

Biologists want to save trout with poison

June 19 2006

For the fifth time, biologists are reportedly proposing to poison a remote Sierra stream to restore what might be America's rarest trout.

The controversial plan by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service and California Department of Fish and Game, involves the use of a chemical to clear non-native fish from Silver King Creek south of Lake Tahoe, the Reno (Nev.) Gazette-Journal reported Monday.

Eliminating the non-native fish would allow the threatened Paiute cutthroat trout to flourish in its native habitat, but opponents concerned about use of the chemical rotenone in the mountain creek have blocked the project each of the last four summers.

For the latest attempt, the federal government plans to present a \$125,000 full environmental impact statement to show the project can succeed without any significant environmental problems.

Opponents call the proposal a "very risky undertaking."

"Basically, rotenone is designed to sterilize the stream, not just the target fish," Patty Clary, executive director of Californians for Alternatives to Toxics, told the Gazette-Journal. "It wipes out everything. You don't know what you're losing that won't ever come back again."

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Citation: Biologists want to save trout with poison (2006, June 19) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-06-biologists-trout-poison.html>

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