



caltrout.org

CalTrout's mission is to protect and restore wild trout, steelhead, salmon, and their waters throughout California.

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SPECIAL EDITION

Streamkeeper's Log

An Overview of Current CalTrout Projects

If you've been a regular reader of our quarterly Streamkeeper's Log, you've probably noticed that this edition is a bit heftier than the norm. This edition summarizes our entire portfolio of current restoration projects as well as our involvement in statewide and regional conservation policy planning, development and implementation.



I would be remiss in failing to credit Sacramento-based spey guru and fly fishing guide Bill Lowe for the idea. Bill and I spent a February day together on the Lower Yuba. After a two-hour lunch spent talking through almost every CalTrout project, Bill

offered something along the lines of, "I had no idea CalTrout was involved in this much work and my guess is many others don't realize it as well." Soon after, I spent a couple of weekends at the Pleasanton and Pasadena Fly Fishing shows helping reconnect CalTrout with the California fly fishing community. I spoke with countless CalTrout members (and non-members), and it became clearer still that many really don't have a good understanding of the scope of our work. Hopefully, this edition helps provide that clarity.

The organization is driving (or helping drive) a lot of important work; all tied to our mission of protecting and restoring wild trout, steelhead, salmon and their waters throughout California. It's rare in the conservation world for any one organization to singularly "own" an entire project. But, it's important for us to have a clearly defined role and the ability to measure our impact. CalTrout's regional conservation offices in Arcata, Mt. Shasta, South Lake Tahoe, Mammoth Lakes and Southern California provide the geographic proximity that helps build meaningful relationships with local partners and a better understanding of key issues. And, it enables us to play unique roles on projects.

Some examples include:

- Our Mt. Shasta office is actively engaged in building Siskiyou County support for the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement in a region that frankly prefers the status quo.
- Our Arcata office recently partnered with the Trinity River Guides Association to successfully petition the Trinity River Restoration Program to temporarily suspend a contentious gravel augmentation program in order to assess the impact and success to date.
- Our Eastern Sierra office is demonstrating that a NGO like CalTrout can lead a complex regional water management planning process reflecting the needs of residential, commercial, and environmental stakeholders throughout the area.

We are big believers in the regional conservation office approach while also contributing to state-wide and regional policy initiatives. It's one of the aspects of the CalTrout operating model that differentiates us from most other conservation focused NGOs.

Here's hoping that this newsletter helps you better understand our work. We are excited about 2012 and beyond. There are a number of new and noteworthy projects on the horizon, as well as plans to open a new regional conservation office in Santa Rosa by the end of 2012.

Thanks again for your support.

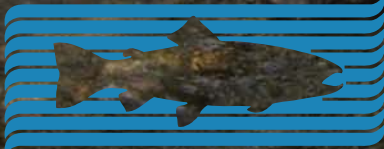
Jeff Thompson

Executive Director, CalTrout



Protecting and restoring wild trout, steelhead, salmon, and their waters throughout California.

CALIFORNIA TROUT



KEEPER OF THE STREAMS

Today, CalTrout has approximately 30 active, large-scale restoration projects. For the first time, in this special edition Streamkeeper's Log, we are sharing with you an overview of our current projects. We hope this gives you a sense of the breadth and depth of the good work we do. We couldn't do this work without the support of our members. Thank you!

Blue Ribbon Waters

Preserving treasured angling experiences across California's most noteworthy fly fishing waters for future generations.

REGION: MOUNT SHASTA

McCloud River and Pit River Flow Relicensing

Ensuring Optimal Flows for Fish and Anglers on Two Key Fishing Rivers

Situation

The McCloud River Dam is under review by FERC's dam relicensing process. Through this process, flows below McCloud dam will be set for the next 40-50 years. Since 2006, CalTrout has been working to protect spawning rainbow trout and rearing fry from current detrimental dam operations (during the winter and early spring) while also protecting the high quality angling experience. We have helped craft a flow proposal that meets our goals and have reviewed the flows with the guiding community to ensure their understanding and buy-in. The proposal has been accepted by FERC but awaits review by the SWRCB.

In 2011, the Pit River finally received new flows per the conditions of the FERC license. Summertime baseflows in Pit 3 are 300 cfs, Pit 4 are 375 cfs, and Pit 5 are 400 cfs. This doubling to quadrupling of summertime baseflows has raised concern with our membership about fishability. While the flows in Pit 3 were higher than we advocated, we believe they will decrease water temperature and increase trout habitat. We are currently tracking creel and biological data to be collected by PG&E to determine how the fish and anglers are responding to the new flows. However, angler satisfaction is low, primarily due to the difficulty of wading at high flows. We are working with the guiding community to provide comments on fish, macroinvertebrate, gravel and angler survey data. This data is being collected as part of an adaptive management process that concludes in 2017.

Conservation Goal

- Protect and enhance hydrologic and ecological processes to sustain the long-term health of McCloud River and Pit River rainbow trout
- In the McCloud River, to establish a flow regime that protects spawning rainbow trout and newly emerged fry
- Protect quality angling experience in the McCloud and Pit Rivers

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Ensuring that the McCloud River preferred flow agreement is implemented. For details, see screencast at caltrout.org/2011/05/a-caltrout-screencast-mccloud-river-flows-explained/
- Reviewing data, commenting and participating on Pit flows
- Fishing and assessing new flows on the Pit River
- Communicating with and soliciting feedback from membership and guides community about new Pit flows

BLUE RIBBON WATERS

Fall River Restoration

California's Largest Spring-fed Wild Trout Fishery In Distress

Situation

The Fall River is California's largest spring-fed wild trout fishery. Known for its crystal clear water, exceptional scenery, and challenging angling, this stream exemplifies what spring creek fisheries are all about. Sadly, various factors threaten the quality of the recreational fishery. Most notably, 1) human sources are causing excessive sedimentation and erosion, 2) an invasive aquatic plant, Eurasian milfoil, is overtaking the lower river (and thus, exacerbating the sediment problem by impeding the natural flows needed to flush the system). CalTrout works with local groups and partners, including The Fall River Conservancy, to identify solutions to these problems.



Fall River, California's largest spring-fed wild trout fishery

Conservation Goals

- Protect over 30 miles of cold water, spring creek habitat for wild trout
- Restore wild trout populations to more than 5,000 fish per mile
- Protect over 1 million acre feet of cold, clean, nutrient-rich spring water
- Provide public access to the river for anglers, bird watchers, and other outdoor enthusiasts

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Securing funding for Eurasian milfoil pilot project
- Implementing a muskrat management plan in an effort to decrease erosion
- Working directly with landowners and agricultural operators to reduce the impact of cattle, irrigation water, and water diversions on habitat and wild trout populations

Hat Creek Restoration

Bringing Hat Creek Back to Its Glory

Situation

Reports from the early 1900s suggest that Hat Creek was once California's premier spring creek fishery. By the 1960s, however, the fishery collapsed due to invasive, non-game fish and heavy angling pressure. In 1968, CalTrout founders and CA DFG led a major effort to restore wild trout populations. These efforts were remarkably successful, and in 1972, Hat Creek was designated by the California Fish and Game Commission as the state's first Wild Trout Area. But today, the fishery has collapsed once again: 2010 fish population surveys observe less than 2,000 fish per mile and native aquatic vegetation has almost completely disappeared. Excessive sedimentation is the primary ecological problem facing the long-term productivity of this Wild Trout Area.

Conservation Goals

- Restore Hat Creek's Blue Ribbon wild trout fishery to 5,000 fish per mile with at least 30% of trout greater than 12 inches
- Maintain water quality
- Reduce excessive erosion, restore native aquatic vegetation, increase habitat complexity
- Maintain adequate flows at 400-750 cubic feet per second

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Building a coalition of conservation partners committed to long-term protection and restoration of Hat Creek
- Developing a Hat Creek Restoration Plan (with the Hat Creek Resource Advisory Committee (Hat RAC))
- Establishing a baseline monitoring program
- Pursuing project funding
- Prioritizing and implementing restoration projects

Mount Shasta Spring Water Management

Protecting One of California's Most Important Water Sources

Situation

Mount Shasta's cold, clean spring waters feed critical municipal water supplies and nourish the region's famous trout populations in the Upper Sac and McCloud rivers and salmon and steelhead in the Shasta River. Lack of baseline information about Mount Shasta's water resources makes it difficult to develop science-based water policy and management decisions. In 2006, Nestle proposed to build the world's largest water bottling plant on Squaw Valley Creek, a McCloud River tributary. In response, CalTrout conducted a three-year monitoring program on 23 springs around Mount Shasta measuring for flow, recharge rates and age of spring water. Additionally, CalTrout worked with Nestle, UC Berkeley and UC Davis to develop baseline studies on Squaw Valley Creek. This study was completed in 2010 with funding from Nestle (even though they had dropped their water bottling plant plans in 2009). Now, we have more data to help inform water management decisions and protect Mount Shasta spring resources.

BLUE RIBBON WATERS

Conservation Goals

- Develop a comprehensive springs monitoring program
- Improve municipal spring water management (25% reduction in use)
- Educate and inform 1,000 community members per year
- Participate in developing a strong IRWMP for Upper Sac, McCloud and Lower Pit

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Establishing baseline conditions at 22 springs and on Squaw Valley Creek
- Continuing to monitor key springs
- Assessing future of stream gauges in Squaw Valley Creek
- Distributing findings from Mount Shasta springs and groundwater study
- Identifying key projects to implement and fund under the IRWMP project

REGION: EASTERN SIERRA

Eastern Sierra Region Water Management

Balancing Supply and Demand for Fish and Communities

Situation

The eastern Sierra region supplies water for numerous economically disadvantaged communities in the area, the City of Los Angeles (30 -50% of LADWP's water), as well as local fisheries. At the state level, over exploitation of natural resources to meet urban water demands is posing a threat to the health of Sierra Nevada ecosystems, and thus the health of our imperiled native trout fisheries. Therefore, integrated and comprehensive water planning is essential for the long-term sustainability of our ecosystems. California's IRWMP provides an opportunity to coordinate regional resources management to help ensure (1) adequate water supplies and flows, (2) improved water quality and (3) healthy ecosystems. In 2008, CalTrout initiated what has become the Inyo-Mono IRWM Program. For more information go to inyomonowater.org.

Conservation Goal

- Protect the water resources necessary for sustaining healthy populations of wild and native trout and the habitats that support them throughout the Inyo-Mono Planning Region and beyond
- Increase water-use efficiency resulting in greater water supplies to relevant fisheries
- Improve water quality throughout eastern Sierra
- Remove and control the invasive species threatening eastern Sierra watersheds

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Securing funding to address regional priorities
- Implementing various restoration projects including: eradicating invasive species (flora) in Inyo & Mono counties, managing storm water, reducing fire threat, conserving water, improving regional water quality
- Ensuring that Sierra Nevada watersheds receive increased IRWMP funding

Mammoth Creek Flow/Habitat

Instream Flows to Support Healthy Fish

Situation

Mammoth Lakes Basin sits above and feeds the Upper Owens River. Mammoth Creek which flows into Hot Creek and then into the Upper Owens River is the main tributary to the Upper Owens. So, the health of Mammoth Creek is directly related to the health of Hot Creek and in turn, the Upper Owens River system. Currently, CalTrout is actively involved ensuring that the recently completed Mammoth Creek EIR moves forward to completion. This EIR evaluates whether or not the existing instream flows are adequate for the health of our fisheries. Next, the EIR will be presented to the SWRCB for approval (Fall 2012), thus triggering the implementation of the previously agreed upon CalTrout, Mammoth Community Water District and CA DFG Settlement Agreement which will ensure healthy, lasting fisheries in the Mammoth Creek Basin.



The Upper Owens, an iconic fishery of the eastern Sierra

Conservation Goals

- Protect fisheries in Mammoth Creek and Hot Creek
- Improve urban water conservation for the Town of Mammoth Lakes
- Seek and achieve full appropriation designation of water resources in the Mammoth Lakes Basin ensuring no additional water diversions are allowed

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Ensuring the implementation of the Settlement Agreement by:
 - Initiating a Mammoth Lakes Basin fisheries enhancement fund to improve local fisheries
 - Monitoring groundwater extraction to ensure instream flows are not negatively impacted
 - Monitoring implementation of comprehensive water conservation plan to maximize water use efficiency
- Communicating Settlement Agreement progress to stakeholders and the community

BLUE RIBBON WATERS

Hot Creek/Upper Owens Water Quality

Controlling Pollutants Associated with Development

Situation

Mammoth Creek and by extension, Hot Creek and the Upper Owens, are iconic fisheries in the eastern Sierra, yet they remain vulnerable to impairments associated with stream chemistry and hydrologic characteristics. These impairments to the river are the result of rapid development in the area. Excessive nutrient concentrations in streams (often due to urban and agricultural development) can increase aquatic biomass production and degrade aquatic ecosystem conditions.

Conservation Goals

- Identify and characterize sources of non-point pollution impacting waters of the Mammoth Lakes Basin and downstream rivers within the Upper Owens hydrologic region
- Develop management recommendations and strategies to mitigate non-point sources of pollution in the Upper Owens hydrologic region
- Improve water quality (and in turn the fisheries) in the Upper Owens hydrologic region

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Identifying water quality impairments
- Engaging relevant stakeholders to form a Technical Advisory Committee
- Developing management recommendations to mitigate water quality impairments

Mono Basin Campaign

Ensuring Healthy Flows on Four Main Tributaries

Situation

In 2014, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is scheduled to pursue an amended water license from the SWRCB. The terms of the new license are subject to progress made on restoring the Mono Basin – per Restoration Orders resulting from the precedent-setting 1983 California Supreme Court decision to protect Mono Lake and its tributaries. As directed by these orders, state-appointed stream scientists were tasked with developing long-term flow recommendations for four main tributaries to Mono Lake – Rush, Lee Vining, Parker and Walker Creeks. In April 2010, the stream scientists completed a Synthesis Report with findings and recommendations. CalTrout (and partners) are tasked with: 1) determining the feasibility of implementing these recommendations, 2) reconciling any disputes resulting from the Synthesis Report, and 3) drafting a request to the SWRCB regarding LADWP's new license.

Conservation Goals

- Restore ecosystem processes of the Mono Basin's four primary tributaries essential for self-sustaining populations of wild trout
- Ensure feasibility of recommended base flows and stream ecosystem flows for Rush, Lee Vining, Parker and Walker Creeks

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Resolving outstanding issues affecting desired instream flows
- Completing and implementing a long-term monitoring plan to track the health of Rush and Lee Vining Creek fisheries
- Drafting terms of amended license

REGION: NORTHERN SIERRA

Carson River Restoration

Wild Trout Populations Are Dwindling

Situation

This highly regarded angling destination is in a state of decline. There has been limited focus on fisheries conservation resulting in dwindling wild trout population and an over-dependence on stocking. Furthermore, habitat is declining due to agricultural impact and channelization.



A beautiful East Carson trout

Conservation Goal

- Significantly increase the number and distribution of wild and native trout in the Carson and ensure their long term self-sustainability

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Working with CA DFG to identify an improved hatchery/wild trout management policy
- Finalizing installation of gauge stations along West Carson and begin monitoring to better understand base flows as they relate to river restoration
- Conducting a gap analysis to determine restoration and research opportunity
- Implementing restoration projects by assisting with fisheries pre & post monitoring
- Advocating that USFWS develop a LCT recovery plan for the watershed
- Seeking opportunities to enhance existing native trout populations

Imperiled Native Trout

Reestablishing resilient populations of native inland trout which maintain the biodiversity and genetic integrity unique to California.

REGION: NORTHERN SIERRA

Upper Truckee River Wild & Scenic

Saving an Endangered Species

Situation

Sadly, the Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) species suffers a high likelihood of extinction in California. The only wild stream population of LCT found within the Tahoe Basin resides in the Upper Truckee River. If the population expands through restoration efforts, this could be the largest meta-population within the Sierra.

Conservation Goals

- Protect headwater population of LCT
- Improve degraded habitat and remove non-native competitors in lower river sections, thus, expanding upstream population

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Generating local, state and federal support for a Wild and Scenic Designation of the headwaters
- Conducting a habitat assessment of the lower watershed
- Supporting non-native fish removal
- Supporting restoration, monitoring and plan development for population expansion

Walker River Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Preservation

Expanding Threatened Populations in the Upper Walker

Situation

The LCT situation in the Walker River Basin is bleak, too. The only remaining Walker River strain populations of LCT within the watershed are small, disconnected and threatened by non-native competitors.

Conservation Goals

- Ultimately, recover LCT across the entire Upper Walker River Basin through research, restoration, community engagement and long-term management planning

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Gaining a baseline understanding of the quality and quantity of populations by initially focusing on two priority streams, Slinkard Creek and Silver Creek
- Removing non-native competitors to expand available habitat and improve chances of survival
- Conducting an in-depth genetics analysis of LCT populations to ensure they are genetically pure and can be used to establish and expand populations throughout the watershed

Tahoe Truckee Fisheries Coalition (TTFC)

NGO Collaboration for Stronger Impact in Tahoe Region

Situation

Prior to CalTrout initiating the TTFC, the only coordinated fisheries restoration effort in the Tahoe Basin and Truckee River Watershed was for the benefit of LCT. The Lahontan team, the Recovery Implementation Team (RIT), solely involves agencies and excludes researchers, non-profit groups, and community stakeholders. Thus, there was a need to bring diverse interests groups in this area together to interact with the RIT. This collaboration (the TTFC) allows science to inform management. In addition, the TTFC broadens the perspective to examine all fish species within the watershed and take an ecosystem approach.

Conservation Goal

- Protect and enhance the native and wild fishery of the Tahoe Truckee River Watershed

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Developing a shared strategic plan to improve the region's fisheries
- Defining a clear set of priorities, a funding strategy, and project ownership for the plan
- Collaborating on research, restoration and community outreach projects to improve overall effectiveness

Eagle Lake Rainbow Preservation

Enabling Survival Without Human Intervention

Situation

These trout, which are native solely to Eagle Lake and its tributary streams, are no longer a naturally self-sustaining species. Their ability to exist as a wild population diminishes each year they remain completely dependent on hatchery for production. Historically, this fish migrated to surrounding streams for rearing prior to returning to spawn. Due to decreased flows in surrounding tributaries (such as Pine Creek), passage is now impossible. So, CA DFG must physically transport fish up into the spawning tributaries past fish passage barriers. But, the upstream habitat is not in ideal condition and therefore, in need of restoration.

Conservation Goal

- Create a healthy self-sustaining spawning population of Eagle Lake trout that requires no human intervention

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Bringing stakeholders together to assess the situation and identify solutions
- Developing an action plan that prioritizes habitat restoration and fish passage solutions
- Beginning to implement habitat restoration and research projects

IMPERILED NATIVE TROUT

Paiute Cutthroat Trout Protection

Removing Paiute from Endangered Species List

Situation

The Paiute cutthroat trout is currently listed as threatened under the ESA. Restoring the fish to its entire historic habitat in the Silver King Creek watershed is the highest priority recovery action in the 2004 USFWS Recovery Plan. If successful, this could become the first listed fish species to be removed from the threatened and endangered species list. The Restoration Plan for Silver King Creek is currently held up in litigation due to a vehicle access issue. This issue is being re-drafted and should be seen by the court in 2012. CalTrout supports this reconsideration and plans to engage in project implementation if passed.

Conservation Goal

- Restore Paiute cutthroat trout back to their entire historic range

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Supporting USFWS, USFS and CA DFG through the litigation process if necessary
- Working with agencies to help fund and implement a restoration plan and long-term monitoring
- Conducting necessary education and outreach to ensure public understanding and support

REGION: EASTERN SIERRA

US Forest Management Planning

New Management Plans to Benefit Sierra Nevada Watersheds

Situation

Once every decade or longer, the USFS embarks on a revision to their Management Plans. In an effort to influence such management planning, CalTrout is partnering with a number of organizations to develop conservation strategies specific to Sierra Nevada aquatic systems and fisheries.

Conservation Goals

- Develop conservation strategies for aquatic systems necessary to support imperiled native trout throughout the Sierra Nevada watersheds
- Ensure the revised National Forest Management Plans adequately address the needs of target aquatic species

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Identifying research/restoration recommendations (specific to aquatic systems), ensuring that they are included in revised Management Plans, and then adopted
- Soliciting stakeholder support of suggested conservation strategies

Golden Trout Protection

Saving California's State Fish

Situation

California's state fish, the CA golden trout is considered imperiled and some believe it should be declared a threatened or endangered species at the federal level. In 2004, a Conservation Strategy was developed by relevant agencies (with the help of CalTrout) to support the recovery of the species. But still today, resources are needed to assist with the implementation of the Conservation Strategy. CalTrout remains a key partner in this implementation – meeting with agency representatives and supporting restoration efforts. Specifically, CalTrout's Wild and Native Trout Internship Program provides direct support to agency staff and volunteer efforts working in the Golden Trout Wilderness and beyond.



California's state fish, the golden trout

Conservation Goals

- Continue implementation of the CA Golden Trout Conservation Strategy
- Ensure sustainable land-use practices, including grazing (where appropriate on the Kern Plateau)
- Support completion and implementation of genetics management plan for CA golden, Little Kern golden and Kern River rainbow trout necessary for the long-term management of these species
- Increase public awareness about the importance of wild trout conservation programs relevant to the Kern Plateau
- Manage natural resources through internship program

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Implementing the golden trout Conservation Strategy
- Supporting the golden trout restoration work
- Providing field support to CA DFG's Heritage and Wild Trout Program
- Providing interns to work directly with CA DFG and Inyo National Forest staff to implement restoration programs
- Supporting the development of genetics management plans

CALIFORNIA TROUT PROJECTS

30+ Projects

Today we are working on more than thirty critically important conservation projects across five regions:

Eastern Sierra

Mount Shasta

North Coast

Northern Sierra

Southern California



CalTrout Participation in Statewide Committees

The conservation staff of California Trout sits on a number of regional and statewide committees. Our participation on these committees allows CalTrout to advocate for policy, communicate in different venues, strengthen partnerships and drive important conservation and restoration work throughout the state.

Committees & Their Goals	Our Role
State Water Plan Revision 2013 To ensure that the State Water Plan 1) considers needs and perspectives of stakeholders involved with water resources and their management (including rural headwater communities) 2) pays adequate attention to planning for sustainable resource stewardship.	Represent angling, resources stewardship, water resources management and regional interests (in the Sierra Nevada and eastern Sierra).
Sierra Water Work Group To coordinate management of Sierra Nevada resources (with emphasis on IRWMP efforts).	Serve as founding member and active participant.
Coho Salmon Recovery Team To ensure protection and recovery of coho salmon.	Represent fisheries conservation along the north coast.
North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership To ensure protection of the healthiest rivers and core centers of wild salmon abundance and diversity in the North Coast Region.	Represent three of California's Salmon Strongholds in the Smith River, Mid-Klamath, and Eel/Mattole.
Peer Review Committee, Fisheries Restoration Grants Program To assure California's share of the Pacific Salmonid Restoration funds are utilized for the highest priority, most-effective conservation and restoration actions.	Serve as Vice Chair of this committee.
CA DFG Fish Passage Forum To streamline fish passage permitting and fisheries protection/restoration efforts.	Serve as the only NGO in the forum.
SCSC To coordinate and support all SoCal steelhead recovery efforts.	Serve as Chair of this coalition.
CA Advisory Committee on Steelhead and Salmon To provide recommendations to the legislature on steelhead and salmon issues.	Represent the sportfishing community.
DFG Strategic Vision – Stakeholders Advisory Group To develop a long-term strategic vision for the Department of Fish and Game.	Represent the sportfishing community.
CA Hydropower Reform Coalition To coordinate with other NGOs on hydropower reform.	Serve as Steering Committee member.
Klamath-Cascade Advisory Council To raise awareness and promote collaboration among diverse parties for economic and ecological health of the region.	Serve as member representing conservation interests.
McCloud River Coordinated Resource Management and Planning Group To protect the unique resources of the Lower McCloud River.	Serve as member.
Upper Sac/McCloud/Lower Pit Integrated Water Resource Management Plan With a broad array of stakeholders, to develop a plan to address water infrastructure and restoration needs of the region.	Serve as member.

IMPERILED NATIVE TROUT

Meadow Habitat Restoration

90% of Meadows in the Sierra Are Degraded

Situation

California's inland native trout are especially vulnerable to degraded habitat conditions as they have limited ability to migrate away from poor conditions. Many of these species are native to high elevation, lower productivity ecosystems, where even minor levels of habitat degradation can have a significant impact on the ecosystem's capacity to support the species. Meadow systems are one of the most altered systems in the Sierra, and it has been estimated that as much as 90% are impacted and degraded by past and current land management activities.

Conservation Goals

- Evaluate past and present restoration projects in the central and southern Sierra in terms of their efficacy at addressing the needs of native trout species
- Broaden the scientific understanding of appropriate meadow restoration practices
- Use these practices to restore resilience in meadow ecosystems that are necessary to recover populations of California's inland native trout

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Implementing the Meadows Restoration and Fisheries Analysis Tool (MRFAT) to determine efficacy of meadow restoration projects, specifically realative to fisheries.
- Evaluating 3-5 historic and/or ongoing meadow restoration projects
- Conducting outreach and engagement to agencies involved in meadow restoration



Removing brook trout from Slinkard Creek to expand the range for LCT

Steelhead and Salmon

Restoring healthy, self-sustaining populations of California's native steelhead and salmon across their historic range.

REGION: NORTH COAST

Coho Recovery

Coho Populations Declining Region-wide

Situation

California coho salmon are listed as threatened under federal and state ESA. CA DFG developed a Recovery Plan with assistance from the State Coho Recovery Team, which was completed in 2005. Additionally, the NMFS recently released its draft Coho Recovery Plan for public review. Funding for coho salmon recovery is available (but limited) through state and federal grant programs, and many projects are underway. But, despite these activities, coho salmon abundance has continued to decline region-wide – as state and federal regulatory agencies (i.e., CA DFG) have not committed enough financial or human resources, nor have they committed to regulatory enforcement in clear cases of endangered species act violations (i.e., violations of Incidental Take).



Coho salmon spawning in Morrison Gulch

Conservation Goals

- Facilitate coho salmon recovery through restoration actions, regulatory program implementation, and enforcement of regulatory statutes against Incidental Take
- Consider recommending a Jeopardy Ruling status update for coho salmon by state and federal agencies
- Focus on the Shasta River, Smith River, and the South Fork Eel River as a key opportunity for coho recovery

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Participating in statewide Coho Recovery team meetings and seeking funding and agency action for coho recovery plan implementation and regulatory enforcement
- Reviewing and commenting on the forthcoming NMFS Recovery Plan for coho salmon
- Seeking reform of water management policy, specifically the SWRCB's instream flow policy
- Developing an integrated instream flow, temperature, ranching irrigation and water management plan for the Shasta River Big Springs Complex as a trial case

STEELHEAD AND SALMON

Eel River Restoration

Coho Populations Once 100,000, Now 1,000

Situation

The Eel River is the third largest river in California. Many large and productive sub-basins and tributaries join the Eel River. While the majority of the watershed is privately owned and managed for timber production, cattle and dairy ranching, the area also includes several State Parks, Wilderness Area, and National Forests. Historically, the Eel River was a major salmon and steelhead producer, with estimated combined runs numbering over a million adults annually in wet periods (~800,000 Chinook, ~100,000 coho, ~150,000 steelhead). Today, nearly all mainstem and large tributaries in the Eel River Basin have been listed as “impaired” under the Federal EPA’s Clean Water Act 303(d) list, primarily for excessive sediment and increased water temperatures. As a result of habitat degradation and other factors, salmon and steelhead are currently severely depressed in the Eel River: fall-run Chinook and steelhead runs fluctuate between 1,000 and 10,000 adults; coho number are less than 1,000 adults annually.

Conservation Goals

- Develop a coalition of stakeholders in the Eel River Basin to focus on the current status of salmonid populations, evaluation of PG&E’s Potter Valley Project (dam flow releases), and a non-native pikeminnow eradication strategy
- Work with the Regional Water Quality Control Board to address warm water temperature and excessive sediment impairment
- Restore access to ancestral spawning and rearing habitat through implementation of fish passage projects recommended in the recently completed North Western Pacific Railroad Fish Passage Assessment (conducted by CalTrout and partners) beginning with Woodman Creek and Bridge Creek

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Developing an Adaptive Management Plan that outlines ongoing and proposed fisheries monitoring, evaluation of Potter Valley Project flow releases, and pikeminnow suppression actions
- Initiating water quality monitoring
- Securing funding to develop: 1) fish passage feasibility studies, 2) engineering design alternatives, and 3) construction plans for Woodman and Bridge Creeks



An impassible barrier at the mouth of Woodman Creek

Smith River Protection

Salmon Strongholds Offer Hope for Preservation

Situation

The Smith River is one of California’s healthiest, most pristine, and best protected rivers. Over 90% of the watershed is protected, either under the Smith River National Recreation Area (SRNRA), the Siskiyou and Kalmiopsis Wilderness Areas, or State/National Park. The Smith River has been proposed as a Salmon Stronghold under the federal Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Program and Oregon’s Wild Salmon Center. This year, the Smith River Alliance (with support from CalTrout and others) secured an important victory on the Smith River – over 14 miles and 5,360 acres of the Hurdy Gurdy Creek property will become a protected part of the SRNRA. This creek is one of the best-producing salmon and steelhead streams in the SRNRA. \$1 million from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund has been secured to purchase the first phase of the Hurdy Gurdy Creek tract.

Despite all this, important restoration and conservation tasks remain. Lake Earl and Goose Creek need acquisition funding. Restoration is needed: road decommissioning, migration barrier removal, large wood habitat enhancement, and tidal wetland and estuarine repair. A review of the Rowdy Creek fish hatchery operations and management is needed. And, a pilot adult salmonid monitoring project using state-of-art equipment is being implemented to provide a benchmark for attainable salmonid population health.

Conservation Goals

- Protect and restore anadromous fish habitat and recreational fishing opportunities in the Smith River
- Complete remaining priority land acquisitions and implement conservation and restoration measures to all public lands throughout the watershed
- Use the Smith River as a demonstration of conservation program success, and salmon and steelhead population potential, through the Salmon Stronghold program and population monitoring

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Continuing our support and involvement with Smith River Advisory Committee
- Supporting ongoing restoration projects in Mill Creek and Yontocket Slough
- Advocating for SRNRA/USFS support and funding for restoration and monitoring, visitor services, ecosystem management, and improvement of forest health

Trinity River Restoration

Restoring Salmon & Steelhead to Their Near-Historic Abundance

Situation

The Trinity is the largest tributary to the Klamath River, and sustains important tribal, recreational, and commercial fisheries. The Trinity River Division (TRD) was completed in 1964. With the TRD, up to 75-90% of the inflow was captured each year and exported to Southern California farms and municipalities. The impacts of flow regulation and other land uses combined to degrade the river and its salmon and steelhead habitat.

STEELHEAD AND SALMON

By 1970, the decline became obvious. Studies were done and the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) was developed to restore naturally-spawning salmon and steelhead populations to near pre-dam levels. In 2002, a ROD (based on the TRRP) was signed by Secretary of Interior to begin the process of restoring the river. While the TRRP is considered the largest and most important experimental river and salmonid restoration program in California, its primary decision-making body has demonstrated a lack of shared and consistent vision.

In the past, CalTrout participated in (and chaired) the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group (TAMWG) and is awaiting re-nomination to this committee in order to help guide the TRRP decision-making body. In December, CalTrout joined with C-WIN and the Trinity River Guides Association to force the TRRP to re-design 2012 bank rehabilitation projects and accept a temporary moratorium on spawning gravel injection in an effort to protect adult steelhead holding habitat and ensure the proper role of adaptive management in restoration decision-making.



Flow releases from the Lewiston Dam to the Trinity River

Conservation Goals

- Restore salmon and steelhead populations to pre-TRD production levels through implementation of water management, channel reconstruction, and reform of the TRRP management structure
- Restore tributary watershed health and salmonids productivity through reduction of fine sediment input and expanded habitat range

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Ensuring the original mission and vision of the ROD are fulfilled by the TRRP
- Securing a nomination as an alternate on the Trinity River Adaptive Management Working Group committee

REGION: MOUNT SHASTA

Shasta River Restoration

Readying Steelhead & Salmon for Dam Removal

Situation

We are working to keep populations of steelhead and salmon abundant enough to recolonize the upper Klamath basin once four dams on the Klamath River are removed. The Shasta River is the last major tributary to the Klamath River before Iron Gate dam and holds tremendous restoration potential—greater than 80,000 Chinook salmon and approximately 15,000 coho salmon used to return to the Shasta River each year. Today, an average of 5,000 Chinook return and coho are on the brink of extirpation. Still, habitat conditions for rearing coho salmon are improving. Our focus over the next three years will be to 1) expand juvenile rearing habitat by removing the Cardoza diversion, 2) stimulate coho populations, and 3) advocate for sound policy.

Conservation Goals

- Enhance anadromous fish runs in the Shasta River to a ten-year average of 10,000 returning adult fall-run Chinook, 2,000 adult coho, and 2,000 adult steelhead
- Expand summertime rearing habitat for coho salmon by five miles in Parks Creek and the Shasta River above County Road A12

Our Efforts

- Securing Fisheries Restoration Grant Program funds for Cardoza diversion fish passage project on Parks Creek
- Funding Humboldt State University/CA DFG coho tagging program to track juvenile coho survival and habitat use
- Assessing and implementing a supplementation project to aid in coho recovery
- Developing flow, monitoring and water management plans with landowners in Big Springs area of Upper Shasta River
- Identifying restoration projects with willing landowners

Klamath River Dam Removal

Largest U.S. Dam Removal Leads to Largest River Restoration

Situation

The removal of four dams on the Klamath River will be the largest U.S. river restoration project implemented to date. CalTrout's involvement in this project began in 2000 when we participated in PacifiCorp's efforts to relicense the four dams through FERC. After 10 years of FERC relicensing proceeding, court hearings, and negotiations, two Settlement Agreements were signed by 29 parties in 2010. The Klamath Basin Hydroelectric Agreement sets the stage for dam removal by mandating feasibility studies and identifying costs for dam removal to inform a Secretarial Determination on whether dam removal is doable. The Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) lays the framework for restoring habit, allocating stream flows, developing a fish reintroduction program and providing funding to Klamath basin communities and tribes.

STEELHEAD AND SALMON

Conservation Goals

- Increase habitat – by 2020, remove 4 major obstructions (Iron Gate, Copco 1, Copco 2, JC Boyle) thus opening up over 300 miles of spawning and rearing habitat
- Restore salmonid populations to 25% of historic levels (250,000 adult spawning salmon and steelhead)

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by:

- Advocating for a positive Secretarial Determination in favor of dam removal
- Conducting outreach to Siskiyou County residents and opinion leaders
- Advocating for federal legislation to fund the KBRA
- Advocating for California state funding for dam removal

REGION: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Southern California Steelhead Coalition (SCSC)

Strength in Numbers, The Coalition is Back

Situation

The SCSC was formed by CalTrout in 1999 to bring strategic leadership, greater awareness, and improved collaboration across the many NGOs working to recover steelhead from Baja, Mexico to the Santa Maria River near Santa Maria. The SCSC launched the efforts to remove the Matilija Dam on the Ventura River, take down the Rindge Dam on Malibu Creek, install the Robles Fish Ladder on the Casitas Diversion Canal, and apply for a host of other protection activities enabled by the SoCal steelhead ESA listing. Now, again under CalTrout's leadership, the SCSC is reconvening with an expanded membership of over three dozen conservation organizations and a new, formalized chapter structure focused on five key watershed groupings: Santa Ynez River, Ventura River, Santa Clara River, Santa Monica Mountains and SanDoc Watersheds.

Conservation Goals for all Five Watershed Areas

- Provide fish passage and access to historic spawning/rearing habitat
- Restore hydrologic and ecological processes throughout SoCal steelhead watersheds

Our Efforts

In the next 2 years, we will do this by leading the coalition and formulating recovery plans across all five watersheds. We plan to accomplish the following over time:

- Eliminate diversions and dams and/or implement adequate fish passage
- Ensure in- and out-migration and adequate rearing habitat (temperatures & conditions)
- Calibrate flow operations in each watershed, system-wide
- Raise awareness of and support for SoCal steelhead recovery

Santa Ynez River Restoration

Bradbury Dam Blocks Steelhead Access

Situation

The Santa Ynez River in the Santa Barbara/Lompoc/Solvang area once supported the largest steelhead run south of San Francisco. In the 1950s, steelhead access to roughly half of the watershed, and more than 2/3 of the spawning habitat was completely obstructed with the construction of Bradbury Dam. With the endangered species listing of steelhead in 1997, CalTrout filed a water rights challenge at the State Water Board to request certain flows and fish passage at Bradbury for the benefit of steelhead. This process was stalled for several years but State Board hearings are expected to resume later this year. CalTrout will continue to lead these efforts, fighting for flows for steelhead in the lower watershed and to secure fish passage beyond Bradbury. Meanwhile, steelhead are still utilizing the available habitat in the lower watershed, so protection of that habitat is critical to maintaining a Santa Ynez run and the opportunity for recovery is exceptional.



CalTrout supports the notching of Matilija Dam

Ventura River Restoration

Removing Dams & Securing Fish Ladders

Situation

Today, we are involved in two Ventura River projects:

Matilija Dam, a 190-foot structure with a reservoir that is now sediment filled, poses a seismic/safety risk for downstream communities, and completely blocks fish passage. CalTrout helped launch the initiative to remove Matilija and restore the upper watershed ecosystem, facilitated the development of the Matilija Coalition, and engaged in the development of a dam removal plan. Opposition ensued, primarily due to the complexity and cost associated with the removal of 6 million cubic yards of sediment. Pressure from CalTrout and the Matilija Coalition has resulted in a plan to notch Matilija, hopefully starting in 2013. Moving forward, CalTrout will keep a close watch to assure that the agencies adhere to the community-approved project plans.

STEELHEAD AND SALMON

Through legal action, CalTrout secured the Robles Fish Ladder on the Casitas Water Diversion Canal in the Ventura River. But flows to ensure fish passage were challenged in court by the water district. In 2010, the “Casitas Takings Case” was heard on appeal in the Washington DC Circuit Court. In this case, the Casitas Water District sued the NMFS, claiming that NMFS is illegally “taking” Casitas’ water by requiring Casitas to send water down the Robles Fish Ladder to facilitate fish passage and that the federal government should have to pay for that water. CalTrout is an Amicus party in the case (offering information to assist a court in deciding the matter). We will work to uphold ESA species protections even in the face of multiple demands on water supply. This is a critical precedent-setting legal case that will have significant long-term impacts on fisheries’ recovery.

Santa Clara River Restoration

A Watershed with Exceptional Spawning Habitat

Situation

The Santa Clara River near Ventura represents one of the most valuable watershed systems for restoring the threatened Southern California steelhead populations. There is exceptional spawning habitat in the Sespe Creek system (a large tributary) with only one barrier between Sespe and the Pacific Ocean, as well as great habitat in other tributary streams. But, there are issues. United Water Conservation District (the river’s largest water manager) diverts river flows to meet agricultural and community demands. And their facilities (such as the Vern Freeman Diversion Dam) cause fish passage barriers and depleted flows that deny fish access to spawning grounds. In addition, constrained Santa Felicia Dam flows result in dangerously high temperatures or inadequate flows – thus blocking upstream return migration of adult fish and downstream outmigration of juveniles. Regulatory oversight is needed to ensure habitat access and restoration for returning adult fish to successfully spawn and propagate.

Santa Monica Mountains Restoration

Momentum in Santa Monica Mountains

Situation

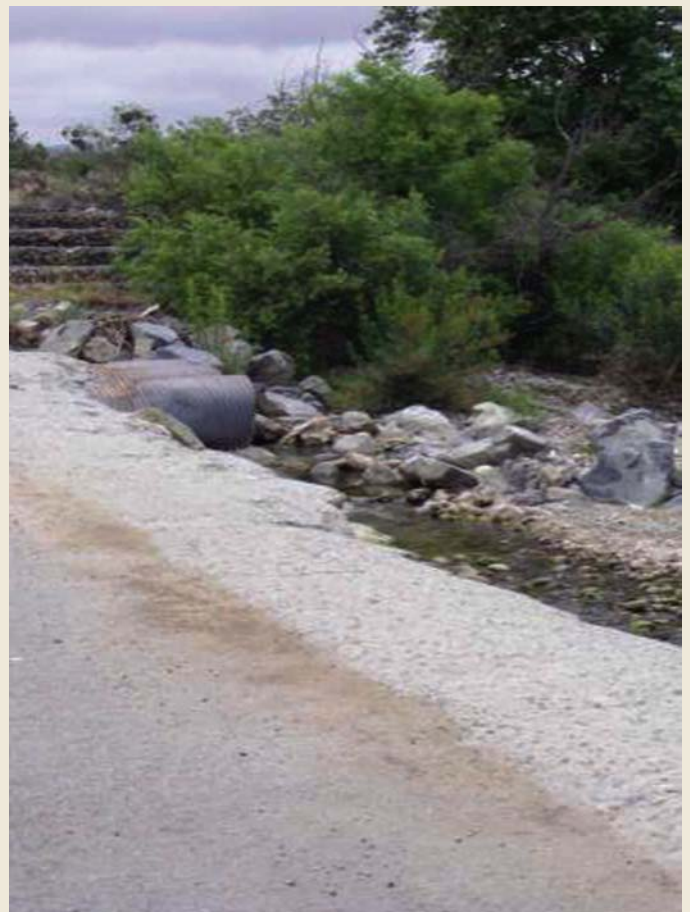
The Santa Monica Mountains Steelhead Habitat Assessment was produced by CalTrout in 2005. By outlining priorities and actions across the area’s 23 watersheds, this document laid the foundation to launch a steelhead recovery campaign in the L.A. area. From 2006 to 2010, other groups worked to implement several critical actions, including Malibu Lagoon restoration, Topanga Creek Rodeo Grounds restoration, and Rindge Dam removal. Most of these actions were lead by Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District (SMM RCD) while CalTrout played a supporting role. However, the full re-engagement of the SCSC (coupled with CalTrout’s restoration activities on Zuma Creek, the new momentum to remove Rindge Dam, and a returning steelhead run in Topanga Creek) has ripened the Santa Monica Mountains for steelhead recovery, and CalTrout (with SMM RCD) is helping lead restoration efforts in this area.

SanDOC Watersheds Restoration

A Complex Watershed Needs CalTrout’s Leadership

Situation

SanDOC encompasses the largest stretch of undeveloped coastline in urban Southern California. Land is owned by the state and federal government, private entities, and involves three counties and more than a dozen cities. These factors, coupled with the surrounding press of urban and suburban sprawl, present complex jurisdictional issues and incredible demands on the resources. Current issues require participation by and leadership from non-agency/non-government stakeholders to ensure these watersheds benefit from the consistent application of ESA protections. For example: 1) FERC is going through a re-licensing process on the San Luis Rey River. Without intervention, this process may result in reduced flows causing unnatural dewatering of the river. 2) Camp Pendleton and City of Fallbrook are filing a “Conjunctive Use Permit” to remove and sell Santa Margarita River water to San Diego County. 3) Rancho Water District has filed a “Conduit Exemption” application for a small hydroelectric unit on a Santa Margarita River diversion facility. In addition to monitoring these projects, there is a need for comprehensive invasive species removal planning and implementation, coordinated restoration and water conservation activities, and community education and engagement for watershed and steelhead recovery.



Barriers on San Juan Creek

Staff & Board

Regional Conservation Staff

Eastern Sierra

Mark Drew, PhD
mdrew@caltrout.org

Northern Sierra

Jenny Hatch
jhatch@caltrout.org

North Coast

Darren Mierau
dmierau@caltrout.org

Southern California

Nica Knite
nknite@caltrout.org

Mt. Shasta

Curtis Knight
cknight@caltrout.org

Drew Braugh

dbraugh@caltrout.org

Meadow Barr

mbarr@caltrout.org

Central Office Staff

Executive Director

Jeff Thompson · jthompson@caltrout.org

Conservation Director & Advocacy

Curtis Knight · cknight@caltrout.org

Finance & Administration Director

Alan Roesberry · aroesberry@caltrout.org

Membership Manager & Press Contact

Tony Van Houten · tvanhouten@caltrout.org

Development & Foundations

Gaby Roff · groff@caltrout.org

Grant Writing

Michael Robin · mrobin@caltrout.org

Marketing & Development Manager

Lisa Clarke · lclarke@caltrout.org

Fly Fishing Ambassador

Craig Ballenger · craig@craigballenger.com

Governors

Linda Rosenberg Ach
Ron Antipa
Gary Arabian
Jim Arce
Doug Ballinger
Tony Brookfield, Chairman
Eric Callow
Andy Eckert
Bill Epstein
Dick Galland
Nick Graves
Stephen Rogers
John Slezak, Secretary
Thomas Szymoniak, Treasurer
Alan Vidinsky
Richard West
Jerome Yesavage, MD

Emeritus Governors

Roy Crawford
Nicholas Di Croce
Craig Fusaro, PhD
Bill Hooper
Richard May
Frank Pipgras
Joel Scheinberg
Will Trefry

Contact us

870 Market St., Suite 528, San Francisco, CA 94102
Phone: (415) 392-8887 Email: info@caltrout.org



Key Partners

CalTrout works in partnership with many organizations, conservation groups and institutions to get our work done. Our list of partners is extensive. It includes universities, Native American tribes, multiple state and regional water agencies and water management authorities, federal and state land and wildlife management agencies, fishing guides, community members and fly clubs. We could not accomplish our work without these strong collaborations. A list of some of these partners appears on our website at caltrout.org/about/partners.

Terms & Organizations/Groups (used throughout this issue)

CA DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
EIS/EIR	Environmental Impact Study/Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
IRWMP	Integrated Regional Water Management Program
LCT	Lahontan cutthroat trout
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
ROD	Record of Decision
SanDoc	South Orange/North San Diego Counties
SCSC	Southern California Steelhead Coalition
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TU	Trout Unlimited
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service



Habitat conditions improve on the Shasta River



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870 Market St., Suite 528
San Francisco, CA 94102

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