

ENDANGERED TROUT GET HUMAN HELP MOVING THROUGH EAST BAY CREEK

by Leslie Brinkley

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FREMONT, Calif. (KGO) --

Endangered Steelhead Trout trying to get upstream to spawn in the East Bay got a boost from humans Wednesday as they tried to get over a concrete barrier.

Five Steelhead Trout were netted in the process including four males and a female. That may not sound like a lot, but fishery manager Joe Sullivan says it's a bonanza.

"A single female can have 8,000 eggs, so they can reproduce quite a bit as long as we allow them to go to the proper habitat where they do like to spawn," Sullivan with the East Bay Regional Parks District said.

They like to spawn upstream, but keep getting hung up at a concrete barrier in an Alameda flood control channel near a BART overcrossing.

"Our volunteers have been seeing them there every single day since February. They are jumping, trying to get over this weir and it's physically impossible," Jeff Miller with Alameda Creek Alliance said.

So, they got a little help from their human friends. As the flood control district inflated two rubber pillow dams at midday to slow the flow, volunteers waded in the one foot deep waters scooping up trout in nets.

They were then measured and tagged with radio trackers and loaded into tanks to be trucked and released three miles upstream.

The last and only time this worked was in 2008 when just two Steelhead were relocated.

Up next is the construction of a fish ladder so the trout can migrate upstream on their own. There's local money to fund it, and they are now waiting for federal permits to build it.