

PROJECT PROPOSAL

TITLE: Development of a Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Brood Stock at Kolob Reservoir

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BACKGROUND:

The Colorado River cutthroat trout CRCT *Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus* is one of two native trout found in southern Utah and one of the most colorful of all trout species. It is currently managed as a "Conservation Species" by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources UDWR under a Conservation Agreement and Strategy developed in 1997. Aggressive management of the subspecies by the UDWR and cooperating agencies has resulted in improving the status of the CRCT from the early 1990's, when 2 known populations occupied about 6 miles of stream in the Southern Geographic Management Unit, to 2007, when 10 populations occupied 60 miles of stream. Recently, after reviewing the status of the CRCT and the work underway to protect and enhance the subspecies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a finding that listing as "threatened or endangered" was "not warranted". Continued conservation efforts will be important in maintaining this status in the future.

An important component of the Conservation Strategy is the development of brood stocks of CRCT. Eggs and fish produced from these brood stocks are used to restore populations in historic habitats. In southwestern Utah, cutthroat trout have also been stocked to maintain sport fishing in many waters. Currently the UDWR maintains a brood stock of Colorado River cutthroat trout for the Southern Geographic Management Unit at Dougherty Basin Lake near Escalante, Utah.

PROBLEM:

Production of CRCT from the Dougherty Basin Lake Brood Stock will not meet future demands. The small size of Dougherty Basin Lake limits the number of adult CRCT in the brood stock and the number of eggs that can be produced. It is estimated that more than 60,000 CRCT per year will be needed to continue with CRCT restoration projects and maintain cutthroat sport fisheries in the future. The average number of fish produced from the Dougherty Basin brood stock over the past 9 years has been a little over 7,000.

PROPOSAL:

CRCT would be stocked in Kolob beginning in 2008. Management of the reservoir would not change. The reservoir is currently managed with a mixture of rainbow trout and hybridized cutthroat trout under special regulations. The reservoir would **NOT** be poisoned to remove the non-native trout now present. Stocked CRCT would be marked to enable their identification when they are collected during the spawning season. CRCT

would be collected by trapping on Kolob Creek during the spawning season as they migrate out of the lake in the spring beginning in 2010 or 2011.

KOLOB RESERVOIR AS A CRCT BROOD LAKE:

Advantages:

- Relatively large, productive reservoir capable of producing a sufficient number of eggs/fish;
- Good spawning tributary (Kolob Creek);
- Establishing a brood stock would not require removal of the existing fishery;
- Special regulations to maintain a population of large, spawning adults are already in place. No changes in regulations would be necessary;
- Close proximity to UDWR regional office, good access;
- Potential watchable wildlife opportunity relatively close to large population centers.

Disadvantages:

- Other fish species make success less certain;
- Lack of conservation pool; could be impacted by drought, etc.



Colorado River cutthroat trout