



WEST SLOPE CUTTHROAT A Popular Inland Trout Gets Support

The East Kootenays provides a spectacular backdrop for outdoor recreation. This area is home to the Westslope Cutthroat Trout. This unassuming fish provides some of the best angling in British Columbia, particularly for inland waters.

The Westslope Cutthroat Trout is closely related to rainbow trout and other cutthroat trout. What it lacks in size, it makes up for in feistiness, providing a remarkably popular fishery. Westslope Cutthroat angling has become so popular that special Classified Waters regulations were implemented to maintain quality fishing experiences on some of the more heavily fished rivers, such as the Elk and Wigwam.

Unfortunately, Westslope Cutthroat Trout face an uncertain future as the species has suffered massive declines throughout much of its native range in North America. Stocking of non-native salmonids has led to displacement and cross-breeding problems. Habitat loss and degradation, as well as over-harvest, have also reduced numbers.

Westslope Cutthroat Trout have been identified as priority sport fish by the provincial Fisheries Program and resources have been provided by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation to develop a provincial management plan.

This plan has two main objectives: (1) conservation of population diversity, and (2) maintenance of quality recreational opportunities consistent with conservation. This plan will assess the key threats and limiting factors for Westslope Cutthroat Trout, and will identify means of mitigating them and ensuring angling opportunities are maintained throughout the species' range.



Westslope Cutthroat - a popular sport fish in the East Kootenays Kelly Latch

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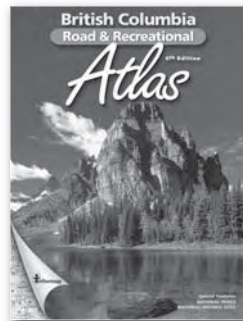
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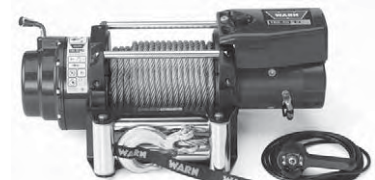


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