



October 21st, 2024

## Final Reporting

**Project/Program Title:**

Implementing Actions to Recover Native Lahontan Cutthroat Trout in the Upper Walker Basin

**USFWS Grant Number:**

F23AP01906-00

**Email address of individual submitting this report:**

mnation@caltrout.org

**Name of individual submitting this report:**

Marrina Nation

**Dates covered by this report:**

7/1/2023 - 06/30/2024

**Briefly summarize (2-3) sentences) overall progress and accomplishments applicable to this time period.**

The Recovery of Native Lahontan Cutthroat Trout in the Upper Walker basin uses a novel method of dewatering and electro-fishing to remove nonnative brook trout from Silver Creek. If this project proves to be a successful method of nonnative fish removal it could be used across the country as an alternative method to chemical removal. During the 2023 (August-November) field season an estimated 90% of non-native brook trout were removed from Silver Creek through implementation of this novel dewatering method. The Silver Creek Project wrapped up its final season of dewatering for LCT recovery on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. CDFW, CalTrout, and various partners have been working diligently to remove non-native trout from Silver Creek with the novel dewatering method since 2019.

**Task specific/deliverable updates (for each task in the cooperative agreement, provide a brief update on progress; provide brief update on significant work toward, or completion of any deliverables from the cooperative agreement):**

Task A. Personnel (Completed)

Ongoing. Quarterly invoices and reports with supplemental docs submitted to WNTI as per agreement. This line item was also used to supplement CalTrout Project Manager (Marrina Nation) time out at Silver Creek during the 2023 field season. The CalTrout News Blog posting and Social Media posts were released on 10/26/2023 to cover the work being implemented at Silver Creek <https://caltrout.org/news/threatened-lahontan-cutthroat-trout-receive-help-in-the-walker-basin>

Task B. Travel (Completed)

Mileage for personnel staff to travel to and from Mammoth lakes and Silver Creek project site.

Task C. Supplies (Completed)

Equipment for Silver Creek - Equipment purchases were made in Invoice #1 and Invoice #3 to provide Poly Pipe for the dewatering of Silver Creek and equipment to supplement Silver Creek and LCT Recovery. The 2024 field season was successfully implemented with the purchases for equipment made with the WNTI grant.

**Any significant developments beyond those reported for specific tasks/deliverables:**

A small grant award was received from Keefe Family Foundation in 2022 to fund the eDNA sampling of Silver Creek and 6 field technicians for two 8-day hitches for LCT Recovery in Silver Creek. A second funding source from Keefe Family Foundation came in January 2024 to support Slinkard Creek supplies and travel for CalTrout Field leads and field technicians.

For implementation funding on Slinkard Creek, a \$1.2M grant award was awarded to CalTrout from the CDFW Drought Funds to implement LCT Recovery on Silver Creek 2023, Slinkard Creek 2024-2025, and RoughCreek/Bodie Creek fish barrier to maintain LCT populations post recovery in Bodie Creek.

**Any delays/issues that are impacting or may impact progress of the project:**

The 2022-2023 winter had produced record breaking snow fall and snowpack throughout the Eastern Sierra. The 2023 field season was delayed by two months to reach "optimal" flows for de-watering and accurate non-native trout removal.

**Summary of invoices/charges to the agreement (include amount and date of any invoices submitted for payment under the agreement that occurred during the reporting period. Optionally, include a summary of charges incurred during the reporting period that will be invoiced during the next reporting period):**

Invoice 1 7/1/2023 - 9/30/2023 for \$13,105.04. – This invoice supplemented Project Manager (Marrina Nation) hours on the Silver Creek Project, mileage of 226 miles, and Poly Pipe purchases for Silver Creek Dewatering.

Invoice 2 10/1/2023 – 12/31/2024 for \$2,622.14. - This invoice supplemented Project Manager (Marrina Nation) hours on the Silver Creek Project, and mileage to Silver Creek project.

Invoice 3 4/1/2024 – 6/30/2024 for \$36,606.98 – This invoice supplemented important project supplies for the recovery of Lahontan cutthroat trout within the Walker Basin. This equipment helped with bringing Silver Creek to completion.

**Anticipated work in the next six months:**

CalTrout will be hiring a team of six field technicians for LCT Recovery at Slinkard Creek beginning Spring 2024. Equipment purchases through the WNTI funds will be purchased for Silver Creek during the early Spring of 2024. Field work will be snow dependent, but will begin sometime late Spring or early Summer of 2024

**Summary and number of any outreach activities or significant meetings related to the project:**

Caltrout attended a Fisheries Branch Inland Fisheries Coordination Meeting on January 24th, 2024 with CDFW Heritage and Wild Trout Program staff. We reviewed the Strategic Trout Plan and the projects in the various region. CalTrout highlighted the work in the Walker Basin and our involvement with CDFW Region 6 on Silver Creek and the work to come on Slinkard Creek.

CalTrout also attended the Walker RIT Spring meeting on May 8th, 2024, to review all LCT Recovery Projects throughout the Walker Basin. This included Silver Creek, Mill Creek, Slinkard Creek, Bodie/ Rough Creek where current projects and monitoring are taking place by CDFW, USFWS, NDOW, CalTrout and other various partners throughout the region.

**Please include any additional information (pictures, documents, presentations, or similar outputs developed during the reporting period related to the project).**

- 1\_LCT Presentation Supplemental Info
- 2\_2023 Silver Report
- 3\_20230419\_CalTrout\_FinaleDNAReport 2022
- 4\_SilverCreek eDNA. Kmz
- 5\_2023 Silver Dewatering.jpg

**Expected Completion Date**

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – End of WNTI Grant

**Summary and number of monitoring activities conducted as part of this project:**

eDNA sampling was completed at twenty seven sites in Silver Creek and three species analyzed including LCT, brook trout, and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. Samples were taken 10/28/2022-11/04/2022. CalTrout plans on collecting Samples in May 2023 with funds from CDFW and the Keefe Family Foundation. CDFW collected eDNA samples in October 2024 to analyze presence/absence of Brook trout throughout the Silver Creek Project area post 5th/final field season. Samples will be analyzed in Fall 2024 with Kramer Fish Sciences.