

Harming Plentiful Species to Protect Endangered Species

Poisoning three species of trout to assist an endangered trout. In order to provide habitat for West slope cutthroat trout, the Gallatin National Forest in Montana plans to remove brook, rainbow, and Yellowstone cutthroat trout from Cherry Lake in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness by poisoning the lake and its tributaries. The West slope cutthroats are candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Because of a waterfall that kept any fish from reaching upstream on their own, the drainage was barren until people introduced fish there earlier this century. Thus none of these species of fish are “native to this habitat,” though one might argue that 50 to 80 years is sufficient for the introduced fish to become “naturalized.” Ironically, about 100 miles away, National Park Service officials are trying to protect the Yellowstone cutthroat by killing off Midwestern lake trout that were introduced into Yellowstone Lake. See Scott McMillion, “Cherry Creek poisoning plan OK’d,” Bozeman Daily Chronicle (7/24/98): 3.

Poisoning gulls to protect terns and plovers. Managers of a Cape Cod national wildlife refuge are planning to kill thousands of herring and great black-backed gulls to protect endangered roseate terns and piping plovers. The gulls will be fed bread laced with a poison that causes kidney failure. “This is a calm death....The gulls pretty much fold up their wings and go into a coma.” Animal rights advocates are arguing that these steps are unnecessary because gull populations are already on the decline and the plover population has grown slightly. AP, “Refuge to kill off thousands of pesky gulls,” *Charleston Post and Courier* (5/9/96): A6.