

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



WESTERN
NATIVE
TROUT
INITIATIVE

DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you for being a part of the Western Native Trout Initiative in 2019. We could not accomplish all that we do without the continued support and dedication of our partners and donors.

In 2019, the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) and our partners funded eight habitat restoration projects benefiting our focal species with a total of \$206,864 National Fish Habitat Partnership funds leveraged to partner matches of \$2,126,647 for a total projects value of \$2,233,511.

An ongoing partnership with the Resources Legacy Fund (RLF) through their Open Rivers Fund, funded nine projects in the Upper Bear River in Utah and Wyoming to benefit Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, recreational fishing, and local communities and ranchers who divert water for irrigation. Open Rivers 2019 funding of \$432,000 was matched by \$2,268,005 in other private and public funding, for a total projects value of \$2,700,005.

A new partnership began between WNTI and RLF to execute an ambitious watershed-scale restoration effort in the Warner Lakes Basin in southeast Oregon. This partnership will benefit Warner Lakes Redband Trout (State Sensitive and Federal Species of Concern), and the Warner sucker (listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act), recreational fishing, ranchers and landowners. The partnership will ultimately fund ten restoration projects to open 38 stream miles in the Warner Basin by 2025. This year's grant of \$190,000 supported engineering and design plans for the first four projects in the portfolio and was matched by \$101,500 from other partners.

WNTI awarded \$19,750 out of its small grant program for five projects in six states, which were matched by \$115,800 in other public and private funding. The community-based projects were selected because of their emphasis on citizen science and outreach to help address challenges facing the restoration and recovery of western native trout. WNTI gratefully thanks our partners at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rocky Mountain Flyathlon, RepYourWater, Basin+Bend, California Fly Fishers Unlimited, Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers, and all our individual donors for supporting our 2019 Small Grants Program.

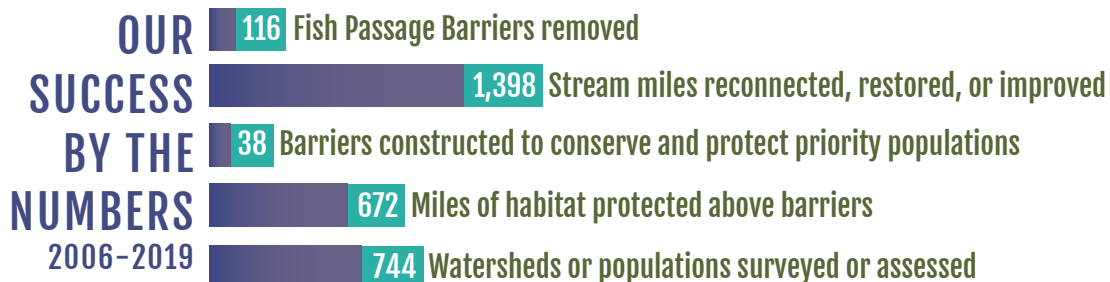
Collectively, projects funded in 2019 will remove or bypass 20 barriers to restore access to 199 miles of stream for fish passage, restore 120 miles of riparian habitat, complete 30 habitat assessments, and assess 155 stream miles. Barriers will be constructed in three separate projects to protect 3 miles of high priority habitat for Bonneville Cutthroat Trout in Utah, and 56 miles of high priority habitat for Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Montana.

Thank you for making 2019 another successful year for the Western Native Trout Initiative. We are looking forward to continued success in 2020!

Sincerely,

JULIE MEKA CARTER
Chair, WNTI Steering Committee

THERESE THOMPSON
Coordinator



Outreach Activity Highlights

COLLABORATION WITH REPYOURWATER

Match the hat! Thanks to our ongoing collaborative partnership with RepYourWater, you can purchase a different hat for all 21 species of western native trout and char that the Western Native Trout Initiative represents. We hope this unique offering will promote pride in our native trout species and an interest in where they live. The hats have been very popular with anglers and other members of the public. We started a hashtag "#matchthehat" on social media and invite people to share photos of themselves holding a native trout that matches the native trout on their hat. A percentage of the proceeds from hat sales will support on-the-ground habitat conservation projects in all 12 states where WNTI works.



Photo courtesy of Tyler Coleman

repyourwater.com/collections/western-native-trout

WESTERN NATIVE TROUT CHALLENGE

Native trout are the embodiment of the West. The wild rivers, alpine lakes, and trickling arroyos — the fiber of Western geography — are also habitat for the iconic native trout of the Western U.S.

In May 2019, WNTI launched the Western Native Trout Challenge, and invites anglers to help celebrate this legacy by catching native trout and char in their native ranges in each of the 12 Western states, at their own pace. There are three levels of achievement: Participants who catch six trout species across four states will earn "Expert Caster" rewards. Those who catch 12 trout species across eight states will earn "Advanced Caster" rewards. And those who catch 18 species across all 12 states will not only enjoy the adventure of a lifetime, they will also be designated as a "Master Caster" with rewards to match.

The 12 states where these native trout can be found are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The state fish and wildlife agencies in each of the 12 states partnered on the effort, along with the U.S. Forest Service, the federal Bureau of Land Management and Trout Unlimited.



"We've been working for decades with our partners to conserve and rebuild native trout species across the West," said Ed Schriever, Director of Idaho Fish and Game Department and Chairman of the National Fish Habitat

Partnership Board of Directors. "The Western Native Trout Challenge is a great way to promote angling for these beautiful fish, keep people connected to native fish and their habitat while raising awareness and support for the need to conserve them."

Anglers can get details on which fish to catch and where to find them by registering on the website, WesternNativeTroutChallenge.org. Registration is \$25 per adult and is free for those 17 and under. The vast majority (92%) of the registration fee will go toward helping conserve native trout populations for future generations to also enjoy.

"We're thrilled to be launching this fun way to support native trout conservation across the West," said WNTI Coordinator Therese Thompson. "For every \$25 program registration fee, \$23 will go directly back to conservation projects that are helping native trout populations thrive. We want anglers to learn about these unique species and where they can go to catch them. In addition, catching the selected species helps conserve them by promoting angling and fishing license sales for native trout species, which also supports conservation efforts. It's a wonderful way to help conserve these beautiful species, in beautiful places, at your own pace."

The Western Native Trout Challenge is complementing a similar effort in some states. Anglers can participate in the Western Native Trout Challenge at the same time they participate in state specific programs, including the Arizona Trout Challenge, California Heritage Trout Challenge, New Mexico Trout Challenge, Nevada Native Fish-Slam, Utah Cutthroat Slam and the Wyoming Cutt-slam.

THE LURE of the WEST
Catch trout in the West.
Win the adventure of a lifetime.

A fishing challenge, at your pace, that helps Western Native Trout Initiative conserve 21 native trout and char species in 12 states.

Everything you need,
All in One Cool Place.
Maps. Species. Trout Conservation.
Rewards. The Adventure of a Lifetime.

\$25 for Adults 18+
Kids 17 and under play FREE

Get started by visiting
WesternNativeTroutChallenge.org

Logos for Trout Unlimited, National Fish Habitat, and the Western Native Trout Initiative.

Learn more and register at WesternNativeTroutChallenge.org
Follow the action on:



WNativeTrout



WesternNativeTrout



westernnativetrout

Projects

PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP FUNDS IN 2019:

- Restore Sand Creek to a Native Rio Grande Cutthroat Fishery, *Colorado*
- Tincup Creek Stream Restoration Project, Phase 3 (Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout), *Idaho and Wyoming*
- Selway Meadows Westlope Cutthroat Trout Population Restoration, *Montana*
- Wall Creek Fish Barrier (Arctic Grayling, Westslope Cutthroat Trout), *Montana*
- Yaak Headwaters Restoration Partnership Project (Bull Trout, Redband Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout), *Montana*
- Santa Clara Creek Headwaters Restoration (Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout), *New Mexico*
- Central Oregon Interior Redband Trout Genetic Status Project, *Oregon*
- Deep Creek Floodplain Restoration Project, Phase 2 (Redband Trout), *Oregon*

Additional information for all 2019 National Fish Habitat Partnership funded projects:

westernnativetrout.org/2019-funded-projects

SMALL GRANTS PROJECTS FUNDED IN 2019:

- Going to Extremes Exploring the Northern Extend of Alaskan Trout Species (Arctic Grayling, Coastal Cutthroat Trout, Dolly Varden, Rainbow Trout), *Alaska*
- West Hills College Coalingua Citizen and Undergraduate Science Project (Coastal Cutthroat Trout), *California*
- The Greenback Cutthroat Trout Exhibit, *Colorado*
- Yellowstone Fly Fishing Volunteer Program (Arctic Grayling, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout), *Montana and Wyoming*
- Willow Creek Habitat monitoring (Gila Trout), *New Mexico*

Additional information for all 2019 WNTI small grants projects:

westernnativetrout.org/2019-small-grants-projects



Photo courtesy of California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Photo courtesy of Ryan Ragan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

STEERING COMMITTEE

Operating under the guidance of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Western Native Trout Initiative is governed by a Steering Committee that represents 12 western state fish and wildlife agencies, 3 federal resource management agencies, tribes, and nonprofit fisheries conservation organizations.

Julie Meka Carter, Chair
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Jon Sjöberg, Vice Chair
Nevada Department of Wildlife

Martin Koenig
Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Craig Burley
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Bruce McIntosh
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Paul Dey
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Gillian O'Doherty
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Andrew Cushing
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Matt Nicholl
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Roger Bloom
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Pat Saffel
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Melissa Dickard
Bureau of Land Management

Yvette Paroz
U.S. Forest Service

Robert Clarke
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Warren Colyer
Trout Unlimited

Chris Cantrell
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

STAFF

Therese Thompson
Coordinator

THANK YOU 2019 PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Alaska Dept of Fish and Game
Americanfishes.com
American Sportfishing Association
FishAmerica Foundation
Angling Trade Magazine
Arizona Game and Fish Dept
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
ATLAS at Lander Arts and Sciences
Basin+Bend
California Dept of Fish and Wildlife
California Fly Fishers Unlimited
Clark Fork Coalition
Coastal Cutthroat Trout Interagency Committee
Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Copper River Watershed Project
El Paso County, Colorado
Federation of Fly Fishers – Southwest Council
Friends of the Teton River
gaiacreative
Idaho Dept of Fish and Game
KeepEmWet Fishing
Kenai Watershed Forum
Lake Country Umbrella Watershed Council

Long Tom Watershed Council
Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group
McKenzie Watershed Alliance
Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group
Middle Colorado Watershed Council
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Nathan Brown Fine Art
National Fish Habitat Partnership
National Forest Foundation
Native Fish Society
Native Trout Addicts
Nevada Dept of Wildlife
New Mexico Dept of Game and Fish
North Fork John Day Watershed Council
Okanogan Land Trust
Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
RepYourWater
Resources Legacy Fund (Open Rivers Fund)
Rocky Mountain Flyathlon (Running Rivers)
Sage Lion Media
Santa Clara Pueblo Forestry Division
Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers

Smith River Watershed Council
South Fork John Day Watershed Council
Spokane Riverkeeper
Terry Lee Wells Nevada Discovery Museum
Trout Unlimited
Turner Endangered Species Fund, LLC
Upper Deschutes Watershed Council
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Geological Survey
U.S. National Park Service
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Washington Dept of Fish and Wildlife
West Hills Community College District
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Wild Fish Conservancy
Wyoming Game and Fish Dept
Yaak Valley Forest Council
Yellowstone Forever Foundation

And all the individual donors who contribute to WNTI!



*Photo courtesy of California
Dept of Fish and Wildlife*

About WNTI

The **WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE** is a public-private Fish Habitat Partnership that works collaboratively across 12 western states to conserve (protect, restore and recover) 21 native trout and char species.

**To achieve this mission, WNTI works together with its on-the-ground partners to:
Establish Joint Priorities for Native Trout Conservation**

Covering over 1.75 million square miles of public and privately managed lands, WNTI and our partners combine science-based assessments along with expert and local knowledge to establish joint priorities for native trout conservation at a landscape scale.

Coordinate Investment and Collaborative Action

WNTI provides a forum for partners to coordinate and invest their collective assets and capacity toward completing the highest-priority, native trout conservation efforts across the West. Proposed and led by local communities and resource agencies, these projects are funded and supported through WNTI's grant programs and in kind contributions by our partners.

Education, Outreach and Stewardship

WNTI seeks to support and sustain the ongoing efforts of our on-the-ground partners by raising awareness for the importance of healthy native trout watersheds and facilitating greater public support for native trout conservation within local communities. Through our **Campaign for Western Native Trout**, WNTI helps encourage private investment and involvement in native trout projects and regional native trout conservation initiatives.



Photo courtesy of David Lentz

The future of native trout conservation depends on the generosity of individuals like you who care about sustaining healthy western watersheds. When you give to WNTI, 100% of your donation is leveraged to support on-the-ground, locally led projects.



**134 Union Boulevard, Suite 665
Lakewood, CO**

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