# Fisheries of the Wind River Basin

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# Fisheries Management

- Manage 1111 streams and 883 lakes in the Lander Region
- 10 salmonid species, 10 cool or warm water sport fish species and 17 nongame fish species

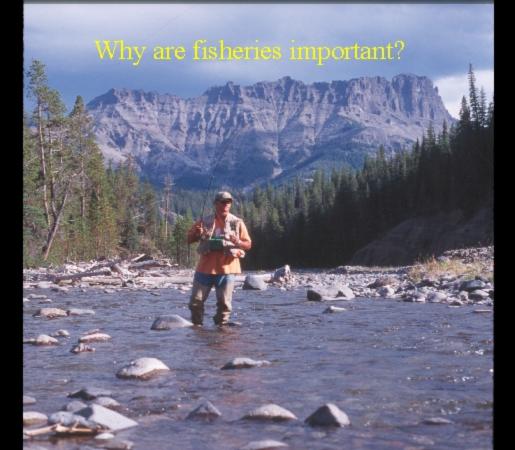
	Game Fish	Non Game Fish
Native	Yellowstone cutthroat trout, sauger, ling, channel catfish, stone catfish, and white fish	White, mountain and longnose suckers, flathead and lake chub, river carp sucker, red horse, longnose dace, sand shiner, and fathead minnow
Non Native	Rainbow, golden, brook and lake trout, walleye, bass, perch, crappie	Carp, emerald shiner, spottail shiner, sculpin, killifish, Darter

# Sampling

- Electrofish estimate fish/mile
- Gill net or Trap net monitor fish abundance
- Seine monitor juvenile fish and forage
- Sonar used to survey fish densities in reservoirs
- Angler surveys monitor catch rate, harvest, angler preference and satisfaction

# Management Concepts

- Catchable
- Basic Yield
- Trophy
- Wild
- Unique



# Why are the fisheries important?

- 1996 413,141 anglers bought licenses in Wyoming
- In a 1998 economic study, fishing generated
  293 million dollars in Wyoming
- Boysen Reservoir 39,449 anglers days in 1993
- Biological feed on insect, food for birds and mammals, educational requests...

# Commercial Importance

- Outfitters
- Boysen Marina
- Bait Dealers
- Sporting good stores
- Boat dealers
- Tournament/Special interest
- Motels, Restaurants, Service Stations...



# Management efforts

- Provide fisheries through stocking 260,000 fish stocked in the Lander Region in 2001
- Protect fish from over-harvest by regulation
- Identify problems, enhance habitat where opportunities lie and obtain in-stream flows when possible
- Purchase access
- Information and Education

#### **Priorities**

- Native Fish Yellowstone cutthroat trout, sauger and burbot (ling)
- Important waters
- Whirling Disease
- Aquatic Nuisance
- Access
- Habitat

# Native Fish



Prevent listing on Endangered Species List

#### Yellowstone Cutthroat

- Determining changes in distribution from historic range
- Monitoring population changes
- Evaluating genetic purity
- Identifying barriers
- Coordinating with federal agencies (USFS)
  and USFWS)

# Whirling Disease

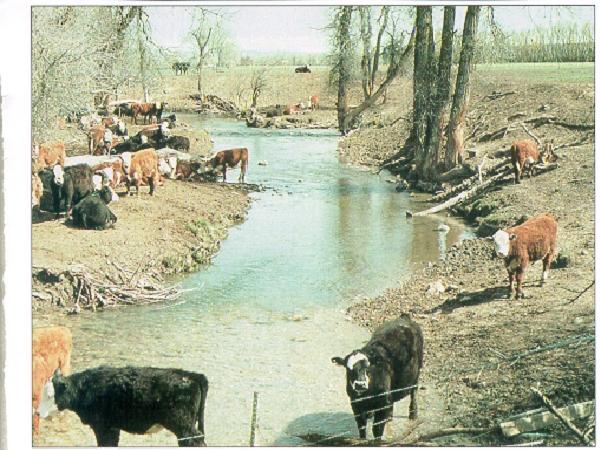
- Prevent spreading of Myxobolus spores
- Identify waters infected
- Evaluate effects on fish populations
- Inform anglers

### Access

- Acquire permanent fishing access
- Purchase walk in access
- Provide handicap facilities
- Boat ramps

#### Habitat

Protecting riparian areas and looking for opportunities to improve the watershed





#### Problems Identified

- Accelerated erosion tie drives, overgrazing, subdivisions, etc...
- Barriers to fish dams, dewatered channels, etc...
- Channelization loss of fish habitat
- Competition introduced fish

# **Progress**

- Native Fish funded sauger study, currently evaluating Yellowstone cutthroat communities and monitoring other native fish.
- Whirling disease protecting hatcheries, learning and informing anglers with new information.
- Aquatic nuisance importation ban to prevent Zebra Mussel, New Zealand Mudsnail and Golden Algae introductions.
- Access recent boat ramp improvements at 6 lakes, ½ mile fishing easement at Dubois, handicap facilities on 3 lakes, walk-in access at 3 streams and 1 reservoir

# Progress cont.

- Habitat
- Spot treatments Little Popo Agie PFA, Lander City Park, Wind R. PFA ...
- Trust fund habitat projects Town of Dubois, private land owners ...
- Watershed Approach work with conservation district on Popo Agie, Irrigation improvements on E. Fork Wind River ...
- Instream flow filings on 3 streams and studies on 3 other streams.

# Drought

- Can have adverse impacts to juvenile fish and spawning
- Can be beneficial to healing stream banks

### Summary

- Increasing efforts to maintain native fish communities.
- Taking steps to prevent spreading of disease and introduction of aquatic nuisances.
- Placing more emphasis on long term habitat projects rather than short term projects.
- Looking for access to quality fishing areas.