

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Cutthroat Trout Restoration in Specimen Creek, Yellowstone National Park

Discipline: Natural Resources

Type of Project: Technical Assistance

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University

Effective Dates: 9/1/2009 - 12/31/2011

Funding Amount: \$128,120

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: The westslope cutthroat trout (WCT) is imperiled and listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is imminent unless immediate action is taken. WCT historically occupied over 1,000 km of stream habitat in YNP but have been reduced to only one remaining aboriginal population existing in a tiny isolated headwater stream. The goal of this project is to establish self-sustaining, genetically-pure WCT populations 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 NGO's to renovate a watershed in Yellowstone's Northwest corner through reintroduction of genetically-pure WCT. These activities are critical to ensuring the persistence of these unique aquatic resources and the ecosystem that depends on them.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: Due Date for Final Report and/or Other Products: 31 December 2010

Keywords: westslope cutthroat trout, reintroduction, Yellowstone National Park, Big Sky Institute, Montana State University