

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Preparation for westslope cutthroat trout restoration in East Fork Specimen Creek

Discipline: Natural Resources
Type of Project: Technical assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University
Effective Dates: 12/1/2007 - 6/30/2009
Funding Amount: \$18,036

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Todd M. Koel, Center for Resources, Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Section, P.O. Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190; 307-344-2281, todd_koel@nps.gov
Investigator: John Varley, Big Sky Institute, 107 AJM Johnson Hall, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717; 406-994-5320, john_varley@montana.edu

Project Abstract:

The westslope cutthroat trout (WCT) is imperiled and listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is imminent unless immediate action is taken. The goal of this project is to establish self-sustaining, genetically-pure WCT population within Yellowstone National Park (YNP) in an effort to restore and prevent the ESA listing of this unique native subspecies. WCT are an important resource in Yellowstone because they are a fundamental component of a relatively intact, naturally-functioning ecosystem that includes the ESA-listed grizzly bear and many other important and sensitive species. The proposed project will allow YNP biologists to partner with multiple government agencies as well as expert NGOs to renovate one watershed in Yellowstone's Northwest corner through removal of nonnative fish species and reintroduction of genetically-pure WCT. These activities are critical to ensuring the persistence of this unique aquatic resource and the ecosystem that depends on it. **Cooperators at MSU will work with NPS to conduct logistical planning including compiling equipment needs, budgeting, and producing technical documents that will guide on-the-ground restoration activities during the summer of 2008.**

Outcomes with Completion Dates: 30 September 2008 - Report including list of equipment needs, budget, and recommendations to complete field work proposed

Keywords: Westslope cutthroat trout, lake trout, Specimen Creek, Yellowstone National Park, Montana State University