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CALIFORNIA TROUT RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT TO PROTECT MCCLOUD REDBAND TROUT

McCloud, CA. – California Trout announced today that they have received a \$25,000 grant from the Mead Foundation for the restoration and protection of Native McCloud redband trout. The money comes at a key time for a species that faces new challenges in the context of climate change, population growth and increased energy and water demands.

In 2008 and 2009, California Trout will use the Mead foundation grant to implement key scientific assessments, identify areas for restoration, and mobilize local stakeholders and private landowners to reduce threats and restore habitat for the redband trout throughout the Upper McCloud Basin. California Trout will also use the funds to engage state resource agencies to strengthen existing partnerships committed to native trout restoration and protection.

McCloud redband trout, known for their brilliant coloring, adaptability and unique genetic diversity, live in small streams that flow into the Upper McCloud River. Over the course of tens of thousands of years, cutting glaciers and volcanic activity trapped and isolated various lineages of ancient rainbow trout above waterfalls and natural barriers. Once isolated, these trout were forced to adapt to volatile living conditions and evolve into the distinct subspecies - McCloud redband trout.

Although McCloud redband trout continue to persist in small, hidden, often intermittent streams, their future remains uncertain. Historic land-use practices such as logging and grazing have degraded key habitat and spawning areas. Domestic hatchery rainbow trout, stocked for recreational purposes, continue to hybridize with native trout, which destroys genetic integrity and weakens their fitness for survival. Moreover, climate change threatens to reduce dramatically what limited spawning and rearing habitat remains.

“Despite the challenges, we believe that restoration actions will lead to improvements in habitat conditions and increases in native McCloud redband trout populations,” said Curtis Knight, Mt. Shasta Project Manager for California Trout. “Time is not on our side, but this grant program will give local redband populations the attention they deserve.”

For more information about the Mead grant and the ongoing work of California Trout, please contact Curtis Knight at 530-926-3755.

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