

2008 Edition



Wyoming Game and Fish Department

New Fishing Regulations

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Special points of interest:

- New Access along the Platte River.
- How are trout doing in the Casper Region?
- What's new at Speas Rearing Station?
- Make sure you pick up the new regulations for 2008-2009.
- Concerns about introduction of exotic species.

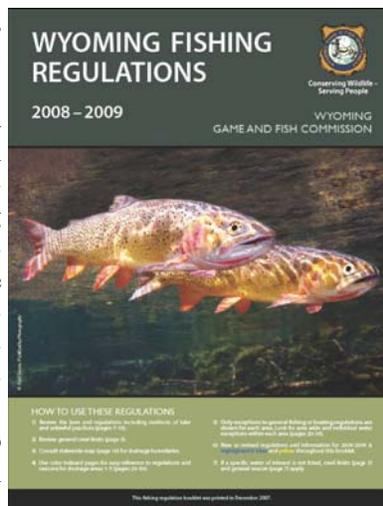
Another fishing season is here and if you have not picked up a copy of the new fishing regulations I encourage you to look at the new regulations before you begin fishing. Grab a copy where you get your license or the booklet is on our Web site (<http://gf.state.wy.us/downloads/pdf/fishregs.pdf>).

Numerous changes were made this year including a combined trout category and creation of a separate brook trout category. A species of special concern section was added to address special conservation limits for native species of concern. We attempted to reduce and standardize area regulation exceptions and addressed issues with winter ice fishing and spear gun fishing regulations. We also examined the myriad of cutthroat regulations and attempted to standardize those on an area specific basis. Baitfish recommendations are proposed to address the supply of baitfish for statewide use. Changes were made to prevent the transfer of live baitfish from seining license holders to others. There is no limit on the number of traps that can be used by those who hold both a seining and live bait dealers license to improve supply. We also expanded the methods of baitfish capture to include different types of nets. The length a baitfish receipt is valid was changed from 10 to 15 days or 30 days if for fathead minnows or golden shiners from a Wyoming hatchery.

If you fish for walleye, sauger or channel catfish please note page 6 in the regulations. The Wyoming Department of Health has offered some advice on eating these species from some of our waters. In general, Wyoming fish are low in mercury but we have found elevated levels of mercury in some of the fish in Seminole, Pathfinder and Big Horn reservoirs.

Mercury is a metal that occurs naturally in small amounts in the environment. It also comes from burning coal or trash and from industry. Mercury gets into lakes and rivers in several ways, including rain and runoff. When conditions are right in the water, certain kinds of bacteria change metallic mercury into the more toxic methylmercury. Methylmercury is stored in the muscle of fish. The longer a fish lives the greater its chances of accumulating mercury in its tissues. In general, fish that feed on other fish are also more likely to accumulate mercury.

Walleye in our higher elevation reservoirs (Seminole and Pathfinder) are very slow growing and long lived due to cooler water temperatures. This situation provides ideal conditions for these fish to accumulate mercury. For more information go to www.health.wyo.gov.



The North Platte River - Gray Reef

We conducted two population estimates on the North Platte River between Gray Reef and Glenrock in 2007. The first population estimate was between Robertson Road Bridge and Mills Bridge in Casper. The estimated population is around 900 trout per mile, of which approximately 97% are rainbows and 3% are brown trout. While there are a few Snake River cutthroat present, they make up less than 1% of the total trout population. Rainbows average 12.4 inches and 0.8 pounds. Eleven percent of the rainbows were larger than 16 inches with the largest fish captured being 21.3 inches and 4.32 pounds. Brown trout averaged 15 inches and 1.7 pounds, with fish up to 25.6 inches and 6.8 pounds captured.



Big Muddy rainbow trout

The second population estimate was conducted between Big Muddy Bridge and the Rabbit Hill Access area about 4 miles upstream of Glenrock. The estimated population in this reach was 800 trout per mile of which 99% were rainbows. Rainbows averaged 13 inches and 1 pound, with individuals up to 22.5 inches and 4.1 pounds captured. Browns averaged 14.6 inches and 1.5 pounds with the largest fish being 22.2 inches and 3.23 pounds. While this reach certainly holds some larger browns, the estimate was conducted in early October, when many of the big browns are running upstream to spawn and have moved out of the study reach.

We collected fish from each reach to test for whirling disease. All samples came back negative for the parasite. While whirling disease is present in the

North Platte River above Seminoe Reservoir, it has not yet spread downstream. We urge all anglers who travel among waters to be diligent about disinfecting their gear to prevent the spread of whirling disease and other aquatic nuisance species.



Brown trout from Robertson Road

WHAT IS WHIRLING DISEASE?

Whirling disease primarily affects trout and salmon. A microscopic parasite attacks the soft cartilage of young fish. Sufficiently infected young fish may display a whirling behavior, develop a black tail, or die. Survivors may have skeletal deformities. Whirling disease has no effect on human health. Long-term effects of this disease are controversial. Recent collapses of rainbow trout populations outside Wyoming have prompted new studies on the importance of this parasite.

YOU CAN PREVENT THE SPREAD OF WHIRLING DISEASE

- ➔ Clean all equipment such as boats, trailers, waders, boots, and float tubes of mud before leaving the river or lake.
- ➔ Do not transport any river or lake water in coolers, buckets, boats, or live wells from one river basin to another.
- ➔ Disinfect equipment at home with a solution of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chlorine bleach per gallon of water to kill the parasite.
- ➔ Don't transport live fish between water bodies. This practice could spread the disease and is strictly illegal.
- ➔ Don't dispose of fish heads, skeletons, or entrails in any water body. Fish parts should be disposed of in the garbage or by total burning.
- ➔ If you observe symptoms of whirling disease in fish or observe illegal stocking, contact your regional G&F office.

The North Platte - Cardwell

If you fished Cardwell in 2007, you may have noticed some boxes containing cards for anglers to fill out (no doubt you filled one out). These cards were designed so we could gauge angler catch rates, harvest rates and overall satisfaction with the fishery. We received quite a few cards in March, April and May, but card returns tapered off along with fishing pressure once the water became cloudy. When data from March – May is pooled, 77 anglers reported good fishing with an average catch rate of



Casper fisheries biologist, Matt Hahn, with rainbow from Cardwell

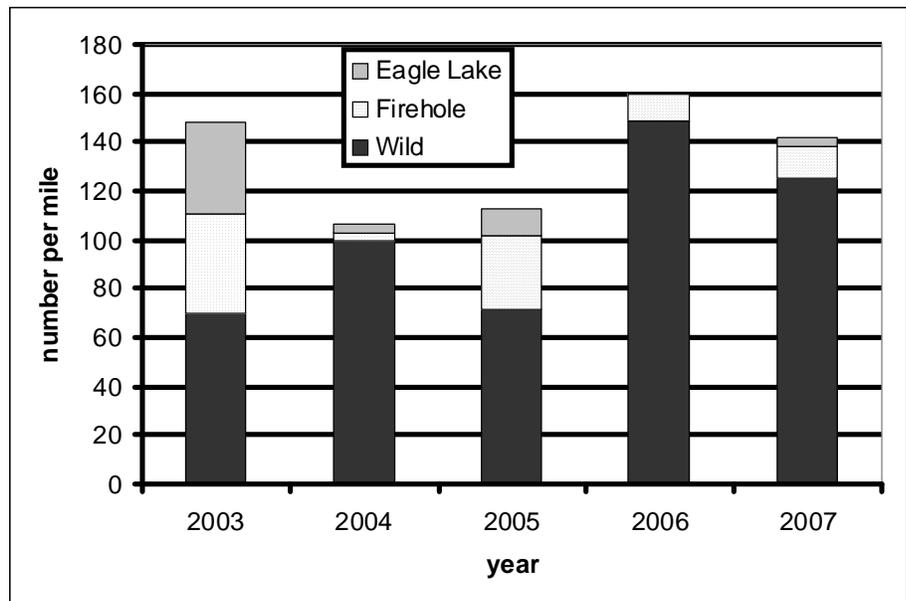
0.85 fish per hour (catch rates of 0.5 fish per hour are considered good). While some anglers got skunked, others reported catch rates as high as 4 fish per hour. Average catch rates were highest in May (1.3 fish per hour) and lowest June – August (0.2 fish per hour). Anglers released 97% of the trout captured. On average, anglers reported being only slightly satisfied with the number of fish caught, but were very satisfied with the size of fish caught.

Annual population estimates conducted since 2003, show the trout population in this reach has ranged from 120 – 160 trout per mile. We have been conducting a rainbow trout stocking and strain evaluation to determine which strain of rainbow trout, the Eagle Lake strain, or the Firehole strain, is best suited for this particular water. After 5 years of data collection, it seems that neither strain is contributing much to the overall fishery. We have been stocking at an annual rate of over 500 fish per mile, but electrofishing surveys show only about 20 rainbow trout per mile that are of hatch-

ery origin, the rest are wild fish.

While the bulk of the trout population is composed of wild fish, spawning habitat is limited on this reach. Trout need gravel in the 1-4 inch diameter range to successfully spawn. Gravel of this size is very sparse at Cardwell as the bulk of the stream bottom is composed of cobble and boulder size rocks. In order to increase the amount of suitable spawning gravel and increase production of

wild trout, we will be supplementing the river with gravel this coming year. We will be adding enough 2 to 3 inch gravel to more than quadruple the amount of spawning habitat, and hopefully lead to more fish available to anglers.

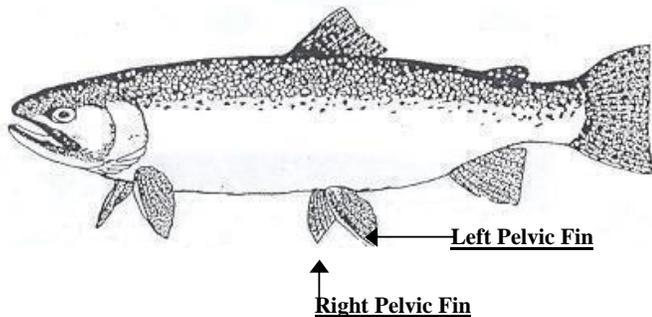


Total number of rainbow trout per mile and number of wild, stocked Firehole and stocked Eagle Lake rainbows per mile in the Cardwell reach.

The North Platte— The Miracle Mile

Anglers Asked to Assist with Rainbow Trout Strain Evaluation on the Miracle Mile

We are currently involved in a study to evaluate the growth, survival, and return to anglers of two different strains of rainbow trout. The first strain is from Eagle Lake in California (ELR), and the second strain is from the Firehole River in Yellowstone National Park (FHR). From 2005 – 2008, we will fin clip 40,000 of each strain in the summer before stocking. All ELR will receive a right pelvic fin clip, and all FHR will receive a left pelvic fin clip (see figure below). Success of each strain will be determined through population estimates and creel surveys.



We are asking anglers for help with our strain evaluation. During 2008 and 2009, we will be conducting creel surveys at the Miracle Mile to try to determine which strain of rainbow trout anglers catch more often. Creel clerks will be present to interview anglers and pass out creel cards. If approached by a creel clerk, please take a few minutes to answer questions and fill out a creel card when you are done fishing. As you are fishing, pay particular attention to fin clips on rainbow trout and record how many rainbow trout you catch with each kind of fin clip on a creel card. Your cooperation is important to the success of this study and improvement of the Miracle Mile fishery.

New Access on the North Platte

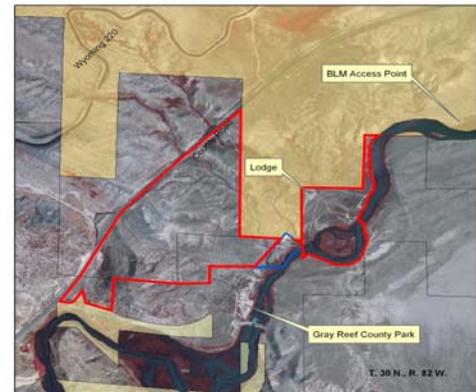


Exhibit A



On August 10, 2007 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) dedicated their newest land acquisition on the North Platte River. The project was a collaborative project between the landowner, Mr. Bret Van Rensselaer, the Conservation Fund, Wyoming FlyCasters, BLM and WGFD. The Van Rensselaer Property provides public access to 1.3 miles of stream bank fishing opportunity just below Gray Reef Dam. This is some of the most desirable water to fish on the Gray Reef reach of river.

We are working closely with the BLM to develop a recreation management plan that will provide resource protection and access development on the North Platte River between Gray Reef Reservoir and Casper. This property is an important and unique opportunity to provide protection for crucial habitats while increasing public access for wildlife related activities. We will be working with the BLM to develop an interpretative area for fish spawning on riffle habitats used by rainbow and brown trout.

If you go, please be aware of the special fishing regulation. The creel limit on trout is one per day or in possession and all trout less than 20 inches must be released immediately. Fishing is only permitted with artificial flies and lures. We are also attempting something brand new in Wyoming. A small portion of the river (between the cable crossings) is closed to fishing during the month of April. In the near future we will be working with the BLM and Wyoming FlyCasters to develop an interpretative area providing information about trout spawning and an area where people can watch fish spawn.

The North Platte—Angler Etiquette

The Intermountain West is booming, and Wyoming is fast becoming the premier hunting and fishing destination for crowd-weary sportsmen from Colorado and Utah. This is good for our economy, but it's creating a new, unfamiliar challenge on some of our most popular and productive rivers and reservoirs: crowds, at least by Wyoming standards. This is especially true on the weekends, and while the fish are still thriving, courtesy and ethics are not.

We are seeing more and more fishermen on the North Platte and hearing more and more complaints about bad behavior. This is big country with big waters and there are plenty of fish for everyone, but some people see it as a competition. Some even purposely sabotage other people's fishing and move into the holes while people are still fishing.

While it's easy to blame outsiders for all these ills, frustrated resident anglers are just as guilty. When you are fishing locally, it's easy to presume you have some sort of proprietary right over nonresidents on the water. You don't. Only the landowner does.

So no matter what the color of your license plate, all anglers need to pay more attention to etiquette and politeness as fishing pressure increases. Consider these suggestions:

1. Floating or wading—it's first come, first serve.
2. If you come across a stationary angler, leave the water and quietly walk around him or her.
3. Don't crowd. If you are interfering with another angler's ability to fish, you are too close. Some even feel if you can see another angler, you are too close.
4. Boat anglers should give shore anglers a wide berth. They have more flexibility. Boat anglers should even stop fishing while passing a shore angler.
5. Always yield to an angler fighting a fish.
6. Do not move in front of someone already in the water.
7. Know the property boundaries and respect private property.
8. Do not litter.
9. Get your boat and trailer ready before you launch to avoid crowding at ramps.

All anglers share some common traits. We all enjoy the solitude. Consider treating every angler you encounter with the same respect you would afford your best fishing buddy, friend or companion.



Warm Water and Catch-and-Release

We are optimistic with the snow pack this winter that drought conditions may be moderated some this season. However, recovery from the drought will require several years of above average snow pack. In addition to less snow the past several years, we are seeing temperatures warm sooner in the spring causing runoff to occur earlier. Early runoff results in lower summer stream flow and causes warmer water. Low flow and warmer water have us very concerned about problems for trout.

As the water levels drop, the temperature rises. Cool and warm water species such as walleye or bass can generally tolerate the harsher conditions -- but warm water is a real threat to trout and other coldwater species. Trout experience significant mortality at prolonged exposure to water temperatures greater than 75 degrees Fahrenheit and brief exposure to temperatures over 80 degrees is lethal. Trout also become stressed quicker in warmer water, because the water holds less oxygen, which greatly hampers a fish's ability to recover from the rigors of being caught. Catching and releasing a trout in 40-degree water is not a problem if done correctly. However, as water temperature approaches 70 degrees the chance trout have to survive being caught and released is greatly reduced.

We urge anglers to be aware of the water temperature and change fishing techniques with changing conditions. Water temperature is particularly important for anglers practicing catch and release or where our regulations require fish to be released.

We ask catch-and-release anglers to consider the following during the dog days of summer:

- Fish early in the morning while water temperature is cooler.
- Carry a pocket thermometer and monitor the water temperature.
- If the water temperature is at or above 65 degrees, consider keeping what you catch within the regulations, if 70 degrees or higher, do not attempt to catch and release trout.
- As water temperature increases, using the proper techniques to catch and release a fish become increasingly important to help the fish survive:
 - Play and land fish as rapidly as possible to reduce exhaustion stress.
 - Keep the fish in the water as much as possible.
 - Do not squeeze the fish or place fingers in the gills.
 - Remove the hook gently. If hooked deeply, cut the leader.
 - Flies and lures are recommended whenever many fish are being caught and released.
 - Barbless hooks allow easier hook removal.
 - If a fish is exhausted and cannot hold itself upright, and if regulations allow, consider having it for supper because the fish has a poor chance of surviving.

These are not new regulations, just recommendations to assist with the conservation of the fishery resource. If water temperatures are high, perhaps try fishing for a different fish species or escape the heat with a trip to the high country.



Catch-and-release can be hard on trout in warm water conditions

Pathfinder Reservoir

Trout

After years of decline some positive signs were observed for the Pathfinder Reservoir rainbow trout fishery. Rainbow trout numbers increased in 2007 after a significant decline was observed from 2004 to 2006 (Figure 1). Additionally, rainbow trout size structure decreased in Pathfinder from 2006 to 2007 after increasing every year since 2002 (Figure 2). The increasing size structure from 2002 to 2006 along with the decreasing numbers from 2004 to 2006 indicated that fish stocked into Pathfinder were not surviving and that the population was made up of older individuals.

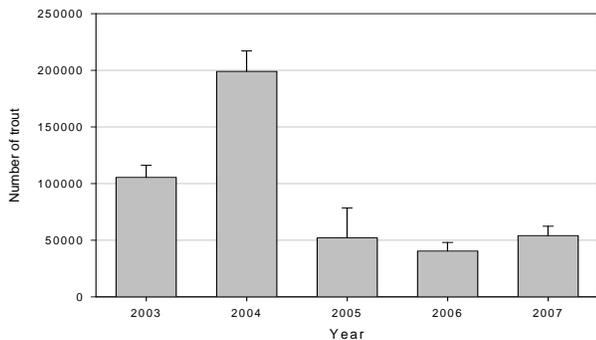


Figure 1. Hydroacoustic population estimates for rainbow trout in Pathfinder Reservoir, 2003-2007. Error bars represent 90% confidence intervals.

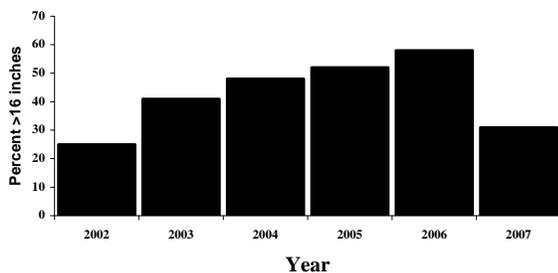


Figure 2. Percentage of rainbow trout over 16 inches in Pathfinder Reservoir spring gill nets from 2002 - 2007.

The decline in rainbow trout numbers and increase in size structure observed in previous years coincided with decreases in reservoir water levels and size of stocked trout. The current drought caused water levels in Pathfinder to decrease, and renovations to our hatcheries left us unable to grow fish as large as we normally would before stocking. Normally, we stock 9-inch trout in reservoirs that contain walleye such as Pathfinder. However, in 2004 and 2005 we

were only able to stock 7-inch trout, which walleye can eat.

While we cannot do anything about the drought and decreasing reservoir water levels, we were able to stock larger trout in 2006. Increasing numbers and a decreasing size structure of rainbow trout from 2006 to 2007 are evidence that stocking larger fish was beneficial to the Pathfinder Reservoir fishery.

Walleye

Gillnet catch rates suggest walleye numbers have increased in Pathfinder Reservoir over the last few years (Figure 3). Most of the walleye in Pathfinder Reservoir in 2007 were between 10 and 16 inches. Relative weight (a measure of how fat a fish is) of Pathfinder walleye decreased from 2006 to 2007. The decrease in relative weight may have been the result of decreasing the available food supply for walleye by stocking larger rainbow trout.

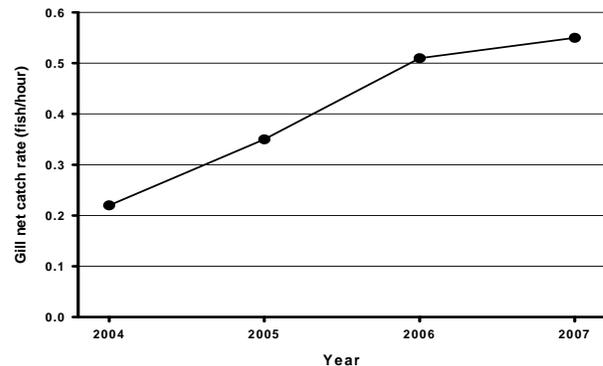


Figure 3. Gill net catch rate (number of fish captured per hour) for walleye in Pathfinder Reservoir from 2004 - 2007.



10+ pound Pathfinder walleye

Seminole Reservoir

The fishery in Seminole Reservoir is doing well despite continued drought and record low water levels. Our annual gillnet surveys show the trout population is down slightly from historic averages, but is still maintaining a favorable size distribution with rainbows averaging 14 inches and 1.2 pounds. Twenty five percent of the rainbows in Seminole are larger than 16 inches with some individuals in the three pound range. We stocked 122,500 rainbow trout in September 2007, an increase of 10,000 fish over what was stocked in 2006. Trout anglers fishing Seminole this spring should see higher catch rates than the previous 3 years. While brown trout are not nearly as numerous as rainbows, they do get considerably larger with fish up to 25 inches and 7.5 pounds captured in nets.

The walleye population has been showing signs of adjusting to the reduction in creel limit that went into effect January 1, 2002. Because walleye grow so slow in Seminole (it takes 5 years to grow a 15 inch walleye) anglers are now starting to see more 15-18 inch fish in the creel. And of course, Seminole remains one of the best places in the state to catch trophy walleye in the 10-15 pound range.



Walleye from Seminole



Brown trout from Seminole

VERY IMPORTANT

STREAM ACCESS AND TRESPASS

Wyoming's trespass law states that a member of the public has the privilege to enter private land only with the explicit permission of the landowner.

It is legal to float through private land but it is the responsibility of the floater to know if the land is public or private. If you are floating through private land you must stay in your boat at all times unless permission has been obtained from the landowner.

State law only allows you to leave your craft for short portages around non-navigable obstacles. The streambed is the property of the landowner. Wading or anchoring without permission is trespassing.

Access to public lands for public use is only permitted if these lands are accessible from an existing public road or border other public lands where you can access the state lands without crossing private lands. If you are unsure, check with the land management agency responsible for the land in question (BLM, USFS, State of Wyoming, etc.).

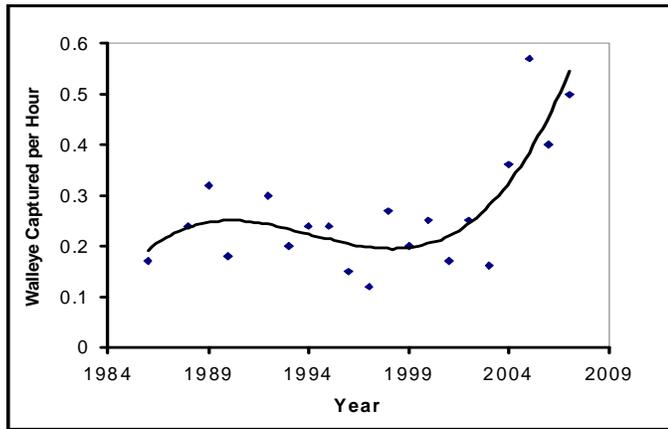
Public land maps, available from the Bureau of Land Management, are excellent guides for avoiding a **\$210 trespassing ticket**.

In all cases, respect the land, the landowner, and those who come after you by removing litter and minimizing evidence of your presence and the evidence of others who have not been so considerate.

Treating your access as a privilege goes a long way in gaining more access for fishing and hunting in Wyoming.

Alcova Reservoir

Ask any angler familiar with Alcova Reservoir about fishing out there, and trout invariably comes up. And for good reason too. Alcova has always been managed to provide a fast, family oriented rainbow trout fishery that is stocked with 95,000 9-inch rainbow trout each fall. However, in recent years, the walleye population in Alcova has been increasing at a rapid rate. In fact, the population of walleye in Alcova Reservoir currently rivals other well known Wyoming walleye lakes, but receives a fraction of the walleye angler's attention.



Alcova walleye population trend from 1985 - 2007.

Walleye first found their way into Alcova Reservoir in 1984 and 1985 when Pathfinder Reservoir (which had an established walleye population) spilled. The population remained steady to slightly decreasing through the year 2000. During this time, natural reproduction was very



Ten pound Alcova walleye

low, which kept the walleye population low. As a result, the reservoir received little attention from walleye anglers. Starting in 2000, biologists started catching more and more young walleye in annual samples, indicating reproduction was on the rise. This trend has continued through 2007.

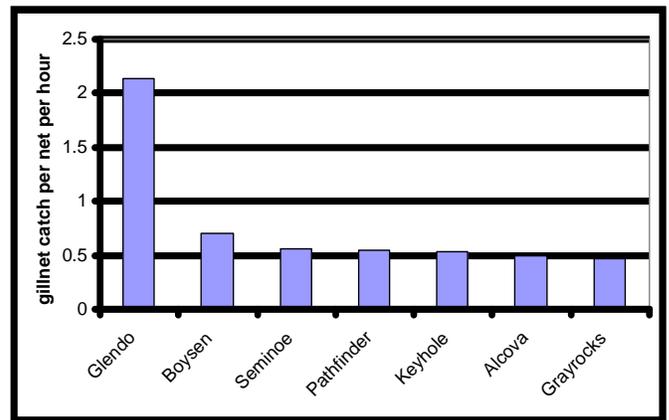
When Alcova is compared with other walleye reservoirs, it is similar in terms of numbers and is a little better in terms of average size. For instance, walleye abundance (measured as the average

number of walleye caught per gillnet per hour) is statistically similar to Seminoe, Pathfinder, Boysen and Keyhole Reservoirs. In terms of size, Alcova had the second highest percentage of fish 20 inches or larger and the highest percentage of fish greater than 25 inches. In fact, the percentage of fish greater than 20 inches in Alcova is nearly 4 times higher than Glendo.

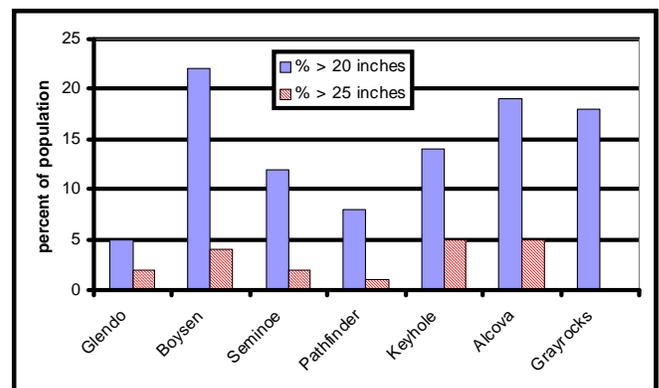


Eight pound Alcova walleye

So the next time you are hooking up your boat, consider giving Alcova a try for walleye. There will be a lot of 13-18 inch fish available this year, as well as the chance for a 10 pound fish.



Gillnet catch rates for walleye from various Wyoming reservoirs.



Percent of walleye population that is larger than 20 inches and larger than 25 inches in length from various Wyoming reservoirs.

Dan Speas Rearing Station Closed for Construction

Due to public safety concerns the popular Speas Rearing Station, which hosts thousands of visitors each year, is now closed to public visitation while construction work is underway. The facility and grounds will remain closed until projects are completed sometime in 2009. Speas is located about 10 miles west of Casper.

The construction is part of an ongoing project to increase the number of fish the facility can raise. Potential hazards to the public warrant the closure. We regret that Speas will not be open for public tours during this phase of the construction. It's a matter of public safety. There will be a lot of large equipment and other hazards that could pose dangers and public safety is our utmost concern.

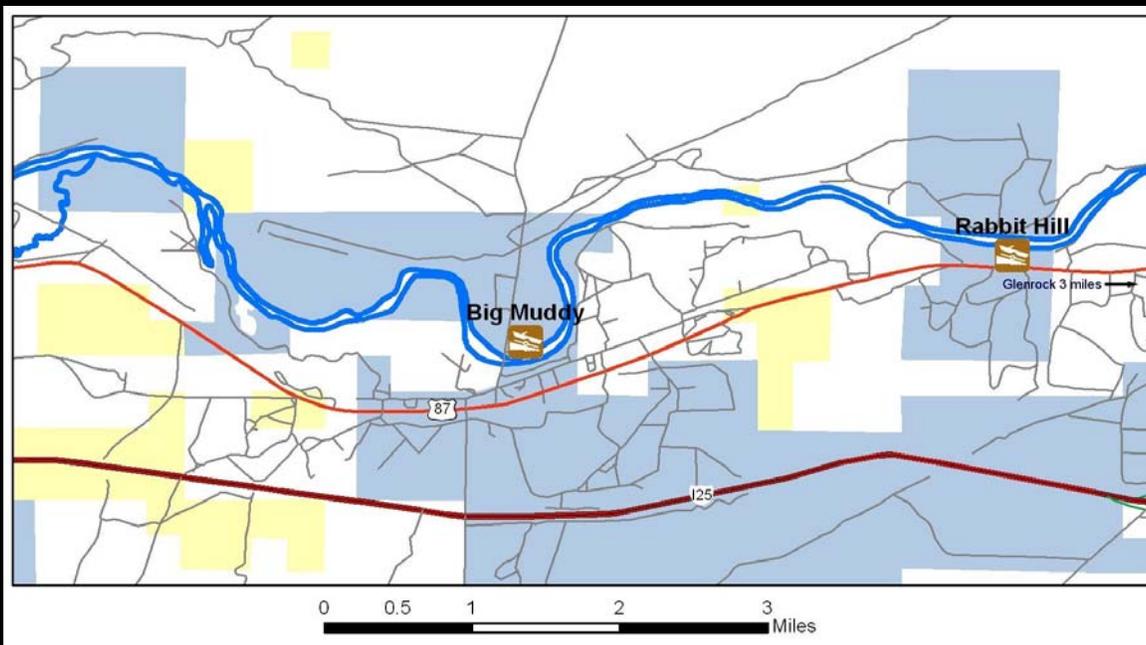
Speas remained open the past several months during construction of some of the smaller components of the project, such as installation of a degassing tower that will remove excess nitrogen gas and inject oxygen into the water as it enters the rearing tanks. The next phase of construction is the expansion phase, which includes installa-



New degassing tower at Speas Rearing Station

Access on the North Platte

State land located in Converse County provided the only access to the 27-mile reach of the North Platte River between Edness K. Wilkins State Park and the Dave Johnston Power Plant Float Access. This reach was the longest reach of the North Platte's Gray Reef (Gray Reef Dam to the Dam at Dave Johnston Power Plant) trout fishery lacking permanent public float access.



We are happy to report that our development of Big Muddy Bridge (S9, T33N, R76W) and Rabbit Hill (S1, T33N, R76W and S36, T34N, R76W) float access areas are nearly complete. These new float access areas will greatly improve float access opportunities on the North Platte River between Casper and Glenrock. From Casper take U.S. 26/20 or 87 east about 16 miles to Converse County Road 22 to get to Big Muddy Bridge. Continuing east a little more than 3 miles will get you to Rabbit Hill. All that remains for completion is the paved approach from the highway to Rabbit Hill. Anglers now have float opportunities of 14, 4 or 9 miles.

Speas continued...

tion of eight large circular tanks that will have the potential to produce two crops of 7-9" trout per year at about 360,000 fish per crop. The project also includes a large complex of 36 smaller circulars, renovating the existing raceways, and buildings to cover all the new rearing areas to protect from predators and possible fish disease introductions.



Future location of circular rearing tanks

The expansion phase also includes a new well tied to a planned hatchery via a pipeline and providing colder water (54 degrees Fahrenheit) that will allow Speas to once again function as a hatchery and not just a rearing station. Speas has not been an actual hatchery to hatch eggs and raise small fish since the early 1990s, relying on other state hatcheries to raise fish to a small size for their production. Effluent treatment ponds will round out the project and help remove fish waste from the facility to meet water quality requirements. Once the expansion phase is complete, a final phase of construction will involve installation of support buildings, feed bins, and the infrastructure for self-guided tours.

The improvements should allow the facility to triple its present production. We'll be able to increase production from the current level of 100,000 pounds of fish annually, to a capacity of over 300,000 pounds of fish per year. This will provide more fish for stocking in Casper Region reservoirs and free up other hatchery facilities to meet the demands for fish in other parts of the state.

The Wyoming State Legislature provided the funding necessary for the project. The Department is extremely grateful to the 2004 and 2006 Legislatures for providing funding to do a complete renovation of Speas. Without their support this project would not have happened.

Support of the neighboring Bar-S Ranch allowed much of the work to protect Speas from fish disease and provided the opportunity to develop a hatchery building. Brian and Susan Hunter, owners of Bar S Ranch, have been very accommodating and quite generous throughout this entire process by permitting drilling for the well on their property, allowing

Game and Fish to cover the spring, and providing an easement to get the water to the facility.

The new Speas Hatchery will greatly increase our fish production and allow other hatcheries to expand their operations to meet diverse stocking needs statewide. The new rearing units and grounds will also provide even more opportunities for the public to see how fish are raised from eggs to large fish in a modern visitor friendly environment.



Pipe placement for future circular rearing tanks

Glendo Reservoir

Walleye

Glendo Reservoir provided excellent walleye fishing for anglers in 2007. Results from a creel survey conducted in June of 2007 showed that walleye anglers were catching 0.82 walleye per hour of fishing time, which is an outstanding catch rate. This was the second-highest catch rate observed since the June creel survey began in 2000 (Table 1). Fish harvested by anglers during the June creel survey averaged 15.3 inches, which was the smallest average length observed since 2000.

Year	Walleye catch rate	Average walleye length
2007	0.82	15.3
2004	0.37	16.2
2003	0.39	16.9
2002	0.83	15.5
2001	0.63	16.3
2000	0.74	16.7

Table 1. Walleye catch rate and mean length of harvested walleye by year for June creel surveys conducted at Glendo Reservoir.

We still have walleye over 10 years old in Glendo, but in 2007 most of the walleye were young. One to three year old walleye made up 78% of the population in 2007. However, walleye grow fast in Glendo, so even young fish provide fishing opportunity. Generally, age-1 walleye are 10-12 inches, age-2 walleye are 13-15 inches, and age-3



Eight pound Glendo walleye

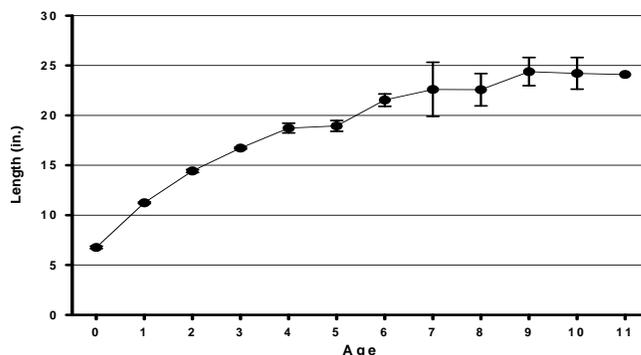


Figure 1. Average length-at-age of walleye in Glendo Reservoir in August 2007. Error bars represent 90% confidence intervals.

walleye are 16-18 inches in Glendo by August (Figure 1). Take a close look at Figure 1. Note that Glendo walleye grow throughout their entire life; however, they grow faster during their first five or six years of life than they do during their later years. Although most of the walleye in Glendo were small and young in 2007, the high number of young fish is a great sign for the future of the Glendo walleye fishery.

Channel Catfish

Channel catfish numbers have been low in Glendo Reservoir the past few years (Figure 2). The low numbers are the result of not stocking catfish in Glendo Reservoir or the N. Platte River upstream from the reservoir from 2001 – 2004. Channel catfish were not stocked during this time period because WGFD had a concern about forage for both catfish and walleye and wanted to determine if natural recruitment could sustain the fishery. Early results indicate that natural recruitment is producing very few catfish and that stocking is needed to sustain the fishery. Stocking of catfish resumed in 2005; however, most of the fish stocked since 2005 are probably less than 15 inches. Because

Glendo Reservoir continued...

of the low number of young fish, the catfish population in Glendo is primarily made up of larger, older fish that are over 21 inches in length. So if you do catch a catfish at Glendo in 2008, chances are it will be big. Catfish captured by WGFD during 2007 sampling averaged 22 inches and 4.4 pounds!

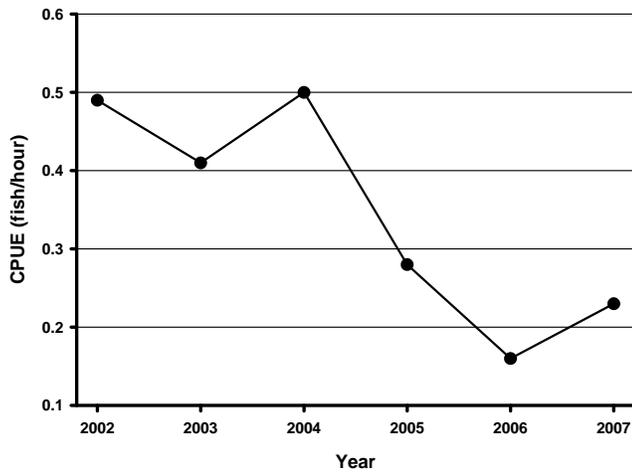


Figure 2. Catch per unit effort (CPUE) of channel catfish in Glendo Reservoir from 2002 to 2007.



Catfish anglers at Glendo Reservoir

Yellow Perch

Our gill nets showed good numbers of yellow perch in Glendo Reservoir in 2006 and 2007 (Figure 3). A large number of age-2, 6 to 8-inch YEP were captured in Glendo in 2007 (Figure 4). Hopefully these fish will grow to 8 to 9 inches and create a good yellow perch fishery in 2008.

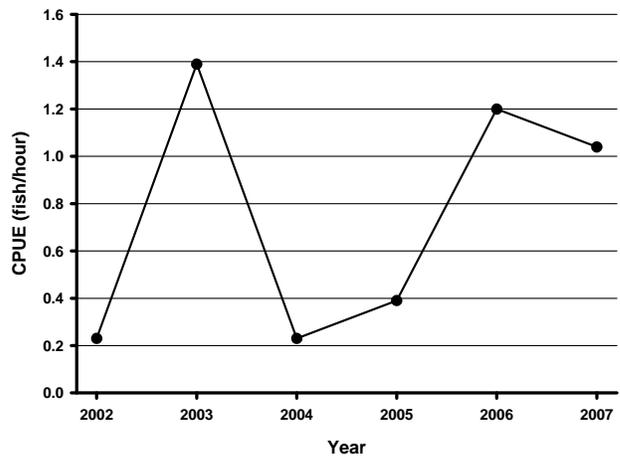


Figure 3. Catch per unit effort (CPUE) of yellow perch in Glendo Reservoir from 2002 to 2007.

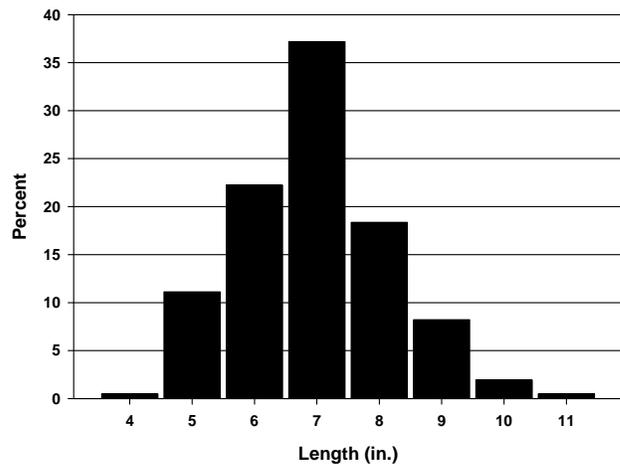


Figure 4. Length frequency of yellow perch in Glendo Reservoir in 2007.

Aquatic Nuisance Species

You may have seen the headline about a Colorado company that was fined \$100,000 for illegally transporting rusty crayfish into Wyoming. We were not kind of lucky, we were extremely lucky! We had the opportunity to get there early and control the rusty crayfish. If we had not gotten there early they would be in the North Platte River and if they had made it to the North Platte River, we could not have controlled them.

Rusty crayfish are very aggressive and prolific. If this species establishes in our waters we could potentially see a loss of our native crayfish species and severe impacts to other aquatic species. Perhaps the most serious impact from rusty

crayfish is the destruction of aquatic plant beds. Rusty crayfish have been shown to reduce aquatic plant abundance and species diversity.



Rusty Crayfish

Submerged aquatic plants

are important habitat for invertebrates (which provide food for fish and ducks), shelter for young gamefish, panfish, or forage species of fish, nesting substrate for fish, and erosion control.

To date, Game and Fish has spent \$34,424.81 of your fishing license dollars to remove the crayfish from three ponds and a portion of one stream. Additional expenses will be incurred for monitoring the site and any subsequent eradication efforts. We would much rather be using your money to improve your fishing opportunity, not attempting to clean up problems.

While we were lucky with this case, next time we probably will not fare as well. The list of potential threats to our fisheries from exotic species is long and unfortunately these species are moving closer to your favorite waters. Zebra mussels were found at Pueblo Reservoir in Colorado, and quagga mussels are drifting down the Colorado River from Lake Mead. We encourage you to read a little



Zebra mussel

about these species. There is a great deal of information on the web about the problems and the attempt to stop the spread. A couple of good sites are <http://www.100thmeridian.org> and <http://protectyourwaters.net>.

When it comes to your fishing opportunity, there is nothing positive about these species except they are not in Wyoming.

The key to preventing the spread of exotic species – do not move them to new waters. While the concept is simple, insuring we are not moving an



Quagga Mussel

animal or plant to a new location is not as easy. Mud on waders may contain spores that cause whirling disease. Zebra mussels can survive out of water for 30 days if it is cool and moist. A little water in the live well of a boat provides ideal conditions to keep them alive until the boat is back on the water.

So far no one has found the silver bullet to control aquatic nuisance species. The answer appears to be everyone doing small thing to prevent the spread of these species. You will be seeing more about the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers program in the future. Fortunately the precautions to stop one aquatic nuisance species are effective for all species and the procedures are simple. It is all about cleaning and drying our gear so we do not move these species. Note the recommendations listed under the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers logo on the next page. Following these recommendations will prevent exotic species from being moved to new locations.

Aquatic Nuisance Species continued...

We strongly encourage you to take the test to get a copy of the on-line certificate listed below. Getting the certificate requires answering a few simple questions. By taking the test and displaying the certificate you demonstrate you are concerned and have an understanding of the problems. Get a copy of the certificate and show it to your friends; ask them to do the same. We all need to become part of the solution, not part of the problem.



On-Line Certificate:

If you are a boater, angler, or aquatic recreational user, then you can benefit from our short, on-line educational training designed to teach you four simple steps that you can follow to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! This training will only take a few minutes and at the end you will get a certificate that you can show authorities to demonstrate that you are doing your part.

On-line training:

<http://100thmeridian.org/>



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.

www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.

Wyoming Game and Fish
Department



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The Casper Region Fisheries Management Crew is composed of three full-time biologists: Al Conder, regional fisheries supervisor; Matt Hahn and Paul Gerrity, regional fisheries biologists. Geoff Klein is the region's aquatic habitat biologist.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
HTTP://GF.STATE.WY.US/

Many Thanks to Newsletter Contributors:
Al Conder, Paul Gerrity, Matt Hahn, Robin Kepple, Janet Milek, and Chris Saunders.

"Conserving Wildlife — Serving People"



"takemefishing"™

Take me fishing.
You can think about work later.

Take me fishing.
And show me that worms really aren't that icky.

Take me fishing.
Because I get the giggles when the boat bounces.

Take me fishing.
Because my wedding will be sooner than you think.

Wyoming's FREE fishing day!
Saturday, June 7, 2008 | Saturday, June 6, 2009



"Conserving Wildlife - Serving People"