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Westslope cutthroat trout

Finding a Natural Refuge

Saving Wild Trout in Banff National Park

Banff National Park is known world-wide for its iconic mountains, hot springs and wildlife, especially large animals like bears and elk. But for aquatic specialist Shelley Humphries, Banff holds yet another treasure – a unique opportunity to create a special refuge for a species at risk - the westslope cutthroat trout.



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Waterfall barrier-Upper Corral Creek



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Electrofishing to remove invasive species

A high elevation prize

The **westslope cutthroat trout**, with its distinctive orange-red slash below the jaw, is highly prized by the sportsfishing community. Once found throughout the Pacific Northwest, including Montana, Oregon, British Columbia and Alberta, its range is now vastly reduced. In Alberta alone, westslope cutthroat trout are limited to less than 10% of their historical range.

Westslope cutthroat trout depend on cold, fast-flowing water as well as riparian and instream cover such as undercut banks. They prefer cooler and higher elevation streams than other trout species; as a result, they are found primarily in headwater streams and lakes and the upper reaches of mainstem rivers.



