

## 14330-2008-864 Fritz Creek Livestock Exclosure, Sinks' Drainages, ID for Yellowstone cutthroat trout

**State(s):** Idaho

**Managing Agency/Organization:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Type of Organization:** Federal Government

**Project Status:** Completed

**Project type:** WNTI Project

**Project action(s):** In-stream and riparian habitat

**Trout species benefitted:** Yellowstone Cutthroat

**Population:** Medicine Lodge 17040215

Exclude from cattle grazing approximately 1 mile of Fritz Creek, a Yellowstone cutthroat trout stream within the Sinks Drainages. Extending the existing exclosure fence by one mile and hardening of water gaps will decrease sedimentation and increase the recovery of riparian vegetation and stream channel health. This project is intended to increase the resiliency of the Yellowstone cutthroat trout population in Fritz Creek by improving their habitat.

The importance to the Resource: The Sinks Drainages were surveyed in 1997 and 10 Yellowstone cutthroat trout stronghold populations were found. In the 2007 survey only 5 of those populations can still be considered strongholds due to invasion of non-native fish. Fritz Creek has maintained its status. Improvement of habitat in Fritz Creek will increase their resiliency.

The problem: Yellowstone cutthroat trout stronghold populations are dwindling in the Sinks Drainages. Livestock use has been concentrated in portions of Fritz Creek which has resulted in raw, eroding streambanks and loss of desert riparian vegetation.

The method: An exclosure fence will be extended for one mile and the remaining water gap will be hardened with rock.

Further description:

Recent 10-year returns to baseline fish distribution surveys have documented the loss of half of our Yellowstone cutthroat trout strongholds in the Sinks Drainages.

**Objectives:**

- Protect from grazing one mile of stream that is important to Yellowstone cutthroat trout in the isolated Sinks drainages, Idaho. Livestock will be excluded from Fritz Creek with the extension of an exclosure system fencing. This will improve riparian and aquatic habitat.

**Partners:**

- Caribou Targhee National Forest - Matching \$7,000 - In Kind \$1,000
- USFS Grazing Permitees - Matching \$0 - In Kind \$3,000

**Measures:**

- Total number of in-stream/shoreline miles restored - 1

**Funding Source(s):**

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**Project cost:** \$18,350.00

**Start Date:** 01/01/2009 **Completion Date:** 01/01/2010

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