

NEWS RELEASE

Sequoia National Forest and the Giant Sequoia National Monument

Kern River Ranger District

105 Whitney Road, Kernville, CA 93238

4875 Ponderosa Drive, Lake Isabella, Ca 93240



Centennial 1908 - 2008

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For Immediate Release

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Scout Troop And Trout Unlimited Team Up To Provide Golden Trout Kiosk At Blackrock Forest Service Station

Kernville, CA....Scout Troop #684 from Ridgecrest, California along with volunteers from Trout Unlimited, the Auguabonita Flyfishing club from Ridgecrest and the Forest Service spent labor day weekend hard at work installing an informational kiosk at a remote Forest Service station in the heart of golden trout country. The project was coordinated by Danial Zellner as part of his eagle scout requirements. Approximately 15 volunteers helped removed an older, dilapidated information sign board and installed a new kiosk with information on golden trout, the state fish. Funds for the materials and signs were provided by Trout Unlimited.

For more information on golden trout and volunteer projects visit <http://www.californiagoldentrout.org/>.



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Catch a Glimpse of Gold

Story of the Golden Trout

Watching a golden trout can be pure delight. One moment it blends into the amber-hued streambottom as a camouflaged shadow in the depths. The next instant it transforms into gleaming gold and red, turning and catching the sun — a flash of pure beauty and joy!

Scientists aren't sure why these fish exhibit such vibrant and distinctive colors. Perhaps it's a form of communication.

What do you think?



I can liken it to nothing more accurately than a twenty-dollar gold-piece, the same satin finish... it gleamed and melted and glowed as though fresh from the mold... I thought then, and have ever since, that the Golden Trout, fresh from the water, is one of the most beautiful fish that swims."

—Stewart Edward White, 1903



Golden Trout — *Oncorhynchus mykiss aguabonita*
California's Official State Fish
Photo courtesy of Wynand Edhardt

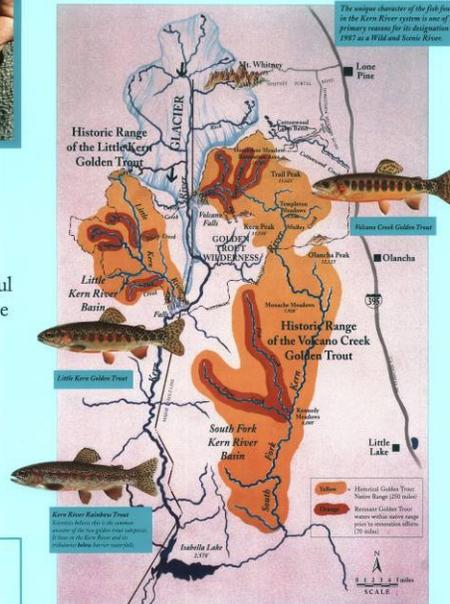
Origins of the Gold

Golden trout owe their existence to powerful geologic forces which have been at work on the Kern Plateau for 1½ million years. Some streams became isolated. Fish that survived in these "safe pockets" slowly evolved into the unique golden trout we know today.

Look at the map. Can you discover what may have caused the "safe pockets"?

 In 1978, Federal legislation created the 303,000-acre Golden Trout Wilderness. Wilderness in National Forests is designated for the perpetuation of natural conditions.

USDA Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
Inyo National Forest



Original Home of the Golden Trout
Kern Plateau — Sierra Nevada Range, California
3 trout illustrations courtesy of Joseph R. Tomelleri

Discovering the Gold

The first human contact with golden trout was probably made by Native American Indians. They traveled into the mountains to escape summer heat. The wild Kern Plateau offered good hunting and fishing, sustaining these visitors during their stay.

Other than a few creeks where golden trout lived, **high**-elevation waters in the southern Sierra Nevada range remained fishless until the mid-1800's. This is when prospectors, shepherds, loggers and anglers exploring the Plateau fell under the spell of these beautiful trout. They transplanted them into lakes and streams outside of their native range.

That's why you don't have to travel far from where you are standing to discover your own "gold nugget" of beauty.

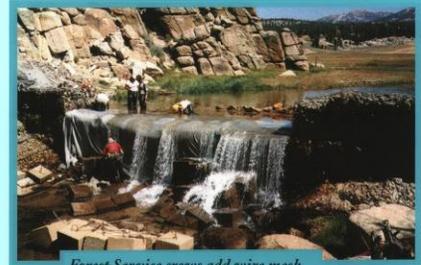


Going for the Gold

Recovering the Gold

Only death extinguishes the golden trout's brilliance of color—its flash of beauty and joy. They continue to struggle for survival, not living as long or growing as big as they once did. Because of the extent of past damage, restoration of the original native golden trout habitat is a major challenge. But many people are working together to bring back nature's balance on the Kern Plateau. Forest Service crews, volunteers and permittees help reduce erosion by restoring plants and streambanks. Domestic grazing and recreation use are monitored and carefully managed to reduce impacts to natural resources. Allowing natural fire cycles to occur on the Plateau also contributes to the good health of its ecosystem.

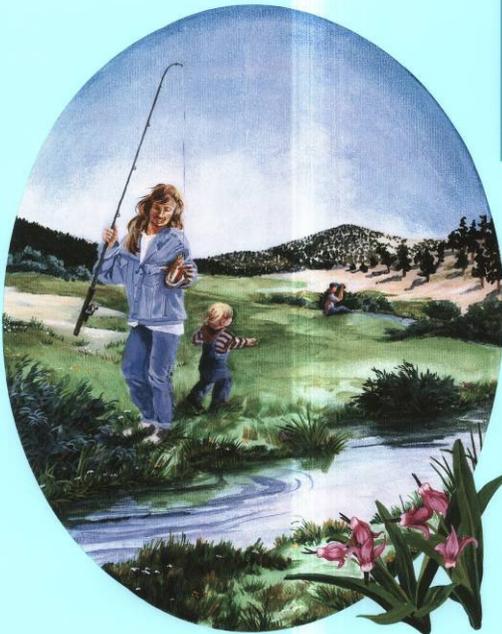
The Golden Trout Wilderness is a sanctuary not only for the golden trout, but also for all forms of life on the Plateau that lived together successfully for thousands of years creating a stable ecosystem. Helping to re-weave nature's tapestry in the recovery process gives people a sense of connection to the golden thread.



Forest Service crews add wire mesh to repair a barrier built to protect golden trout from invading, non-native fish.



California Department of Fish and Game biologists electro-shock the South Fork Kern River as part of the effort to remove non-native fish and protect native golden trout.



This small fish—known for its tenacity of spirit—is still a prized goal for anglers and a treasure for wildlife viewers.

Fishing for golden trout is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game.

"The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings..."

Nature does not exist for the convenience of human beings."

—Rachel Carson



Historic rendering of golden trout by Charles B. Hudson (c. 1905)
Photo courtesy of Phil Pister

USDA Forest Service / Inyo National Forest

1 Daniel Zellner (left) with Karl Zellner (right)

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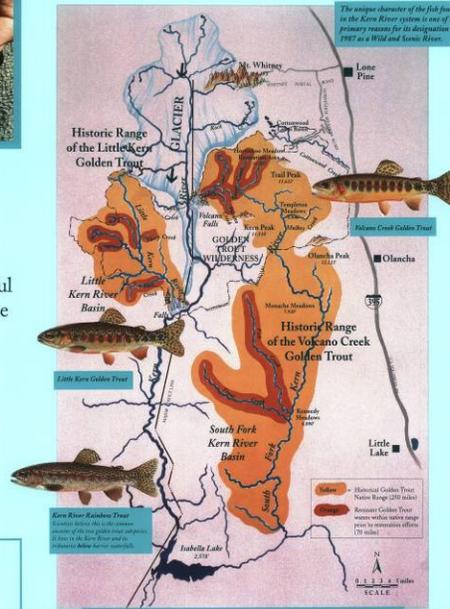
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The unique character of the fish found in the Kern River system is one of the primary reasons for its designation in 1987 as a Wild and Scenic River.

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