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**David Lass**  
*California Field Director*

April 23, 2014

Eagle Lake Guardians  
686-795 Bamboo Way  
Spalding Tract, Eagle Lake  
Susanville, CA 96130

**Re: Funding Request for Pine Creek Watershed Assessment/Non-native Trout Eradication**

Dear Eagle Lake Guardians Board of Directors:

Trout Unlimited (TU) is excited to write you today to request funding for important work in the Eagle Lake Basin to restore the Pine Creek watershed and recover wild populations of Eagle Lake rainbow trout. TU believes a coordinated private and public partnership is fundamental to recovering wild self-sustaining Eagle Lake rainbow trout in the Pine Creek watershed, and avoiding species listing under ESA. A listing under the ESA will create administrative barriers to improving physical habitat condition for Eagle Lake rainbow trout, potentially limiting recreational angling opportunities in the area and alienating current stakeholder alliances. We don't want that. By implementing sound strategies, we will accelerate species recovery, thus reducing the need for listing.

Our project goals include:

- 1) Identification and prioritization of immediate and long-term restoration actions and associated information needs for both Eagle Lake rainbow trout and their watershed
- 2) Cultivating and maintaining the collaborative partnerships that will serve as the foundation for the recovery and stewardship of Eagle Lake rainbow trout over the long-term
- 3) Averting the listing of Eagle Lake rainbow trout as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act through recovery of self-sustaining populations

We will execute these goals by the following strategies:

- 1) Leveraging state funding to eradicate non-native Brook trout from Upper Pine Creek and Bogart Springs Creek**

*Measureable Result:* Restoring habitat and connectivity in Pine Creek is fundamental to the success of Eagle Lake rainbow trout. However, a full recovery of Eagle Lake rainbow trout must integrate the removal of Brook trout from critical spawning and rearing habitat on the front end. Working with California Department of Fish and Wildlife, we propose to eradicate Brook trout in the upper watershed using our Science Team, university students and

*Trout Unlimited: America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation Organization*

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university groups. We propose to increase the ongoing removal effort by roughly 50% through this collaboration.

**2) Conduct physical instream habitat monitoring in Upper Pine Creek**

*Measureable Result:* We will select specific sites for preliminary habitat and ecosystem monitoring as a complement to Brook trout eradication and in support of future restoration planning. The Aquatic Habitat Assessment methodology and results will, together, provide a baseline and template for future management actions, including enabling effects from potential future actions to be quantified post project in terms of change in available habitat, species distribution and abundance, and ecosystem condition. Additionally, habitat and ecosystem data collected will enable evaluation and comparison of different restoration alternatives.

**3) Map the hydrologic features and connectivity of the entire Pine Creek watershed**

*Measureable Result:* Map all hydrologic features in the Pine Creek system to gain a better understanding of where the water flows and where impoundments hold back water. This work will also provide estimates of how many non-native fish currently live in the system and where, so that a sound eradication plan can be drafted to ensure success of wild juvenile Eagle Lake rainbow trout.

**4) Assess the health and current state of meadow habitat in the entire Pine Creek watershed**

*Measureable Result:* This project is designed to improve Eagle Lake rainbow trout habitat and accelerate the pace of meadow restoration in Pine Creek by developing a sound understanding of the opportunities and constraints for restoration and/or enhancement activities within the watershed. This project will result in: all meadows in the Pine Creek watershed will be evaluated and prioritized for restoration, restoration/enhancement alternatives for meadows in the watershed will be built from a sound geomorphic assessment, decade scale effects of management practices will be evaluated and the most effective techniques are incorporated into restoration and enhancement plans, alternative concepts for three sites will be discussed in a collaborative stakeholder process and preferred alternatives selected, and public support for meadow restoration and ELRT conservation in Pine Creek will be increased.

Thank you again for your consideration, and if I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. S. [unclear]", written in a cursive style.

David Lass  
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