

A massive die-off coming for California fish?

By Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

Researchers have issued a dire warning for California's native trout and salmon: Three-quarters of them will be extinct in the next 100 years unless urgent action is taken.

This bleak assessment came Tuesday from biologists at the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences and from California Trout, a nonprofit advocacy group. In a new report, the groups said nearly 75 percent of California's 31 salmon, trout and steelhead will be extinct by 2117 unless critical habitat is protected and restored.

The report follows up on the groups' 2008 assessment that established a baseline level of health for each type of native fish. The researchers said that almost all of the fish are worse off than they were a decade ago. California's record-breaking drought that officially ended this winter wreaked havoc on many of the already-struggling fish, which depend on cold water.

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