

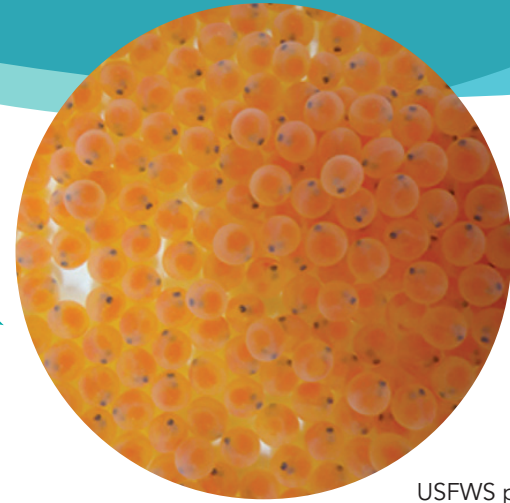
The Westslope Cutthroat Trout Lifecycle



DIGLLOYD INC photo

Spawning

Spawning can occur from April through August, but tends to peak in late May through to mid-June. Female westslope cutthroat trout dig a nest or redd in small, well-oxygenated rivers with gravel bottoms. As the female deposits the eggs in the nest, they are fertilized by the male and covered with gravel.



USFWS photo

Eggs

Eggs incubate in the gravel for a few months before hatching into alevins. The timing of the hatch is dependent on temperature. Eggs produced by larger females are bigger and produce larger alevins, increasing their chances for survival.



NANFA photo

Adults

Adult trout have a territory that gives them a good supply of food and a place to hide from predators. The extent of their territory and age at sexual maturity can vary greatly and is dependent on their habitat and life history. They overwinter in deep pools or lakes and begin migrating to their spawning grounds in early spring.



D-Loop Outfitters photo

Alevins

After hatching, alevins stay in the gravel for an additional few weeks living off their yolk sac. They then emerge from the gravel as fry, usually between July and August.



NPS photo

Fingerlings

Fingerlings, or juvenile trout, are simply one step larger than fry and are typically about the size of a finger. Fingerlings may reside in natal streams from one to four years. Trout begin to acquire the characteristic body markings of westslope cutthroat trout.



Joel Sartore photo

Fry

Fry disperse generally into lower velocity habitats with sufficient cover, foraging for small insects and larvae. Fry often look similar to adult trout, but have light coloration and non distinct spots. Once trout begin to develop scales and working fins they are known as fingerlings.

