

Lahontan cutthroat trout thriving at Independence Lake

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

At a “gem” of a Sierra lake recently purchased for the public, native inhabitants are making a record comeback.

At Independence Lake, one of only two lakes in the world with an indigenous population of Lahontan cutthroat trout, the threatened fish are now spawning at levels not seen since 1956.

“It’s a real success story. They’re coming back,” said Gary Scopettone, a cutthroat expert with the U.S. Geological Survey.

This summer, 223 cutthroat have been counted spawning from the lake up Upper Independence Creek, from 176 last year and 165 the year before. In 2003, as the lake’s fish teetered at extinction, only 17 cutthroat spawned at the lake, Scopettone said.

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