

Population Survey of Cutthroat Trout

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Outdoor

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**EDGE
PROJECT**

Project Summary

Bonneville Cutthroat Trout are native to southwest Utah. Human activities over the past 150 years have greatly reduced their numbers. A small population resides on the east slope of Pine Valley Mountain in the South Ash Creek watershed. In 2002 a high intensity forest fire burned the majority of the vegetation in the watershed. Ash flowing into South Ash Creek and later flood events potentially reduced the number of fish in the creek significantly.

I performed a population survey, using an electro shock apparatus, to find out if the fire and flood events had indeed significantly reduced the number of trout. The results of the survey showed that the fire and floods significantly reduced the number of trout in the stream.



I am holding a Bonneville Cutthroat Trout on South Ash Creek. The electrofishing apparatus is visible on my back with the wand in the background (yellow and red stick).

Project Highlights

- Learned a lot about the fish while researching the project.
- Awesome days in the field collecting data
- Developed skills that will help me in a career in wildlife management
- Developed relationships with biologists who share my passion for animals

From My Journal

“This area is so beautiful. On the hillsides, it is typical high desert. Near the stream is a beautiful riparian zone with towering cottonwoods lending shade to the stream. If I were a fish, I would pick a stream like this to live in.”



This is a closer picture of the Bonneville Cutthroat Trout. This beautiful species of fish has thrived in southwestern Utah since long before European settlers arrived.