

## Resources for more information:

Carpinteria Creek Watershed Coalition



5775 Carpinteria Ave.

684-5405, ext. 449

[www.carpinteriacreek.org](http://www.carpinteriacreek.org)

South Coast Watershed  
Resource Center

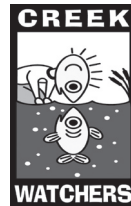


2981 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara

805-682-6113

[www.watershedresourcecenter.org/wrc/](http://www.watershedresourcecenter.org/wrc/)

Creek Watchers



Community Environmental Council

930 Miramonte Drive, Santa Barbara

805-682-6113

[www.communityenvironmentalcouncil.org](http://www.communityenvironmentalcouncil.org)

This brochure was partially funded by:

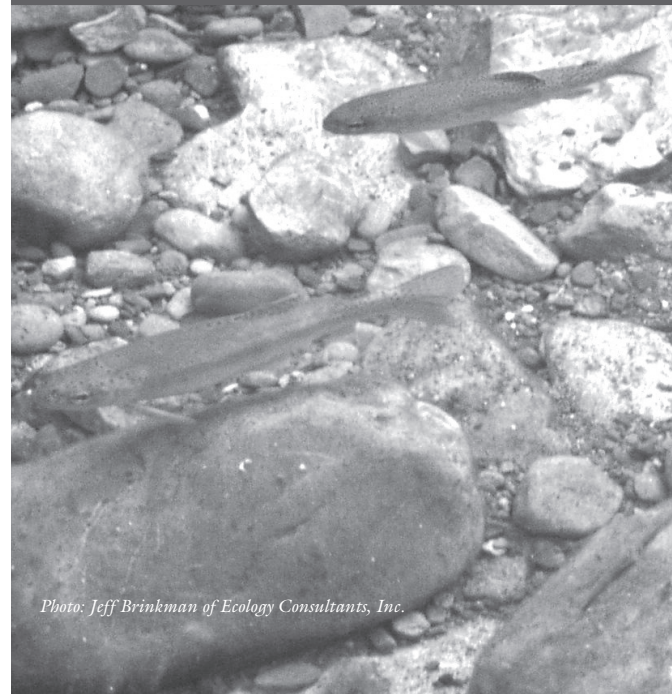
Santa Barbara County's Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund, a partial mitigation of impacts from the following offshore oil and gas projects:

Point Arguello, Point Pedernales, Santa Ynez Unit, and Gaviota Terminal.

Department of Fish and Game (Support Program – General Funds), NOAA Fisheries, and the California Coastal Salmon Recovery Program (CCSRP).



# Steelhead in Carpinteria Creek



*Photo: Jeff Brinkman of Ecology Consultants, Inc.*



**Carpinteria Creek  
Watershed Coalition**

## The Issue

- Southern California Steelhead was listed as an Endangered Species in 1997, meaning that the species is in danger of going extinct.
- The Southern California Steelhead, found in Carpinteria Creek, has declined to less than 1% of its historical population numbers.

## Characteristics

- Steelhead are anadromous fish, meaning they are born and reared in freshwater, like Carpinteria Creek, and move to the ocean to grow and mature, and then return to freshwater to spawn.
- Rainbow trout and steelhead are really the same fish, the difference being that steelhead migrate to the ocean for part of their lives, whereas rainbow trout spend their entire life in freshwater.
- Because the steelhead are not permanent residents of the creek, they become more sensitive to changes in creek conditions compared to most other aquatic life.

## Steelhead and the Carpinteria Creek Watershed

- The deep pools and spawning areas that steelhead need to survive and reproduce are found high up in the watershed, near the base of the mountains, but migration barriers prevent most adult steelhead from reaching these upper areas of the watershed.
- When steelhead cannot migrate between their freshwater and ocean habitat areas, the population loses numbers as reproduction activities cease.
- Carpinteria Creek is contained within the larger watershed system, meaning that everything occurring within the watershed can affect the creek.
- Water pollution, development, stream modification, runoff, and invasive plant species are just some of the factors affecting the watershed that can impact steelhead habitat.

## Bringing Back the Steelhead

- Efforts to re-establish suitable migration pathways and stream habitat are key to bringing back the declining steelhead population.
- Joint efforts, facilitated by community groups such as the Carpinteria Creek Watershed Coalition, landowners & other residents, community groups, businesses and government are essential for a healthy watershed and viable steelhead population.
- Getting involved in local watershed restoration projects can help bring back steelhead populations, as well as improve watershed health for the entire community.
- The further decline of the species is reversible; with help from all sectors to restore the critical habitat in and around Carpinteria Creek, we can bring back the steelhead.