



### **Bear Creek Nature Center Greenback Cutthroat Trout Exhibit Update Report**

In November of 2018, Bear Creek Nature Center installed a live Greenback Cutthroat Trout exhibit to educate the public about Colorado's State fish- once thought to be extinct and currently considered a threatened species. The only genetically pure, self-sustaining population of greenback cutthroat trout is currently located in Bear Creek, upstream from Bear Creek Nature Center.


After installation, it was apparent that visitors had questions that were not addressed in the exhibit. The nature center saw an opportunity for additional education. Common inquiries not addressed in the initial exhibit included life cycle of the trout, types of trout in Colorado, and why the Greenback cutthroat trout almost became extinct.

The Western Native Trout Initiative grant enables Bear Creek Nature Center to incorporate 2 new interpretive panels into the existing exhibit to address the aforementioned topics. One panel addresses the life cycle of greenback cutthroat trout, the types of trout in Colorado's rivers (with native/ non-native distinctions) and an overview of reasons they were pushed to the brink of extinction. A smaller side panel gives an overview of what is currently being done to protect and increase the populations of greenbacks. Bear Creek Nature Center contracted with Condit Exhibits in Denver Colorado for design and installation of the exhibit panels. (Images of new exhibit panels included for reference).

The new panels were completed in May of 2020. Since then, we have encouraged visitors to complete a brief survey to assess the effectiveness of the exhibit for visitors. Due to Covid-related nature center closure, limited visitor capacity and avoidance of using hands-on materials and touchable objects, our initial survey plans have been modified. We have, however, been able to collect a sampling of visitor feedback regarding the exhibit. (Survey data included).

In addition to serving general visitors the exhibit will enhance educational programming related to the Greenback cutthroat trout. This fall, Bear Creek Nature Center offers two public programs about the history of the Greenback cutthroat trout. For these as well as future educational programs, the exhibit will be utilized as a teaching tool.


The total cost for exhibit updates was \$4,534. The nature center's non-profit organization, Friends of El Paso County Nature Centers will pay the \$2,034 not covered by the Western Trout Initiative grant funds.



**A New Chapter...**

At this time, greenback cutthroat trout occupy less than 1% of their historical range. They are currently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

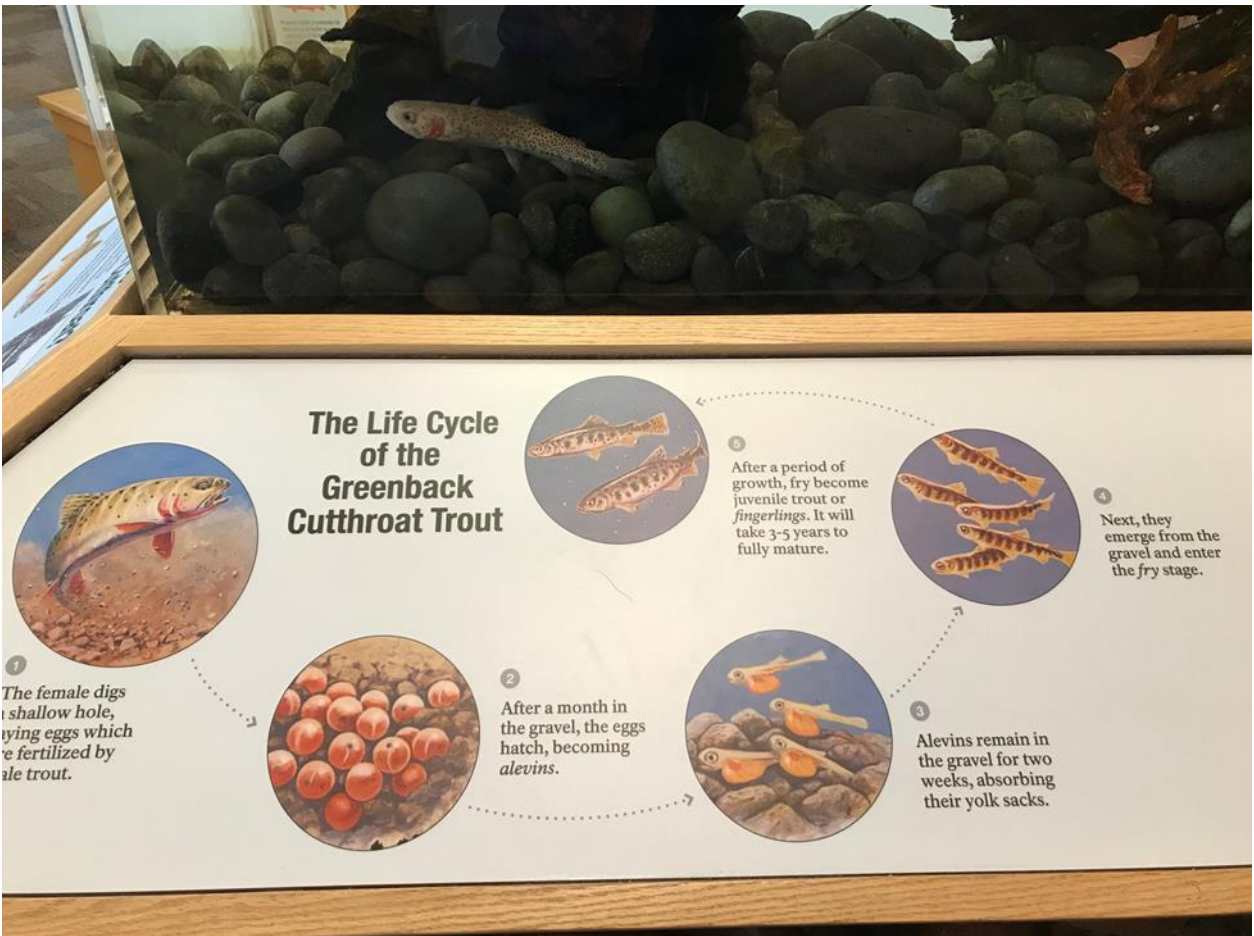
Recovery efforts including habitat restoration and re-stocking of greenback cutthroat trout into their native waterways are underway by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and other agencies. Rerouted trails in the Bear Creek drainage help to protect our vulnerable state fish.

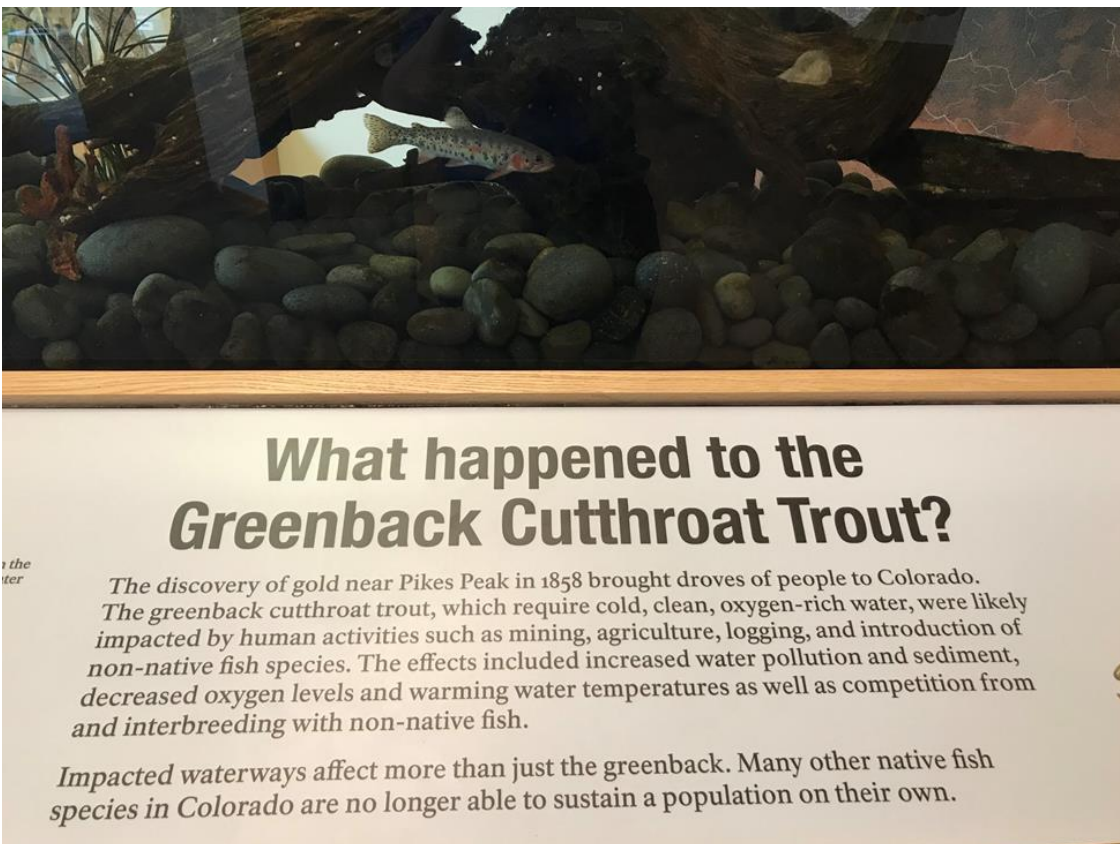


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WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE







### The Trout of Colorado's Rivers

