

To: Ryan

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Saving Fish May Affect Water Quality

A plan proposed by the state Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Forest Service to poison brook and golden trout so that Lahontan cutthroat trout, an endangered species, may flourish, has forced fears about downstream water quality to surface.

The plan was outlined by Steve Widowski, wildlife biologist for the Forest Service and James Ryan, fishery biologist for the Department of Fish and Game, for the El Dorado County Recreation Commission.

The two stated that Rotenone, the chemical to be used, can be chemically neutralized so it doesn't effect fish downstream. The poison prevents oxygen from passing through the gills, suf-

focating the fish.

They also claimed that the quantity of Rotenone that would be used is not hazardous to humans.

The Lahontan cutthroat, classified as endangered in 1975, is ill equipped to compete with the brook and brown trout. The species is nearing extinction.

To save the species the government has proposed killing other species in a dozen waterways in California and western Nevada and replacing them with the Lahontan cutthroat which could flourish in the absence of competition.

Some people have already informed Fish and Game that they prefer the brook trout and don't want the fish populations messed with.