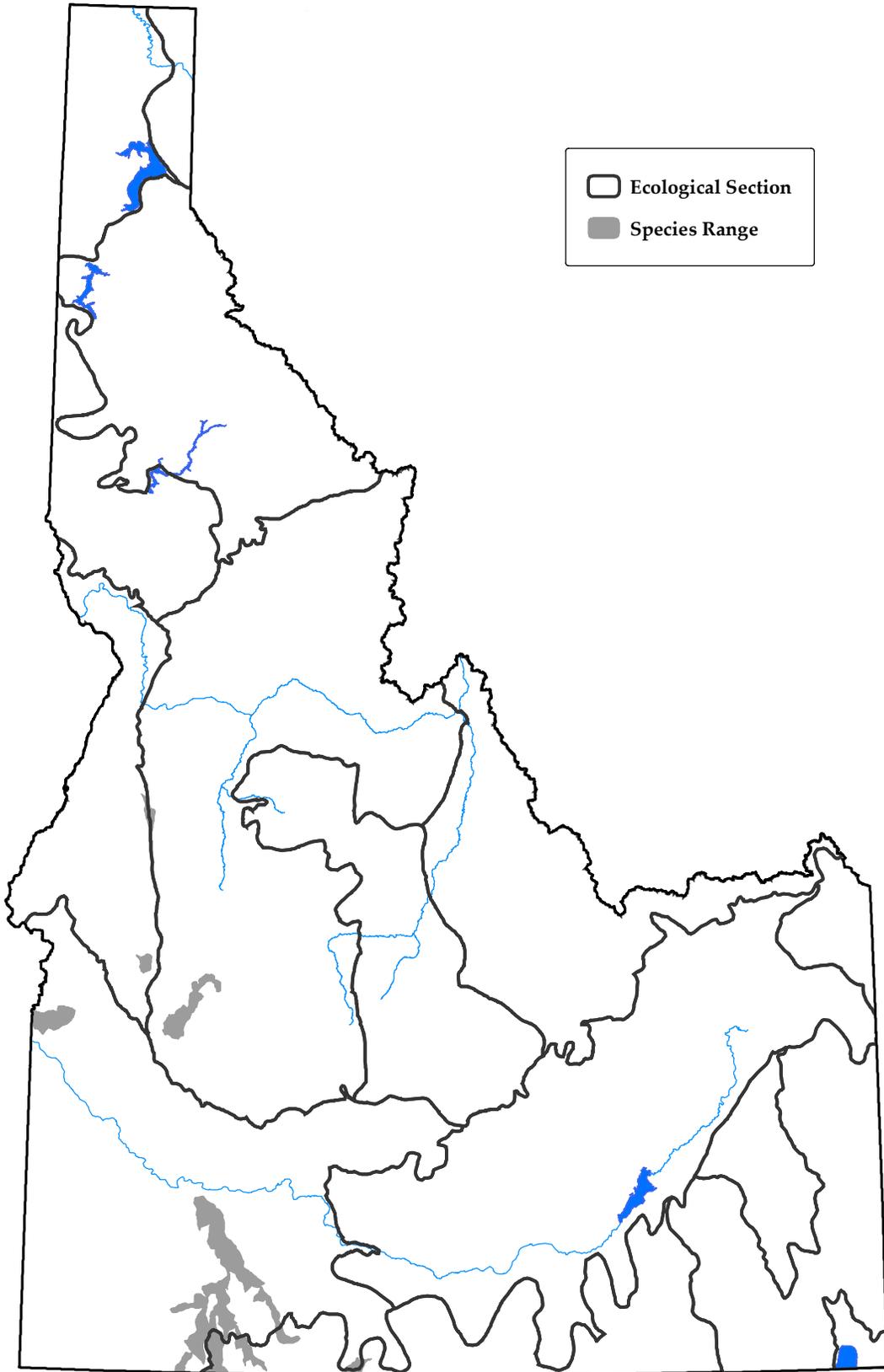
There is a lack of information on population distribution, status and life history requirements. Historic land and water management practices have altered stream habits resulting in reduced flows and sedimentation. Isolation of populations due to construction of dams, diversions, road crossings can result in negative impacts on populations. Introduction of non–native fish species can impact this species.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Surveys need to be developed targeting nongame species to determine distribution of nongame fish at the species level. Studies of life history requirements need to be done. Work with land and water management agencies to protect existing stream channels and to improve degraded habitat, including removal of movement barriers. Management of nonnative fish species needs to consider impacts on native nongame species.

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23 September 2005
Fish information is from Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System, Idaho Department of Fish and Game and displayed at the 6th code hydrologic unit.

