

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Sicklefin Redhorse

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

Every seat in the conference room was filled, with more chairs brought in for the overflow. In the room were aquatic biologists, geneticists, fish propagation experts, dam management experts – a host of biologists offering what they knew about the sicklefin redhorse.

The sicklefin is no small fish – growing up to 25 inches long, and it's found only in the western tip of North Carolina and a tiny portion of north Georgia, and it's a candidate for inclusion on the federal endangered species list. Throughout this year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, one of the keepers of the endangered species list, will gather information about the sicklefin redhorse from state and tribal biologists, as well as other species experts. Based on that information, a decision will be made not to place it on the list, or there will be a proposal to place it on the list, which would then be open for public comment.

In recent years, the fish has been the focus of conservation efforts by the Service, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and Conservation Fisheries, Incorporated. This work will factor into the final decision, however so will the role of growing threats – largely from the impacts of increased development on water quality in rivers where the sicklefin lives.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.