

Robin Knox, Western Native Trout Initiative

RE: Final Report and Invoice (prepared by Jim Hissong, Treasurer/Contact Person)

Upper Bear River TU Fish Tagging/Adopt-A-Trout Project

November 22, 2013

The Upper Bear River TU Fish Tagging Project, Phase 1, is complete. **The \$2000.00 received from WNTI was leveraged against other monies and volunteer hours to purchase ten telemetry tags.** With tagged Bonneville cutthroat (BCT) providing data of their movements, UBRTU can better identify barriers to movement and spawning activity of BCTs in the Bear River of Southwest Wyoming.

This project involved **partnerships** with

- Trout Unlimited National which authorized time and management skills of 1) Nick Walrath, Southwest Wyoming Project Manager; Jim Derito, TU Bear River Project Manager; and Hillary Walrath, TU Henry's Fork of the Green River PM.
- Uinta County School District #1 which provided classroom space and materials for tracking fish through Adopt-A-Trout program at Evanston Middle School. AAT program is taught by Derek Haider, 7th grade biology teacher and secretary of UBRTU.
- Upper Bear River members provided 65 volunteer hours to catch BCTs for subsequent tagging. UBRTU also provided funding of AAT at local schools.
- Wyoming Game and Fish provided tagging equipment and expertise when needed.

Data from telemetry tagging efforts has been used to successfully obtain funding to remove a diversion dam that is blocking access to traditional spawning grounds of BCTs in upper Bear River drainage. This diversion dam will be removed by January, 2014, and result in reconnection of 58 miles of river. Removal of diversion dam is being funded by partnerships with TU National, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, Wyoming Fish and Game Department, USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, and various in-kind donations of materials.

Tasks Completed

- Ten Bonneville cutthroat trout caught and fitted with telemetry tags in March and July, 2013. BCTs were subsequently tracked by Nick Walrath and staff.
- Adopt-A-Trout classroom collected data and tracked BCT movements
- Data has been used to secure funding for Bear River reconnection/restoration projects.
- Movements of tagged BCTs will be monitored to ascertain success of reconnection projects in Bear River.

Photos and video documenting project



An unwilling participant in the tagging project goes under the knife.



Antennae and radio transmitter inserted into cavity of BCT.



BCT, tagged and stapled up, released back into soft water

NOTE: Photos above taken from video available at <http://vimeo.com/78563508>

In video, Nick and Hillary Walrath show how a radio telemetry tag is inserted into a BCT.



Jim Derito shares his expertise with 7th grade Adopt-A-Trout students.



With help of data collected from WNTI BCT-tagging project, a fish ladder will be constructed bypassing this diversion structure.

The financial support of the Western Native Trout Initiative has been greatly appreciated . . . we could not have collected data necessary to obtain financing of projects to reconnect the Bear River without your help.

Tight lines,

Jim Hissong

UBRTU Treasurer, WNTI Project Contact