

HOW YOU CAN HELP

What can you do to help the greenback continue on its remarkable path to recovery? Here are a few ideas:

- Contribute to Colorado's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund through the checkoff on your state income tax return.
- Volunteer to help with restoration efforts through Trout Unlimited, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service or Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Regardless of which route you take, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you played a role in helping bring a native Colorado species back from the brink of extinction.

Colorado Trout Unlimited
190 E. 9th Ave., Suite 120
Denver, CO 80203
303-837-9383



U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
11177 W. 8th Ave.
P.O. Box 25127
Lakewood, CO 80225
303-236-9431



National Park Service
Rocky Mountain National Park
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-586-1206



U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Colorado State Office
2850 Youngfield St.
Lakewood, CO 80215
303-239-3701



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Colorado Fish and Wildlife Asst. Office
755 Parfet St.
Lakewood, CO 80215
303-275-2393



**Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Colorado Division of Wildlife**
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216
303-297-1192



Bring Back The Greenback



A Native Trout Bounces Back From Near Extinction

INTRODUCTION

TROUT marked with large black spots caught the attention of the miners and trappers who entered Colorado in the early 1800s. These tasty fish, whose sides turned a brilliant red during the spring spawning season, inhabited the cold-water streams that feed into the Arkansas and South Platte rivers of eastern Colorado. They were greenback cutthroat trout.

What the miners and trappers didn't know was that this trout subspecies would fall from abundance to near extinction by the early 1900s. Taking a huge toll on the greenback were three main factors: unregulated fishing pressure, the stocking of non-native trout and the widespread loss of trout habitat as a growing human population left its mark on Colorado's land and water.

But there's good news: The greenback is bouncing back. Thanks to cooperative efforts of state and federal agencies and private groups such as Trout Unlimited, this Colorado native fish has been downlisted from "endangered" to "threatened" and soon may be abundant and secure enough to be removed from that list as well.

HISTORY

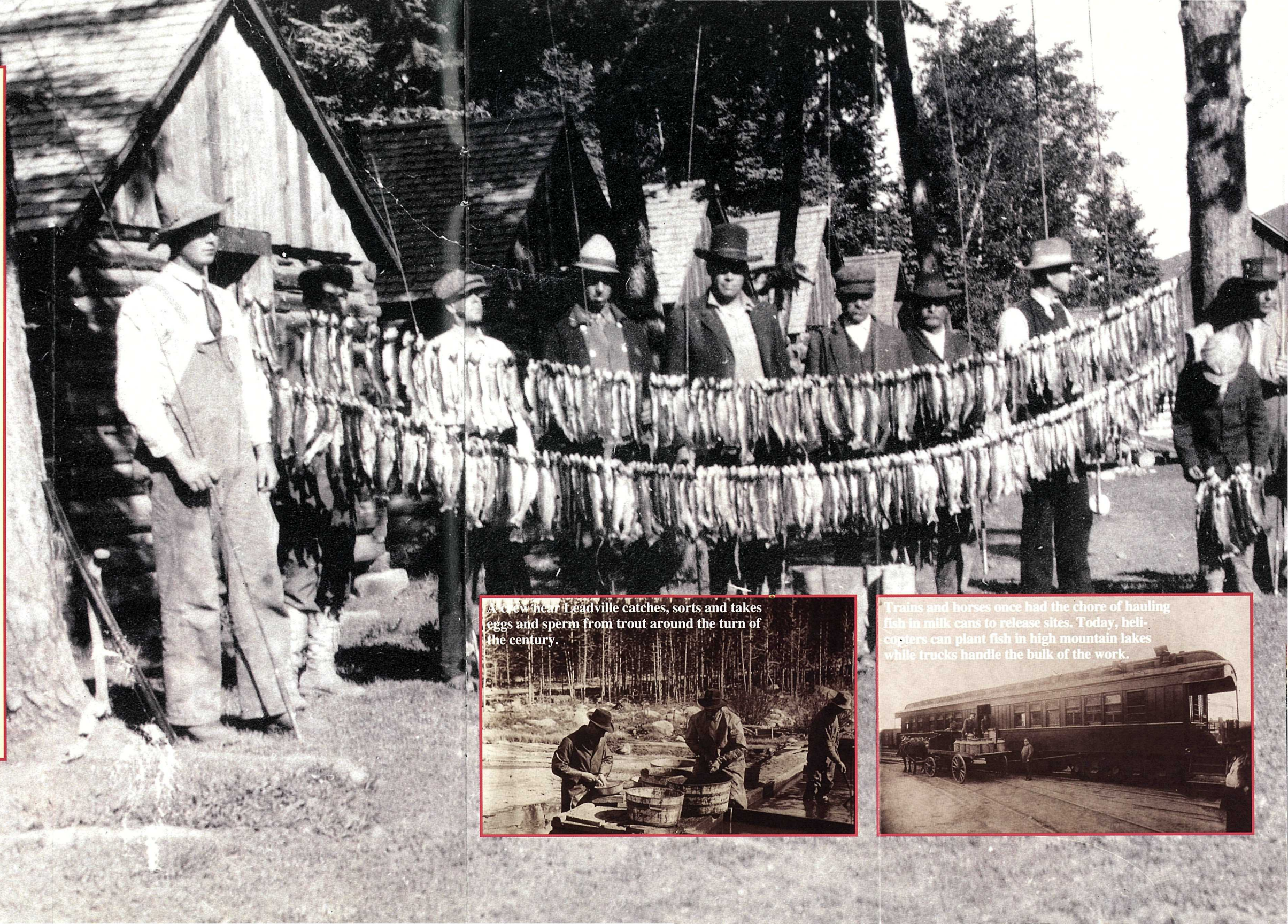
The greenback cutthroat's name, just like its abundance, has changed over the years. The early European settlers called it the black-spotted native. Around 1890, that name gave way to the current name, greenback cutthroat trout. Why? Who knows. The greenback doesn't have any more green on its back than most other kinds of trout. "Cutthroat," of course, refers to the blood-red stripes found near the jaws on all trout native to Colorado.

The greenback was one of four native trout present in Colorado when European settlers arrived. The others were the Colorado River cutthroat, the Rio Grande cutthroat and the now-extinct yellowfin cutthroat.

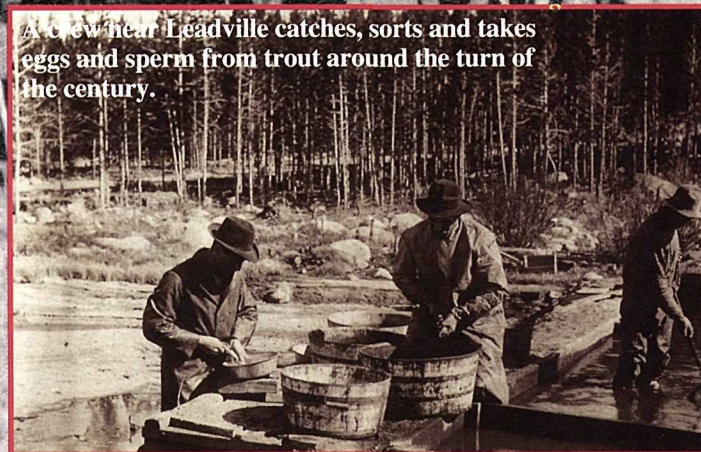
While over-harvest and habitat destruction took their toll on the greenback, the introduction of non-native trout species perhaps dealt the biggest blow. The disappearance of most greenback populations appears linked to their tendency to hybridize with other spring-spawning trout such as rainbows and to their inability to compete against brook and brown trout.

The greenback vanished from its native range so fast that its original distribution is not precisely known. By 1937, it was thought to be extinct. Then two small populations were discovered in the South Fork of the Poudre River just north of Rocky Mountain National Park and in Como Creek near Nederland in western Boulder County.

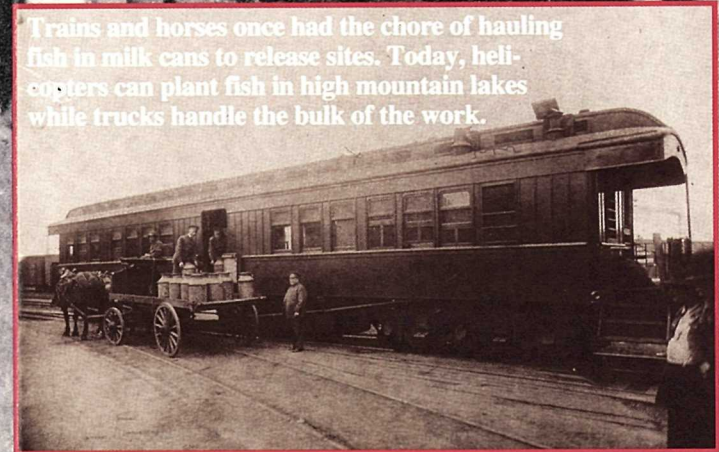
The rest, as they say, is history — a history that people who value wildlife can be proud of. Thanks to hard work by a lot of dedicated people, the greenback — instead of sliding into extinction — is well on its way to a successful recovery.



A few near Leadville catches, sorts and takes eggs and sperm from trout around the turn of the century.



Trains and horses once had the chore of hauling fish in milk cans to release sites. Today, helicopters can plant fish in high mountain lakes while trucks handle the bulk of the work.



COOPERATIVE RECOVERY EFFORTS

Efforts to improve the plight of the greenback trout began in 1959 through a cooperative effort by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State University, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. With the enactment of the Endangered Species Act in 1973, the greenback cutthroat was listed as an endangered species and the greenback recovery team was formed.

Establishing new populations of native cutthroats first meant removing non-native trout from selected streams and lakes in Rocky Mountain National Park, several national forests and tracts of BLM land. Greenbacks then were reintroduced into the reclaimed habitat, where — in many cases — they quickly established self-sustaining populations.

Under the direction of the recovery team, substantial progress was made through the early and mid-1970s. That led to the 1978 downlisting of the greenback from endangered to threatened status, as it is classified today. The greenback ranks as one of a very few species to be removed from the endangered list — without entering the extinct list.

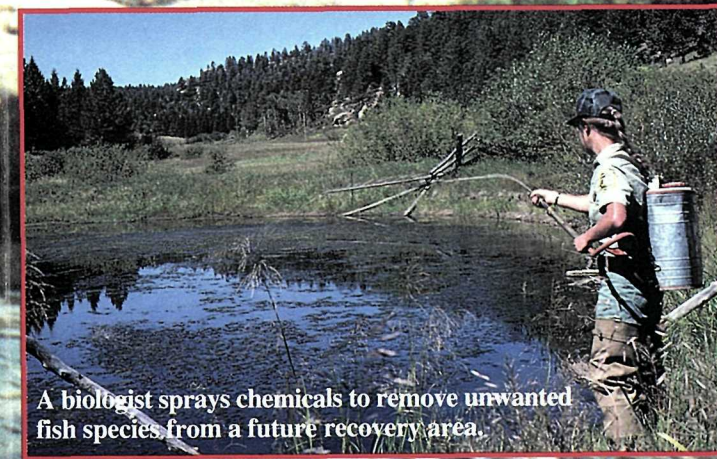
Laying the nets out to capture fish for a spawning operation in an alpine stream.



Biologists collecting sperm from a male cutthroat trout.



Fish barriers keep unwanted species from entering recovery streams.



A biologist sprays chemicals to remove unwanted fish species from a future recovery area.

GOAL OF RECOVERY

The struggle isn't over yet. The goal of recovery for the greenback is to restore it to non-threatened status by the year 2000 by preserving historic populations and maintaining at least 20 stable populations. (A population cannot be considered stable unless it is separated by a physical or biological barrier from non-native trout populations.) Plans call for at least five of these 20 populations to be in the streams and lakes of the Arkansas drainage and the rest to be in the South Platte drainage.

The recovery team has determined that three more steps are needed to achieve recovery for the greenback:

1. Establish three more stable Arkansas River populations.
2. Establish captive broodstocks within Colorado.
3. Prepare a long-term management plan that will provide protection after delisting from threatened status.

CURRENT DISTRIBUTION

Much of the recovery effort to date has focused on preserving historic populations, and re-establishing greenback cutthroat trout into suitable habitat throughout their historic range. Although greenbacks were only known from two sites in 1973, they are currently present in 52 sites that total 360 acres of lakes and ponds, and 94 miles of stream. Nineteen populations - 17 in the South Platte and two in the Arkansas drainage - are considered stable.

SPORT FISHING

Sport fishing has been allowed for greenbacks since 1982, with most programs featuring catch-and-release regulations. Please use care when handling and releasing fish.



Survival of Released Trout is in Your Hands...

Consider Proper Release

1. Do not play fish to exhaustion. Use a landing net for larger fish.
2. Keep the fish in the water when handling and removing the hook. In catch-and-release waters, barbless hooks should be strongly considered.
3. Remove the hook gently; do not squeeze the fish or place your fingers in its gills.
4. Do not remove swallowed hooks... just cut the line.
5. Handle fish as little as possible, and release fish into quiet water when equilibrium is maintained.

WATERS OPEN TO SPORT FISHING FOR GREENBACKS

NAME OF WATER LOCATION REGULATIONS

NAME OF WATER	LOCATION	REGULATIONS
<i>SOUTH PLATTE RIVER DRAINAGE</i>		
Zimmerman Reservoir	RNF	C&R
Sheep Creek	RNF	C&R
Cornelius Creek	ANF	C&R
George Creek	ANF	C&R
Bard Creek	ANF	C&R
North Fork Thompson River, above Lost Falls	RMNP	C&R
Hidden Valley Creek	RMNP	C&R
Lost Lake	RMNP	C&R
Lake Louise	RMNP	C&R
Lake Husted	RMNP	C&R
Crystal Lake	RMNP	C&R
Lawn Lake	RMNP	C&R
Roaring River	RMNP	C&R
Spruce Lake	RMNP	C&R
Loomis Lake	RMNP	C&R
Dream Lake (opens in 1998)	RMNP	C&R
Fern Lake	RMNP	C&R
Odessa Lake	RMNP	C&R
Sandbeach Lake	RMNP	C&R
Ouzel Lake	RMNP	C&R
Ouzel Creek	RMNP	C&R
Upper Hutcheson Lake	RMNP	C&R
Middle Hutcheson Lake	RMNP	C&R
Lower Hutcheson Lake	RMNP	C&R
Pear Lake	RMNP	C&R
Cony Creek	RMNP	C&R
Lily Lake	RMNP	C&R
<i>ARKANSAS RIVER DRAINAGE</i>		
Lake Fork Creek	S/INF	Limited Harvest
Timberline Lake	S/INF	Limited Harvest
Virginia Lake	S/INF	Limited Harvest
Rainbow Lake	S/INF	C&R
Native Lake	S/INF	C&R
Swamp Lakes	S/INF	C&R
Rock Creek Drainage above Leadville National Fish Hatchery	S/INF	C&R
Lytle Pond*	FTC	C&R
Duck Pond*	FTC	C&R
Goat Camp Reservoir*	AFA	C&R

LEGEND:

AFA - Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs
 ANF - Arapaho National Forest
 FTC - Fort Carson, Colorado Springs
 RMNP - Rocky Mountain National Park
 RNF - Roosevelt National Forest
 S/INF - San Isabel National Forest
 C&R - Catch & Release

* - Restricted Access. Military fishing permit required



Native cutthroat in spawning colors.