

Penny Ruvelas
Area Office Supervisor
National Marine Fisheries Service, Southwest Region, Protected Resources Division

Statement of Qualifications

Bachelor of Arts, Marine Biology, University of California at Santa Cruz

Ms. Ruvelas has over 20 years of experience working for the National Marine Fisheries Service on the scientific study and management of protected resources and commercially-harvested fishery species. Since 1995, Ms. Ruvelas has focused on the regulatory and policy aspects of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including work preparing and reviewing biological opinions, habitat conservation plans (HCPs), research permits, and recovery plans for steelhead, Chinook and coho salmon, sea turtles, marine mammals, abalone and green sturgeon. Ms. Ruvelas has also served as an expert on teams dedicated to the development of policies, guidance, and regulations pursuant to the ESA and the development and delivery of internal and external training programs to parties involved in ESA Section 7 consultations.

Ms. Ruvelas spent 10 years as the Regional Section 7 Coordinator for the Southwest Region, serving as the regional expert on the conduct of ESA Section 7 consultations and preparation of biological opinions. In that capacity, she oversaw and assisted in the development of numerous biological opinions on the operations of water projects, land-use actions, and regulation of ocean fisheries. These opinions include, among others:

- Operations of the Central Valley and State Water Projects
- Operations of the Klamath Project
- Operations of the Trinity Division of the Central Valley Project
- Operations of the Russian River Project
- Operations of the Cachuma Project
- Licensing of the Santa Felicia Project
- Operations of the Federal Flood Control Project in the Central Valley
- Implementation of the national and regional US Army Corps of Engineers' Nationwide Permit Program

In addition to her substantial experience in matters relating to Section 7 of the ESA, Ms. Ruvelas has also spent more than 5 years on the development and review and recovery plans for a variety of listed species in the Southwest Region. Her focus has primarily been on the development of plans for listed salmonid species in California, with particular emphasis on the endangered Southern California steelhead and the threatened South-Central California Coast steelhead. Ms. Ruvelas has in-depth understanding of the policies and requirements for recovery plans prepared pursuant to the ESA and has both supervised the development of the plans as well as directly participated in the analyses supporting those plans and written portions of the plans. Ms. Ruvelas currently supervises an office of the Protected Resources Division that includes staff dedicated to the conduct of section 7 consultations, issuance of HCPs, and implementation of recovery plans for steelhead throughout southern and south-central California.