



Southwest Region

Fish and Aquatic Conservation

Whiskey Creek Gila Trout Lineage Rescued from Fire are Returned to the Wild

Facing the devastating effects from the aftermath of the large Baldy Complex fire in 2012, Gila Trout and other fish populations were at risk of a complete loss. In a unified and coordinated effort, biologists with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, New Mexico Game & Fish Department, and members of the Trout Unlimited sportsman's group raced against the clock to save as many of the genetically distinct populations as possible. Nearly 350 fish were rescued from ash and sediment forming in Langstroth and Whiskey creeks. Later the Gila Trout were sent to the Mora National Fish Hatchery, the New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, and the other species were sent to Dexter National Fish Hatchery. The Gila trout facilities were specially designed to mimic the natural habitat of the species as closely as possible which allowed the species to thrive in the hatchery environment. In October 2014, the Service conducted the first reintroduction of Whiskey Creek Gila trout into the Gila Wilderness, from progeny of the 350 rescued fish.



Watch the video for more on the story of this unique lineage of Gila trout:

<http://youtu.be/5ua6e3LevD4>

Learn more about the recovery efforts:

http://www.fws.gov/southwest/docs/Feature_Inter-Agency_Efforts_Save_Fish_from_Wildfire-Region2-Sep20.pdf

<http://newmexicotu.org/update/?p=826>