

Trout in the Classroom Are Now Trout in the Wild

Cassidy Woolsey

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Logan – Skylar

Pond, an urban-community fishing pond in Willow Park, welcomed 44 new rainbow trout fingerlings on Monday as part of the Utah Trout in the Classroom program.

The Utah State University Water Quality Extension program's staff and Providence Elementary School students participated in this unique, hands-on activity to learn about and promote the importance of water quality, fish and wildlife. The event is a first in Cache Valley.

"People often take water for granted or think that it is only for human use," said Brian Greene, program coordinator for USU Water Quality Extension. "This project helps remind people that wildlife, like trout, also need clean, healthy water and it's up to us to ensure that our lakes and streams are healthy."

The Trout in the Classroom program is a national program designed to develop caring attitudes about fish species and their habitats.

In early January, about 300 triploid rainbow trout eggs were brought to USU's Quinney College of Natural Resources and the elementary school through the Trout in the Classroom program and its partnerships with Trout Unlimited–Cache Anglers and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR). Since then, both of these groups have diligently cared for the fish – waiting for the day that they could be released into their natural habitat.

"It's been a neat experience," Greene said. "We got them as a cup of eggs and have watched them grow ever since. It has been cool to see the reaction we got from people at the university and the students at Providence Elementary."

After the fish reach 2 to 4 inches in length, they can be released into an approved area. The college staff, along with the DWR decided to release their fish into Skylar Pond to help increase the population.

The elementary school released their fish Friday, May 1, in



Green Canyon.

Greene said he had been interested in bringing the Trout in the Classroom program to Cache Valley for several years. He hopes that this project will continue to foster a sense of stewardship within the community for many years to come.

The community is invited to visit the pond or try to catch the fish at the annual Bear River Celebration and Free Fishing Day on June 6. The free event is for youth and their families to fish, make nature crafts, tie flies, visit wildlife and more.

For more information, visit the USU Water Quality Extension page: extension.usu.edu/waterquality/annual-events/briverceleb/.

PHOTO 1: The trout were acclimated to the water's temperature and then released into Skylar Pond

PHOTO 2: Nancy Mesner, Brian Greene, Clint Brunson, Jodie Anderson, and Ayush Nigam participated in the trout release on Monday.

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