

WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE

2016 Small Grants Program

Final Report

Arizona Trout Unlimited (AZTU)

“Get To Know Your Native – Apache Trout”

The project plan for developing an Apache trout poster was submitted for a WNTI grant, a \$1,500 grant was approved in July 2016, and the project has now been completed.

Summary of the Project

The Apache trout poster grant request followed the approval of a similar WNTI grant in June 2015 for the “Get to Know Your Native - Rio Grande Cutthroat” project.

A project plan for the Apache trout poster was developed prior to the filing for the WNTI grant and the project started shortly after confirmation of the grant approval. An Arizona Trout Unlimited Council (AZTU) committee developed the poster content by utilizing the book *Trout and Salmon of North America* written by Dr. Robert Behnke and illustrated by artist Joseph Tomelleri as a reference.

An agreement with the graphic designer, Jeremy Carlson of www.jeremycarlson.com, was then entered into for design of the Apache trout poster, referencing the design of the Rio Grande Cutthroat trout which he designed in 2015 with the New Mexico Council of Trout Unlimited.

The permission to use the Apache trout artwork, from the *Trout and Salmon of North America* book, was obtained from the artist Joseph Tomelleri for a modest fee.

The designer provided an initial draft of the poster which was reviewed by the committee. Changes were returned to the designer and a final poster design was approved. No additional fees were required for reworking a third revision.

Logos were obtained and approved for each conservation organization and federal and state agency shown on the poster. Each stakeholder shown on the poster was consulted for input, suggestions and ultimate approval before submission was made to the printer.

The map of original areas and waters which the Apache trout occupied were confirmed with federal and state agencies as well as the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

Competitive printing quotes were researched during the design process (costs, shipping, timeline, etc.). Upon approval of the poster, the designer provided the appropriate final art resolution files for the printer.

A supply of Apache trout posters was delivered in May 2017 to the WNTI office.

Education and Outreach

The poster is already being distributed to raise awareness of the native Apache trout which is the official state fish of Arizona. The outreach effort and plan is to educate the public about the Apache trout, a unique native trout, and the conservation activities that are underway.

The project partners have begun to distribute the poster throughout Arizona at various events and presentations. The poster will be initially provided to the 29 Trout-In-the-Classroom schools. The goal is to reach diverse organizations and communities – especially classrooms, youth groups and governmental agencies that have a direct impact on the environment with their planning and decisions.

As mentioned in the application request, the poster is an important addition to the *Southwest Native Trout Strategy* announced in April 2015 by Trout Unlimited. The attached “*Southwest Native Trout - March 2017 Update*” provides an overview of the status of native trout in the southwest (Apache, Gila and Rio Grande Cutthroat) and the focus and projects that are being pursued to expedite their recovery. The poster will also be a significant contribution to the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) Partnership Waters Program and the 2018 Annual Native and Wild Trout Conference (www.az-tu.com).

We believe the Western Native Trout Initiative has started to benefit from funding the Apache trout poster project. During the April 2017 Trout Unlimited Western Regional Rendezvous, hosted by the Arizona Trout Unlimited Council, the “Get To Know Your Native” program was promoted to 100 attendees/leaders of eleven western states. Materials of the WNTI organization and the “Get to Know Your Native” program were provided in the registration bag of each attendee. An Apache trout poster was given to each attendee so they could return to their respective states to encourage similar projects for their native trout.

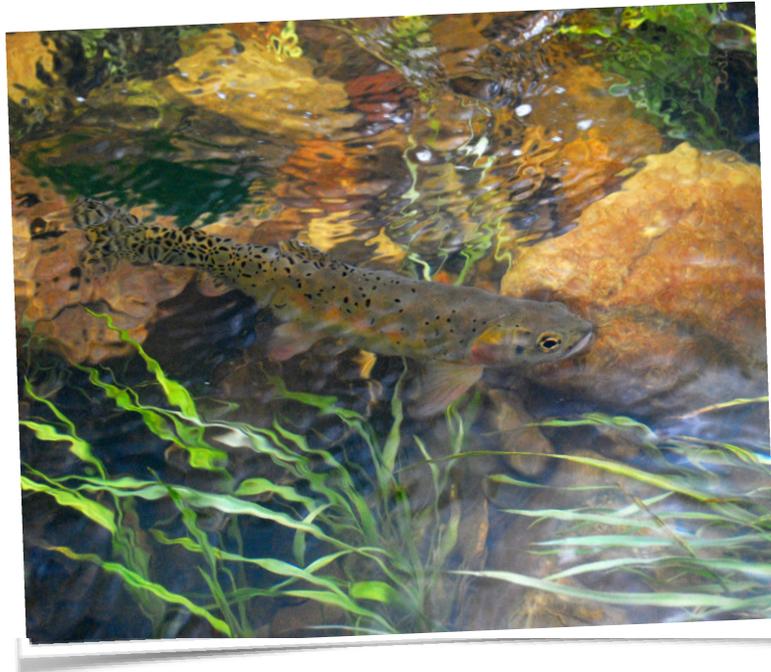
The poster was provided for posting with additional information on the WNTI website at <http://www.westernnativetrout.org/apache-trout>.

Our desire is to develop a successful program for educating and promoting the Apache trout in Arizona.

The Arizona Council and the four Arizona chapters of Trout Unlimited thank you for your support on this project.

Southwest Native Trout

March 2017 Update



Southwest Native Trout

A Native Heritage

The native trout of the Southwest are America's most imperiled trout—and one of Trout Unlimited's most urgent conservation challenges.

Many people do not associate the arid Southwest with trout habitat. Most are not aware of the pristine high mountain meadows, remote wilderness and verdant pine forests found there. But these streams and small rivers that originate in this high country are the lifeblood of the Southwest. Numerous populations of native trout once flourished in these streams, but these once vibrant trout populations have dwindled precipitously.

These native trout of the Southwest—**Apache, Gila and Rio Grande cutthroat**—are beautiful and hardy species, but they are at a critical juncture. Their status continues to decline from a combination of drought, climate change, wildfire and invasion by non-native fishes.

TU Business Plan goals/accomplishments

- 1. Significantly contribute to the recovery of native Southwest trout through protect, reconnect and sustain work that increases resilience to climate change impacts (particularly warming, drought and wildfire).**
 - *NFF/Coca Cola grant (\$119,000) for stream restoration on Comanche Creek*
 - *Invasive barrier completed on the Rio Costillo.*
 - *Santa Fe and Carson NF's with TU's engagement identify key RGCT habitats.*
 - *17.8 km's of historical Gila stream restored to reproducing Gila trout population. (Willow Creek)*
 - *8 km's of historical Gila streams receive first Gila trout reintroduction in decades (Mineral Creek)*
 - *NEPA planning started on 26 km's of Whitewater Creek which will need piscicide treatments*
 - *AZTU is actively engaged in the 4FRI project.*
 - *Added two staff in Arizona to assist with implementation of the Southwest Native Strategy*
- 2. Improve the awareness of the plight of these fishes and the needs and opportunities for improvement**
 - *Southwest Aquatic Conservation book in preparation, expected completion 2018.*
 - *TU in partnership with the Living Water Fly Fishing shop in Texas produced a short film called "Unspoken". The proceeds from this film are being directed to TU.*
 - *Randy Schofield (TU) wrote and had published a story on Apache Trout in Trout magazine*
 - *Developing videos on SW native trout, will be completed in 2017*
 - *Toner Mitchell (TU) published columns in SW Fly Fishing magazine on Gila and Rio Grande Cutthroat trout conservation*
 - *Jason Amaro (TU) submitted a Gila Trout article to NM Wildlife magazine*
- 3. Facilitate and contribute to our improved understanding of threats and recovery needs through research, monitoring & assessment**
 - *Dr. Dan Dauwalter (TU) completed the draft Apache trout monitoring plan in collaboration with AZ Game & Fish and USFWS*
 - *TU's contractor, Dr. Dan Isaak completed compiling existing data and completing future stream temperature scenarios for Colorado and New Mexico.*
 - *TU has contracted with Dr. Scott Bonar at the University of Arizona for the Verde and Gila River systems and with the Gila Trout chapter for stream temperature monitoring. This data will reduce gaps in Dan Isaak's NorWest temperature network.*
 - *Range wide assessment for temperature monitoring and Gila trout population persistence are underway in AZ/NM*

4. **Increase the role of our membership and volunteers to restore and monitor these fishes**
 - *Colorado TU raised funds through its Rocky Mountain Flyathon to pay for conceptual habitat designs on Jim Creek*
 - *TU volunteers are scheduled to annually maintain the fence on Jim Creek*
 - *TU assisting the USFWS on a pilot project for Gila Trout in the classroom in Silver City*
 - *TUNM provided extensive comments on NMGF state fisheries management plan, with particular emphasis on increased take of non natives in streams while waiting for barriers*
 - *TUNM provided letter of support for a fish barrier on Rio de los Indios within Valle Caldera National Preserve a potential RGCT reintroduction stream*

5. **Expand on successful partnerships and coordination with state and federal agencies, recovery teams, tribes and other NGOs in the above efforts.**
 - *Kevin Terry (TU) working in partnership with the USGS and NPS finished a watershed characterization study in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.*
 - *In 2017 TU will be running genetics on existing populations in the Sand Dunes to determine if they are appropriate for translocation or brood stock.*
 - *TU working with Conejos County, the State Land Board and several volunteer partner groups built a riparian fence on 2.5 miles of Jim Creek (Conservation Pop. Of RGCT)*
 - *TU discovered what appeared to be invasive brook trout above the East Middle Creek Barrier. We organized a recon trip with USFS and CPW to electro fish the stream.*
 - *Outdoor Colorado and TU are rerouting trails on Middle Creek to reduce erosion.*
 - *Working with CPW we evaluated Haypress Lake Dam. We helped replace the outlet works and intake infrastructure. We are cooperating on work to remove Brook trout and establish a Conservation Population.*
 - *AZTU met with the USFS to plan for an expansion of stream temp monitoring*
 - *TUNM supported the Gila NFs proposal to remove non-natives on Whitewater Creek*
 - *TUNM and 3 chapters helped with the spawning of Gila trout at the Mora fish hatchery*
 - *OPTU is monitoring 2 streams on Mt Graham*
 - *OPTU is assisting the USFS on the Apache trout habitat improvement work on the West Fork of the Black River*
 - *AZTU and the AZGFD hosted the annual wild and native trout workshop*

6. **Increase fishing opportunity and angler engagement**
 - *RGCT posters have been installed at trailheads and other locations in Colorado*
 - *Arizona TU is developing Apache trout posters (WNTI grant) to be distributed in 2017*

Southwest native trout represent one of the most exciting conservation opportunities for North American coldwater fisheries in our lifetimes. **Please join Trout Unlimited in protecting these rare trout and giving them safe passage into the future.** For more information: www.tu.org/stateofthetrout. Click on "Southwest."

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