

2005 Edition

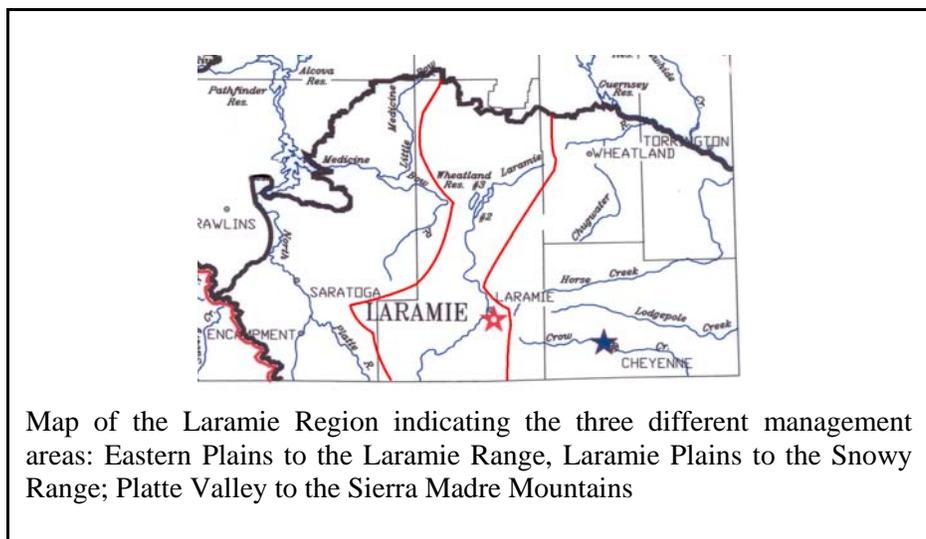


"Conserving Wildlife—Serving People"

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The Laramie Region



Fisheries and Fishing Outlook for 2005

Special points of interest:

- Wyoming's Free Fishing day is Saturday June 4, 2005!
- What fish are found in the Laramie Region?
- Summary of last year's activities
- What waters are going to be surveyed this year?
- Interested in volunteering to help our fisheries management crew?

Overall, the fishing forecast for 2005 looks much the same as 2004, with drought conditions impacting many fisheries around the region. As of April 25, the snowpack around the region varied from 73% to 84%. This will likely mean many of the popular lakes will not gain much in water elevation. Even with low water, boats can still be launched on all waters except Wheatland Reservoir #3.

The eastern plains are known for warmwater fishing opportunities. Grayrocks Reservoir has abundant walleye, catfish, smallmouth bass plus freshwater drum and black crappie. Rock Lake and Wheatland Reservoir #1 have catfish and walleye. Festo has catfish and the only tiger muskies in the region. While there is little water in the Laramie

Range, brook trout fishing can be good in small streams.

The Laramie plains lakes have a well-deserved reputation for growing nice trout. Most lakes have excellent rainbow trout fishing, while there are Bear River cutthroats in Wheatland Reservoir #3 and East Allen. The Snowy Range has many streams with brook trout as well as really good brook, cutthroat and rainbow lakes.

The Platte River valley has one of the best-fishing waters in the country, the North Platte River. In addition to river fishing, Saratoga Lake, just north of Saratoga, has a healthy population of rainbow trout. The Sierra Madres are known for good fishing, especially along the Encampment River.

Eastern Plains and Laramie Range

EASTERN PLAINS



WHAT IS A FRESHWATER DRUM?

Freshwater drum is a species that is closely related to several popular saltwater fish including redfish, spotted sea trout and kingfish. They are a bottom oriented predator species that feed mostly on other fish. While they are a lesser known or sought after game fish, they are said to rival walleye as table fare. In the Laramie region they are found in Grayrocks Reservoir.

Hawk Springs Reservoir

Our September netting showed the walleye population is still going strong despite continued low water levels. Walleye in our nets averaged 17 inches and 1.6 pounds. Despite the dense population, walleye in this lake are notoriously difficult to catch, likely due to the murky water. In addition to walleye, this lake produces nice catfish that average 19 inches and 2.4 pounds, with individuals exceeding 10 pounds. The crappie fishing can be excellent in the spring for fish averaging 0.6 pounds.

Grayrocks Reservoir

The low lake level appears to be influencing angler success at Grayrocks. Based on catch data collected during a June roadblock in 2004, catch rate for walleye was 0.26 fish per hour,

down from a ten year average of 0.45 fish per hour. The lower catch rate appears to be due to anglers' favorite spots being high and dry. Netting data shows a healthy population of game fish with walleye averaging 17.4 inches and 2 pounds. Channel catfish continue to prosper, averaging 19 inches and 2.5 pounds. The main boat ramp is still in use, but use extreme caution on this water as many submerged hazards exist with the low lake level.



Grayrocks walleye

Wheatland Reservoir #1

This reservoir offers excellent catfish and fair walleye fishing. June netting showed catfish averaging 17.5 inches and 1.6 pounds. Walleye averaged 16.1 inches and 1.5 pounds. Productivity of this lake is limited due to highly fluctuating water levels. Currently, fish grow very slow due to a lack of forage, or food. Age and growth data collected from catfish showed they only grow 1 to 2 inches per year. We hope to improve growth of catfish and walleye by stocking gizzard shad, a forage fish, this summer.



Wheatland #1 catfish

LARAMIE RANGE

Granite and Crystal Reservoirs

These lakes, located in Curt Gowdy State Park, offer fast action for smaller rainbow trout and the opportunity for a trophy brown. These waters are managed as catchable fisheries, stocked with 8 to 10 inch rainbow trout. These



Granite Reservoir brown

lakes also host a healthy population of yellow perch. While most of the perch are small, we routinely sample perch in the 0.5 pound range. The abundant perch population has provided a forage base that is allowing brown trout to grow to impressive sizes.

We captured a 12 pound brown in a gill-net set in 2003. In addition, we hear the odd tale of 10 pound plus browns being caught. In an effort to keep the perch population in check and provide a trophy component to these fisheries, we have begun stocking limited numbers of fingerling browns.

Johnson Creek Reservoir

This little known reservoir located in Sybille Canyon is managed as a catchable rainbow trout fishery. While most of the fish are not big, the action is fast, making this a great lake to introduce a youngster to the sport.

Lower North Crow Reservoir

This water was sampled in early June. The bulk of the catch was made up of rainbows in the 8 to 10 inch range. We captured some very impressive brown trout that tipped the scales at 6.1 pounds.

Middle Crow Creek

We sampled this stream in September and found the population to be doing very well. Our estimates showed 1,250 browns and 250 rainbows per mile. While most of the fish were average for this size stream (7 to 9 inches) we captured several browns in the 16 inch range. A remote creel box erected near the walk-in access area showed anglers enjoyed a respectable catch rate of 2 fish per hour. Interestingly, though not surprising, the catch rate for rainbows was double that for browns, even though browns make up 80% of the population.



Middle Crow Creek brown

North Crow Reservoir

Netting last April revealed rainbow trout and grayling are not growing to their full potential. Rainbow averaged 8.1 inches while grayling averaged 9.7 inches, with neither species exceeding 12 inches. The likely culprit is a dense population of longnose suckers, which compete for food with rainbow and grayling. Splake

were stocked in 1999 and 2002 to determine if they would feed on suckers. Our netting showed splake are in fact taking advantage of the abundant sucker population and the 1999 year-class have grown to 20 inches and 4 pounds. However, the suckers are far too numerous for the splake to adequately reduce numbers. In an effort to further reduce the sucker population and boost rainbow and grayling size, we plan to initiate a trapping program in April 2005. We will use trap nets to capture large numbers of suckers before they spawn in the spring. In addition, we will resume stocking splake annually. Through this management action, we hope to reduce the number of spawning adult suckers, while boosting splake numbers to a point where predation reaches a balance with recruitment. Do not expect immediate results though, it will likely take several years until the effects are noticeable.



SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO FISH FOR...

Tiger Musky are a hybrid between a muskellunge and a northern pike. Because they are sterile, fisheries managers can control their numbers making them an ideal predator species to control stunted panfish populations. In the Laramie region, they can be found in Festo Lake near Wheatland. Currently, we stock 500 small tiger musky every other year in Festo Lake to control bluegill and pumpkinseed populations. We have received reports of fish in excess of 40 inches being caught. If you plan on fishing for tiger musky remember all fish under 30 inches in length must be released.

What are Trap Nets?

Trap nets are basically very big minnow traps. They consist of a lead, or a long panel of netting usually 50 feet long and four feet high, that is connected to a large trap. Fish swimming along the shoreline are blocked by the lead. They swim down the lead and end up in the trap, where funnels prevent them from escaping. The advantage to trap nets is that fish can be captured without harm. A disadvantage is that they are only effective in shallow water and require fish to be cruising the shoreline.

Surveys planned for 2005

This summer we plan on doing considerable work to evaluate the largemouth bass fisheries in the eastern plains. We plan on sampling bass in Packers, Rock, Festo, Sloans and Absoraka lakes in an effort to better understand the population dynamics and size structure of these populations. We also plan to sample streams in the Laramie Peak area to evaluate the status of wild brook trout populations. We will continue our annual monitoring of Grayrocks and Hawk Springs Reservoirs.

Laramie Plains and Snowy Range



Grass carp are used to control aquatic vegetation in Meeboer and Gelatt lakes. Like their relatives, the common carp, they are an exotic species native to Asia. However, to prevent the spread of grass carp, the WGFD imports only sterile individuals (known as triploids) that will not reproduce. These fish are expensive, as sterility must be confirmed from each fish before being brought into the state. It is important that any grass carp caught by anglers be returned to the water unharmed. Grass carp can be distinguished from common carp by their elongated body and absence of serrated spines on the dorsal and anal fins.

LARAMIE PLAINS LAKES

Gelatt Lake

Netting in April 2004 showed fish in this lake are doing exceptionally well. Rainbows were averaging 20.5 inches and 4.3 pounds.



Gelatt Lake rainbow

Creel checks in March 2005 verified over-winter survival as anglers were catching a few large fish at ice-out. This lake is periodically stocked with sterile grass carp, which feed on aquatic vegetation and reduce the risk of winterkill. If you happen to catch a grass carp, we urge you to release it, as these fish are very beneficial to the lake.

East Allen Lake

Spring netting revealed a healthy population of Bear River cutthroat and rainbows. Cutthroat are averaging 14.5 inches with some individuals exceeding 3.5 pounds. Rainbow do not grow as big as cutthroat in this water, but we sampled some rainbows in the 2 pound range. While the water level is down, you can still launch a boat off the ramp.

Lake Hattie

The fish population is doing well, despite the low water level. May sampling showed average lengths for fish as follows: rainbow, 17.4 inches; brown, 19.2 inches; perch, 7.1 inches; kokanee, 15.3 inches. The perch population appears to be on the rise as numbers in our nets were up for the third consecutive year. Some perch are getting quite large and are exceeding 1 pound. Last fall, we were able to obtain some brood cull lake trout, which we stocked in Hattie. These fish ranged from 4 pounds to nearly 20 pounds. Ice angler creel checks showed people were catching good numbers of these fish.

Meeboer Lake

Ice anglers had great success this past year at Meeboer. Angler checks showed people catching a lot of 16 inch fish with the occasional 20 inch fish. Last fall we stocked several thousand Bear River cutthroat to evaluate their performance in this water. They should be running about 10 to 12 inches this summer, and ice-out reports show they are eager to hit a fly.

Muddy Creek Reservoir

Spring netting showed a healthy population of rainbows averaging 15 inches and 1.5 pounds. We plan on putting up a remote creel box to gauge catch and harvest rates in 2005.

<i>Species of fish found in the Laramie Plains Lakes</i>							
	Rainbow	Brown	Cutthroat	Brook Trout	Lake Trout	Perch	Walleye
Hattie	X	X			X	X	
Twin Buttes	X	X				X	
Meeboer	X		X				
Gelatt	X		X				
Leazenby	X		X	X			
East Allen	X		X				
Wheatland #3	X	X	X				X



*An average
Twin Buttes brown*

Twin Buttes Reservoir

This lake has a well deserved reputation for consistently yielding nice fish. Spring netting showed average size of rainbows was 18.6 inches and 2.6 pounds. The browns are running a bit larger with an average size of 19.0 inches and 2.7 pounds.

The lake level is low right now with the water's edge 23 feet beyond the bottom of the boat ramp. If you plan on using a boat this summer, launch with caution as you could easily get your vehicle stuck if you back out too far.

Walker Jenkins Lake

A remote creel box operated during the summer of 2004 showed anglers had good success, with a reported catch rate of 3 fish per hour. The limited productivity of this deep, clear lake prevents fish from attaining large sizes. The average rainbow measured 12 inches.

Wheatland Reservoir #3

The water level at this lake is at a critical low. The lake is low enough that winterkill is a threat, however a mild winter prevented a die-off with oxygen measurements taken in late February showing suitable oxygen levels. Continued drought may result in the loss of this fishery. Creel checks show that while the fishing is slow, the wait can be well worth it, with five pound fish being common.

SNOWY RANGE

Rob Roy Reservoir

This lake was netted in July. Rainbows averaged 13.6 inches, browns averaged 13.6 inches and splake averaged 11.9 inches. Most fish were captured in floating nets set mid-lake. This phenomenon was further backed up through creel data collected last summer, where boat anglers experienced better fishing than did shore anglers. In an effort to boost shore angler success, we will begin stocking Bear River cutthroat in addition to rainbow as they tend to be more shore-line oriented. We will monitor the success of this management shift for several years in an effort to boost shore angler catch rates.

Lake Owen

Rainbow and brook trout both averaged 10 inches in our July sampling. Brown trout, on the other hand, averaged 17.6 inches and 2.2 pounds, pretty respectable for a high elevation water. Unfortunately, rainbow survival seems to be less than optimal as few older fish were turning up in our samples. Creel survey data shows fishing to be pretty slow with catch rates on rainbow and brook trout less than 0.25 fish per hour. We plan to further investigate this water in an effort to answer the questions of why aren't the fish growing, why aren't anglers catching them and what can we do to fix it.

Douglas Creek

We electrofished the lower end near the confluence with the North Platte River in early September. Population estimates show 580 brown and 200 rainbow per mile.

Albany South Twin Lake

Historically, this lake lacked suitable spawning gravel in the inlet and outlet streams to facilitate natural reproduction. In an effort to create spawning habitat, gravel was brought in over the snow and later placed in the stream in 1999. To gauge the success of the gravel project, all stocked fish since 2000 have been fin-clipped to identify them as hatchery fish. Last summer we evaluated the project and found it to be a resounding success with many cutthroat sampled that lacked fin-clips. In addition, clouds of newly hatched Bear River cutthroat were observed in both the inlet and outlet streams.



*A wild cutthroat from
South Twin Lake*

Libby Lake

The big news for this water was the new state record splake caught in September. The 12.74 pound fish succumbed to a dry fly. While we do not stock splake in Libby Lake, we do stock Lewis Lake with splake. This fish most likely made its way down from Lewis as a young fish and grew large feeding on long-nose suckers in Libby.

North Brush Creek and tributaries

North Brush Creek and several of its tributaries were electrofished last fall. We found abundant brook trout populations with estimates of 1,000 to 1,300 fish per mile. The average brook trout in these small streams is about 5 inches, with some growing to 10 inches.

Platte Valley and Sierra Madres

North Platte River

Population estimates were conducted at Treasure Island and Pickeroon in 2004. The population at Treasure Island is doing very well, despite several years of drought conditions.

We found 1,700 trout per mile of which 60% were browns and 40%

were rainbows. Browns averaged 12 inches with individuals up to 6 pounds. Rainbows averaged 12 inches with individuals up to 2.5 pounds in our sample. At Pickeroon, we found 460 trout per mile. Browns in this reach averaged 13 inches with fish up to 3 pounds. Rainbows averaged 12 inches with fish up to 2.5 pounds sampled.



Treasure Island brown

Encampment River

The river was sampled at the BLM Oddfellows campground, and at the mouth of Purgatory Gulch. At the Oddfellows reach, we found 800 trout per mile of which 70% were browns and 30% rainbows. Browns averaged 7 inches with the largest being 16 inches. Rainbows averaged 5 inches with 8 inches being the largest sampled. At Purgatory Gulch, we estimated 890 trout per mile most of which were browns and rainbows, but brook trout were found at this site. Browns averaged 8 inches with 16 inches being the largest fish sampled. Rainbows averaged 7.5 inches with 13 inch maximum length. Brook trout sampled were all in the 4 to 7 inch range.

East Fork Encampment River

The East Fork was sampled upstream of the Forest Service Road #496 crossing. We found 250 brown and 80 brook trout per mile. Brook trout averaged 6.5 inches. Browns averaged 8 inches with a few fish in the 16 inch range.

North Fork Encampment River

A population estimate conducted last summer showed 300 brook trout and 40 brown trout per mile. Brook trout averaged 8 inches with the largest being 11 inches. Browns averaged 8 inches with the largest being 12.5 inches.

Small Tributaries

Several small tributaries to the Encampment River on National Forest Lands were electrofished last summer to evaluate populations. All streams hosted dense populations of brook trout. The average brook trout in these streams ranged from 4 to 7 inches. One notable exception was Lakeview Creek (a tributary to Hog Park Reservoir) where we found rainbows up to 16 inches in addition to several brook trout in the 12 to 14 inch range.

Saratoga Lake

Analysis of creel data collected during the summer of 2002 shows an estimated 3,800 anglers fished this lake during the summer (May through August). They caught and kept 4,400 fish while releasing 1,000 fish. The overall catch rate for this period was 0.27 fish per hour, falling short of our management goal of 0.5 fish per hour. In an effort to improve survival of stocked rainbow trout, we adjusted the size of stocked fish from 20 per pound to 7 per pound. By stocking a larger fish, they will be better able to avoid predation by walleye and large brown trout, and will be better able to compete for food with the abundant sucker population. Higher survival will mean more fish available to anglers, thereby increasing catch rate. We will continue to closely monitor this fishery and adjust management as needed to provide the best fishery possible.

WHAT'S A CREEL SURVEY?

Have you ever been asked by a Game and Fish biologist, "how's the fishing?" That's the basics of a creel survey. This survey is designed to gather information on how the fishing is. Anglers are asked specific questions like "how long have you been fishing today?" or "how many fish have you caught today?" These surveys help biologists figure out how the fishery is doing from an angler's perspective.

Emigrant Reservoir

This small lake was sampled with gill-nets last July. While no big fish were sampled, we did capture quite a few rainbows in the 10 to 12 inch range.

California Gold Rush

Jim Barner
Assistant Fish Production Supervisor

What comes to mind when you think of striking gold? Wealth? Shiny golden nuggets? A sense of being able to buy something you've always wanted? For anglers, this "gold strike" may be the golden trout (*Oncorhynchus aguabonita*) gently sipping a dry fly from the surface or hammering a lure along the shoreline of an alpine lake. The pristine high mountain lakes they inhabit and the wily nature of the golden trout are driving forces for many anglers. If the mystique of the golden trout is not enough, the demanding hike to beautiful alpine areas where they live may be your challenge. Whatever the draw, this colorful fish is worth the effort.

In Wyoming, golden trout were first stocked in Cook Lake, high in the Wind River Mountains, in the 1920's through the early 1930's with eggs acquired from the state of California, its native range. It's still noteworthy that the current state and world record golden trout was caught from Cook Lake in 1948. It weighed an incredible 11 pounds, 4 ounces.

From the mid 1930's to the mid 1950's the Wyoming Game and Fish Department conducted annual spawning operations at Cook Lake to provide goldens for stocking lakes throughout Wyoming and other Rocky Mountain states. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department abandoned Cook Lake in 1948 in favor of Surprise Lake, above Pinedale, because of easier access. However, debris from the 1988 Fayette Fire had a huge impact on the Surprise Lake spawning operation, often plugging and overflowing the traps used to collect the spawning fish, and resulted in a decline in the golden trout population. The spawning operation was terminated in 1993, as the numbers of adult fish could not supply adequate egg numbers.

We have looked for a genetically diverse and pure golden broodstock since then. Copper Lake above Cody and Grave Creek Lake and Milky Creek Lakes, both on the Wind River

Indian Reservation, have been evaluated as potential egg sources. Copper and Milky Creek Lakes each proved to have low populations of goldens. With the cooperation of the Wind River Indian Reservation Tribal Council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Grave Creek Lake has become our current egg source. Genetic evaluation of these fish revealed some rainbow trout influence somewhere in their lineage.

The ideal spawning lake to capture golden trout would have limited access, genetically pure, large, and diverse populations that are easy to capture. Currently, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department is negotiating with California to again acquire eggs from its native streams. While the search for that "perfect spawning site" with the aforementioned criteria continues, cooperative efforts with the Wind River Indian Reservation and the US Fish and Wildlife Service will also continue. Surprise Lake has not been ruled out as a potential spawning site, though parent fish would have to be stocked and marked to identify the future spawners in the lake. Grave Creek Lake will, in the meantime, provide golden trout to be stocked in selected lakes. These lakes represent waters that previously supported golden trout but where no natural reproduction takes place and the species has declined or disappeared.

Eggs were obtained once again in July 2004 from Grave Creek Lake and fish will be ready to stock in 2005 via helicopter. Our search continues for that perfect golden trout spawning site. But your search for your "Pot of Gold" can start now. Regional offices can help you locate alpine lakes that sustain this very special fish.

For anglers, this "gold strike" may be the golden trout gently sipping a dry fly from the surface or hammering a lure along the shoreline of an alpine lake.



Life in the Water

Did you know that three-quarters of the Earth's surface is covered by water? And in North America alone there are approximately 2,000 different kinds of fish? Fish have adapted, or changed, to live in the water, they have permanent gills, and most have fins and scales. Fish have adaptations, or special features, that allow them to live their entire life under water.



Gills

Gills are a feathery organ of fish that take oxygen from the water and allow fish to breathe. Fish get oxygen from the water by passing it through their mouths and over their gills. Gills are located under a gill cover just behind a fishes eye.

Fins

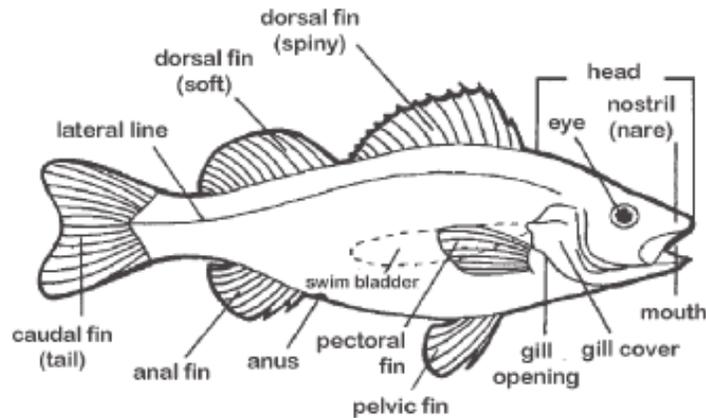
Fins help fish move in the water. Each fin helps the fish move in a different direction. Can you find the fins on the fish below?



Scales

Most fish are covered with scales. Scales are a flexible armor that help protect the fish. The scales are coated with a slimy layer of mucous that protects fish from getting diseases and parasites.

- Pectoral fin—helps with diving, swimming to the surface and staying in the same spot
- Dorsal fin—helps keep the fish from rolling over
- Pelvic fin—works to stabilize or balance the fish
- Caudal fin or tail—helps steer the fish through the water
- Anal fin—works like the pelvic fin to help balance the fish



History of a Fish

Lee McDonald
Superintendent, Como Bluff Fish Hatchery

Hatchery personnel are frequently asked by fishermen to answer questions on the history of fish they catch. They want to know which hatchery stocked the fish and where we got the eggs. In many locations fishermen catch wild fish that have reproduced naturally. This is true of most streams and rivers in the Laramie region. However, in most reservoirs and in some lakes, trout have been stocked to provide fishing opportunity. Here is an example of how one fish found its way into a fisherman's creel.

Let's consider a rainbow trout caught at Gelatt Lake by an angler this spring. It was 21 inches long and weighed just over 4½ pounds. We'll assume this fish is 3 years old because Gelatt is very productive and fish grow quickly. Here's the story of how it came to be there.

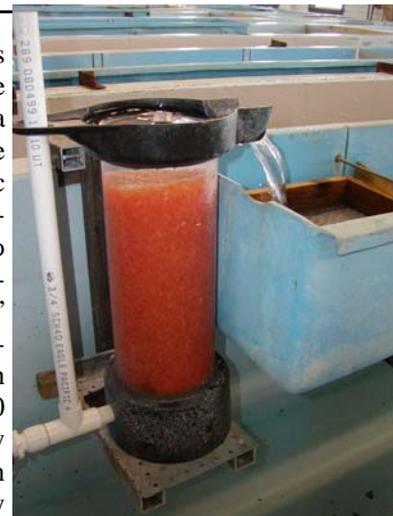
This fish was one of 7,465 Eagle Lake strain rainbow trout stocked in Gelatt Lake by the Como Bluff Fish Hatchery on April 1st and 2nd of 2003. The Eagle Lake rainbow brood stock was maintained at the Wigwam Rearing Station near Ten Sleep, Wyoming. This brood stock produced over 1.5 million eggs in 2002. Our fish was spawned on January 29, 2002 and was one of 262,400 eggs from the fifth week of spawning. The eggs and fish from this brood stock had been previously inspected and certified by a fish health pathologist to be free of specific bacterial and viral diseases. After spawning, the eggs were held without being moved for 2 hours while the eggshell absorbed water and hardened. The eggs could then be transported.

These rainbow trout eggs were transported from Wigwam to the Dubois Fish Hatchery Incubator. They were treated in an iodine solution to avoid disease transmission and placed in a jar incubator. For the next 41 days these fragile eggs were held and monitored in cold, clean, well-oxygenated water. The embryo developed in the eggs during this time period until the eye of the developing fish was visible through the transparent egg shell. Eyed eggs are hardy and can again be handled by fish culturists. Live



eggs and dead or unfertilized eggs were separated using a light sensitive "egg picking" machine. 91 % of the eggs had survived to this stage of development.

Our rainbow trout eggs were then shipped to the Como Bluff Hatchery in a special transport case about the size of a picnic cooler. Another disinfection bath was used to avoid disease transmission. The "eyed eggs" were then placed in several hatching jars each holding around 35,000 eggs. In 14 days they started to hatch. When trout eggs hatch they don't resemble the fish you would expect. They still carry a large yolk sack, which provides the nutrition needed to fuel the development into a fish that can swim-up and start to feed on its own. The sac-fry spent the next 2 to 3 weeks absorbing the yolk sack and growing.



Eggs and developing fry require daily care from a culturist at the hatchery. The fry were sorted and moved to a hatchery trough. When these trout swim-up off the bottom of the rearing trough and are active, it's time for the next stage in their life.

The first feeding for our rainbow trout destined for Gelatt was April 11, 2002. This was a significant milestone in this trout's development. When the lot of fish was feeding well they started to grow. Over the next several months they grew at a rate of a little over ½ inch per month. They were moved to larger rearing units as they grew.

When our rainbow trout was 8 inches long and the ice was off Gelatt Lake it was time to stock. On April 1st and 2nd of 2003 a total of 7,465 fish were stocked in Gelatt Lake. Other Plains Lake were also stocked during April. Our example fish then started eating plankton and small aquatic invertebrates. During the next couple of years this trout grew to a nice size for the lucky fisherman.

Lakes like Gelatt lack spawning habitat so the maintenance of a trout fishery depends on hatchery-reared fish. Fish caught this spring involved a process of spawning and rearing work that was started several years ago. If you see a hatchery truck stocking fish this year you can assume that it means good fishing in the future.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

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"Conserving Wildlife — Serving People"



FISH DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

"As stewards of Wyoming's aquatic resources, we are committed to conservation and enhancement of all aquatic wildlife and their habitats for future generations through scientific resource management and informed public participation. We will use an integrated program of protection, regulation, propagation, restoration and control to provide diverse, quality fisheries resources and angling opportunities. Our efforts will balance the productive capacity of habitats with public desires."

Many Thanks to Newsletter Contributors: Jim Barner, Nathan Cook, Lee McDonald, Janet Milek, Mike Snigg, and Michelle Zitek.

Pole Mountain Stocking

The Pole Mountain area, located between Cheyenne and Laramie, is dotted with hundreds of beaver ponds that are teeming with brook trout. These ponds offer fast action for novices and skilled anglers alike. Unlike similar areas in the Snowy or Sierra Madre ranges, the stream habitat in the Pole Mountain area is not conducive to brook trout spawning. In order for these ponds to support the high fishing pressure they receive, we stock these ponds annually with 15,000 fingerling brook trout on the first Saturday in June. Stocking hundreds of ponds scattered over thousands of acres is a labor intensive job, requiring a lot of people to do effectively. To accomplish this, we solicit the help of dozens of volunteers. Volunteering for this project is a good way to find some new fishing holes and makes for a great family outing. If you are interested in volunteering on this project, Saturday, June 4, 2005, contact us at the Laramie Regional Office, (307) 745-4046.



The Laramie Region Fisheries Management crew is composed of three full-time biologists: Mike Snigg, regional fisheries supervisor; Matt Hahn, regional fisheries biologist; and one regional fisheries biologist position currently vacant.

Mike has been on the Laramie Fisheries Management Crew since 1986. He was promoted in August of 2003 from regional fisheries biologist to regional fisheries supervisor. Mike has over 28 years with the Department. After obtaining his Bachelor's from Simpson College in Iowa, he worked for the Department for several years, and received his Master's from UW.

Matt was hired as a regional fisheries biologist in August of 2003. He was raised in Riverton and worked as a seasonal fisheries technician for the Department while attending college. Matt received his Bachelor's in Wildlife and Fisheries Management from the University of Wyoming in 2000 and his Master's in Fish Ecology from the University of North Dakota in 2002.