

## 22330-2006-023 - Restoration of Rio Grande Cutthroat trout in the headwaters of Santa Clara Creek, New Mexico

**State(s):** New Mexico

**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:** Rio Grande Cutthroat

**Population:** Rio Grand Basin

Continue to maintain partnerships with Santa Clara Pueblo and BIA to restore and establish a Rio Grande cutthroat trout population in pond 4 and the headwaters of the Santa Clara Creek Drainage (5 stream miles), and promote tribal cooperation and partnerships through WNTI.

The importance to the Resource: Rio Grande cutthroat trout have inhabited Santa Clara Creek for time immemorial. The species is religiously and culturally significant to the Pueblo. Securing populations of Rio Grande cutthroat trout and protecting them from nonnative salmonids and habitat degradation decreases the likelihood of listing under ESA and affecting Pueblo lifestyle.

The problem: Establishment and maintenance of a nonnative salmonid recreational angling program has eliminated Rio Grande cutthroat trout throughout most of its historical range in Santa Clara Creek.

The method: Resident cutthroat trout will be collected from the headwaters of Santa Clara Creek, PIT tagged, held and genetically tested for purity. Barrier construction will prevent future hybridization. Stream habitats will be treated with piscicide to remove nonnative salmonids, and pure Rio Grande cutthroat trout introduced after treatment completion.

Further description:

Santa Clara Creek occurs entirely on Santa Clara Pueblo and the tribal council has endorsed restoration of native cutthroat trout. This project satisfies the WNTI Joint Venture's goal of building, funding, and implementing collaborative conservation efforts. This is consistent with the Service's Fisheries Program Vision for the Future and the NFHI. Active Federal Aid in Restoration programs with both states fund activities on public lands. The lack of involvement by FWS in on-the-ground management activities, particularly in coordinating activities on Tribal lands with public land actions has hindered conservation efforts. The objective of this project is to mesh native species conservation with tribal recreational angling.

### **Objectives:**

- This project would provide for an additional 5 miles of stream habitat for Rio Grande Cutthroat trout if nonnative and hybrid salmonids are removed. In addition, the project would also allow the establishment of a native trout recreational fisheries in pond #4 below the headwater streams in the Santa Clara Creek Drainage.

### **Partners:**

- Bureau of Indian Affairs - Matching \$0 - In Kind \$0
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish - Matching \$10,000 - In Kind \$0
- Pueblo of Santa Clara - Matching \$0 - In Kind \$0
- Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission - Matching \$35,000 - In Kind \$0
- Trout Unlimited - Matching \$0 - In Kind \$0

### **Measures:**

- Number of new or modified cooperative agreements or IPA Agreements that support Tribal fish & wildlife conservation. - 1.0
- Number of training session to support Tribal fish & wildlife conservation. - 2.0
- Number of technical assistance requests fulfilled to support Tribal fish and wildlife conservation - 5.0
- Number of consultations conducted to support Tribal fish & wildlife conservation. - 5.0
- Number of habitat assessments completed - 1.0
- Number of miles of in-stream habitat assessed -5.0
- Number of miles of riparian habitat assessed - 5.0

### **Funding Source(s):**

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**Project cost:** \$136,500.00

**Start Date:** 01/01/2009 **Completion Date:** 01/01/2012