Calif. drought puts animals at risk

By Edward Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

California's drought is imperiling tricolored blackbirds, large trees and native fish, with some of the affected species already on the state's endangered list and others likely headed there because of rapidly declining numbers, scientists say.

"The problems created by the drought are just a harbinger of things to come," said Peter Moyle, a professor at the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences, which hosted a daylong Capitol summit Friday on economic and environmental costs of the drought.

"Native fishes and the ecosystems that support them are incredibly vulnerable to drought," Moyle said. "There are currently 37 species of fish on the endangered species list in California – and there is every sign that that number will increase," he said.

Eighty percent of those species face extinction by the year 2100 if present trends continue, Moyle said.

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