

Pinedale Region Angler Newsletter

2011 Edition

Volume 7, Issue 1

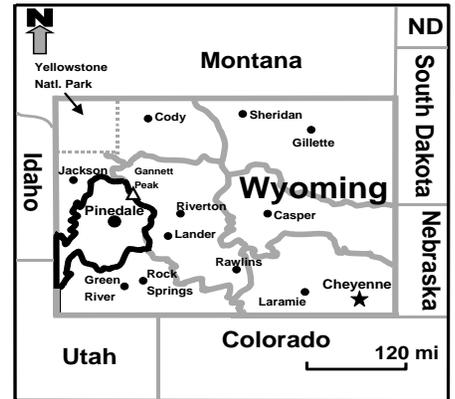


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Thanks for reading the 2011 version of Pinedale Region Angler Newsletter. This year's newsletter will feature stories and news regarding fall rainbow trout, the CCC Ponds, Kendall Warm Springs dace, operations at the Boulder Rearing Station and Daniel Fish Hatchery, and other interesting aspects of fisheries management in the Pinedale Region. This newsletter is intended for everyone interested in the aquatic resources in the Pinedale area. The resources we manage belong to all of us.

The Pinedale Region encompasses the Upper Green River Drainage (upstream of Fontenelle Reservoir) and parts of the Bear River drainage near Cokeville (see map).



Pinedale Region Map

Pinedale Region Fisheries Staff:

Fisheries Management

Hilda Sexauer *Fisheries Supervisor*
 Pete Cavalli *Fisheries Biologist*
 Darren Rhea *Fisheries Biologist*

Aquatic Habitat

Floyd Roadifer *Habitat Biologist*

Spawning

Brian King *Spawning Coordinator*
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Boulder Rearing Station

Chip Moller *Superintendent*
 Bret Bamgrover *Asst. Superintendent*
 Joe Gillis *Fish Culturist*

Daniel Fish Hatchery

Tim Kurtz *Superintendent*
 Greg Anderson *Asst. Superintendent*
 Brian Blutt *Fish Culturist*

Fall Rainbow Trout: Not Your Typical Rainbow

The Boulder Rearing Station cultures a unique rainbow trout brood stock that has been manipulated to spawn in the fall. This strain of rainbow trout was developed over a period of many years beginning about 1883. Eggs were originally taken from wild spring spawning rainbow trout from the McCloud River in California, by the US Fish



Fall rainbow trout have been manipulated to spawn in the fall unlike wild rainbow trout that spawn in the spring

Commission and shipped to its hatchery in Neosho, Mississippi. After many years of selection and manipulation as a captive brood stock at Neosho, some of the fish were shipped to a federal hatchery in Springville, Utah where further selection for early spawning was made. As a result of this continuous selection process, these normally spring spawning rain-

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Fall Rainbow Trout

(Continued from page 1)

bow became fall spawners. In 1933, California's Hot Creek Hatchery obtained a shipment of eggs from these fall spawners for the purpose of developing their own brood stock. In similar fashion, Wyoming obtained a shipment of these Hot Creek strain rainbow trout eggs in 1956 from a fish hatchery in Bothell, Washington. These eggs (50,000) were hatched and reared at the Tensleep Fish Hatchery and then shipped to the Wigwam Rearing Station (near Tensleep, WY) as fingerlings. Two years later, in November 1958, personnel at the Wigwam facility spawned the first take of fall spawn rainbow trout in Wyoming. The fall rainbow brood stock remained at Wigwam until 1989, when they were moved to the Boulder Rearing Station where they currently reside. Personnel at Boulder now spawn this brood stock beginning in mid October and finish up in mid December, with an average egg take of 3.5 million eggs.



Rainbow trout eggs are manually removed from a mature female

The Game & Fish also has a spring spawn rainbow trout brood stock, located at the Story Fish Hatchery near Sheridan, WY. Having both spring and fall spawning captive brood stocks within our Fish Culture Section allows for a wide range of available stocking options for fisheries managers throughout Wyoming. The fall spawn rainbow provides managers the option of stocking a fingerling size fish, up to a catchable sized fish, in the spring and/or early summer months. This fall spawn rainbow has become the mainstay of the rainbow trout stocking program in Wyoming, known for its disease resistance, uniform growth and domestic characteristics. They also do well in most of the places they are stocked, growing and surviving to provide great opportunities for anglers.

The Boulder Rearing Station is open to the public and welcomes scheduled group and walk in tours of the facility. Visiting hours are from 8am to 5pm daily. We are located 15 miles south of Pinedale on Hwy 191, then 1.5 miles east on Boulder Rearing Station Road.

-Chip Moller

CCC Ponds: Not Just For Kids!

In 1933 the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) established a camp at a series of natural ponds near the outlet of Fremont Lake. Now this area is referred to as the CCC Ponds. This recreation area is located just 2.5 miles north of the town of Pinedale, and is accessible via a paved bicycle pathway. It now includes four ponds; a small waterfowl pond to the north, a deeper fishing pond to the south, a small wetland south, and marsh area to the west. The complex encompasses 40 acres of which 14 acres provide wetlands, including a 5 acre fishing pond. An interpretive trail has been built around the entire pond complex providing recreationists easy access to this area.



CCC Ponds provides angling opportunities for people of all ages, kids and adults alike.

A frequent misconception is that CCC Ponds are only open to fishing for kids (those under the age of 14). However, this is not the case, as these ponds are open to anglers of all ages. The CCC Ponds are about as close as it comes to an "Urban Fishery" in Pinedale, and it's a family-friendly location that provides excellent fishing opportunities for all anglers.

Fish managers have been stocking CCC Pond with trout since 1995 and have been monitoring the population about every year. From 1995 to 2004, the primary fish stocked in the pond was rainbow trout, averaging about 8 inches at the time of stocking. Starting in 2004, managers decided to stock brown trout, a fish prone to prey on smaller fish, hoping they would take advantage of the forage fish available in the pond and achieve better growth rates.

Managers are able to monitor the status of the fish population by setting gillnets to capture them in the spring. Since fish are

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Know Your Natives: Kendall Warm Springs Dace

Rhinichthys osculus thermalis

The Upper Green River drainage was once home to as many as twelve native species of fish, ten of which can be found there today. Among them, is the Kendall Warm Springs Dace (KWD), a unique species of fish endemic to Kendall Warm Springs and found nowhere else in the world.



Kendall Warm Springs dace (above) is endemic to Kendall Warm Springs and found nowhere else in the world

Kendall Warm Springs is a small warm spring, roughly 1000 ft long, that flows into the Green River just past the U.S. Forest Service boundary near the head of the Kendall Valley. The temperature of the spring water remains relatively constant at approximately 85° F year-round, creating a unique environment for the KWD to inhabit. A 10 ft tall waterfall at the confluence with the Green River prohibits other fish species from entering the spring. It is believed that roughly 10,000—15,000 years ago, ancestral dace could move freely between the spring and the Green River. As the river eroded forming the waterfall at the confluence, the dace inhabiting the spring became isolated, and evolved into a separate species. Advanced genetic and taxonomic techniques of today have confirmed to status of KWD as a unique species of fish, worthy of protection in its rare habitat.



Kendall Warm Springs is a small spring, less than 1000 ft in length in the Upper Green River valley

The KWD is a small fish, with adults only reaching 1-2 inches in length. They are found in a variety of colors ranging from light to dark green with brown, blue or even purple accents. Their diet is primarily small insects, and they are known to reproduce year-round in the stable spring environ-

ment. Though they are free from predation from other fish, they are frequently the prey of large dragonfly larvae that inhabit the spring. A number of migratory birds are also known to prey on KWD, making them an important food source for passing travelers.

Perhaps the most interesting trait of the KWD is their ability to persist in the relatively inhospitable environment of Kendall Warm Springs. While a number of tropical fish around the world are found to inhabit waters with temperatures similar to that of Kendall Warm Springs, few other

species of fish in the Western U.S. have adapted to such conditions. In-fact, the average water temperatures found in Kendall Warm Springs would be lethal to every species of coldwater fish in Wyoming.

The KWD is currently listed as an Endangered Species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and it is the only fish species in Wyoming given Federal protection. A number of different regulations and land protection measures have been taken to protect this extremely rare species. To protect the dace themselves, Wyoming law prohibits their use or collection as bait, and fishing is not permitted within the warm spring. Activities such as bathing, wading, and washing are also prohibited in Kendall Warm Springs to protect this rare and unique environment. The area around the warm spring is also protected by an enclosure to prevent excessive cattle impacts, though limited cattle presence is allowed within the area periodically to help maintain the spring in its current condition.

Kendall Warm Springs Dace can be easily observed within their natural habitat for anyone interested in this unique part of the areas natural heritage. A quick trip on Highway 352 past the U.S. Forest Service boundary will take you right to their home on a terrace above the Green River. Keep in mind how rare and irreplaceable these unique little fish are as you enjoy watching their darting and fluttering action

The Kendall Warm Springs Dace is the only Federally Listed Fish Species in Wyoming

- Darren Rhea

2010 Update on Management Activities and Regional Sport-Fisheries

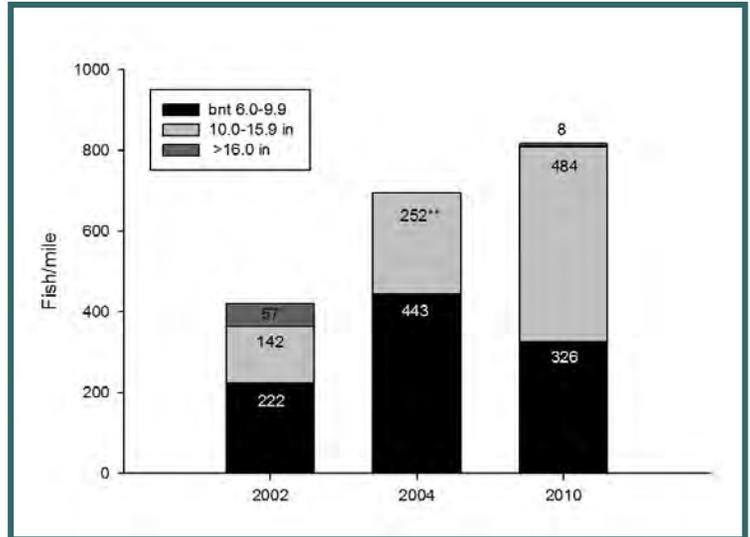
Every year, members of the Pinedale Fisheries staff spend countless hours in the field studying area fishery resources. During 2010, the Pinedale Fisheries Management Crew conducted a variety of assessments on area fisheries as part of our continuing efforts to understand and improve fishery resources and angling opportunities in the region. Many popular sport fisheries are the focus of intense sampling efforts as they provide hours of enjoyment and continue to draw the attention of local, regional, and even international angling enthusiasts. Here are just a few examples of the areas more popular sport fisheries we sampled in 2010.

Green River

Sampling in 2010 was conducted on the 4.5 mile reach of the Green River through the newly acquired Sommers'- Grindstone Fishing Access. This was only the second time this section of the river has been evaluated, and the trout population appears to be faring well. With an estimated adult trout population of over 800 fish per mile, and a large portion of younger age class fish, this newly acquired section of public access should provide some incredible angling opportunities for years to come.

Work was also conducted on a section of the Green River through the Warren Bridge Access Area in 2010. This popular section of the river offers nearly twelve miles of fishing access through BLM and private lands on the Green River east of highway 191. Sampling in 2010 revealed a growing population of brown trout of more than 800 fish per mile, steadily increasing from estimates obtained in 2002 and 2004. More than half of the fish captured were between 10 and 16

inches, the segment of the population exhibiting the most growth over the past eight years. Anglers continue to experience good success on trout within this section of the river, averaging more than 1.0 fish per hour of fishing effort.



Trout populations estimates (fish per mile) from the Warren Bridge Access Area of the Green River in 2010

New Fork River

The popular New Fork River was sampled once in 2010 through State land on the "Airport" section near Boulder. This productive section of the river supports some of the largest brown trout in the region, and data from 2010 confirm this notion. With an estimated trout population of nearly 900 fish per mile, along with several rainbow and cutthroat trout, this section of river holds plenty of willing trout. Even more impressive is the general size of fish captured in this section of the river. More than 36% of the brown trout captured in 2010 were greater than 16 inches long, and incredibly, more than 8% were greater than 20 inches long. With a large number of impressively sized fish, the New Fork River offers some of the finest fishing in the region through a number of access points along its length.

More than 36% of the brown trout captured in the New Fork River were greater than 16 inches in 2010, 8% were greater than 20 inches



Biologist utilize rafts with boom-mounted electrodes to sample fish from the Green River.

2010 Update (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

Boulder Lake

Boulder Lake has been the focus of some intense sampling and assessment efforts over the past several years, and following work conducted in 2010, a number of concerns are beginning to present themselves. Boulder Lake has always been a regular destination for lake trout enthusiasts, and rightfully so, given the large number and impressive sizes of these popular game fish. Data collected over the last several years suggests that the lake trout population may be doing a little too well, having grown to a point that the lake's prey base is no longer capable of sustaining them. Growth and diet information indicates that lake trout consumption accounts for all of the kokanee salmon currently stocked into the lake and the popular rainbow trout population in the lake is beginning to become adversely affected as well. Over a period of roughly ten years, the body condition of lake trout has declined drastically, another indication that the predatory game fish is beginning to run out of food.

Evidence suggests that lake trout in Boulder Lake may have depleted their prey base

Fremont lake

Fremont Lake supports one of the more popular trophy lake trout fisheries in the region, and is also known for its rainbow and brown trout angling as well. Netting efforts in 2010 revealed a lake population with an average length of over 19 inches, the highest of any Finger Lake, with several "trophy" lake trout being captured and released. Brown trout and rainbow trout also made up a large portion of the catch, including a number of large brown trout over 20 inches long.

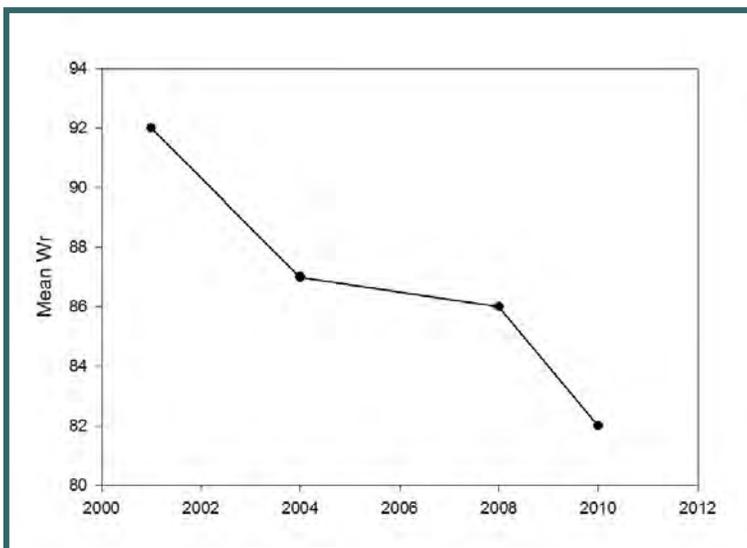


Fremont Lake is one of the top producing trophy lake trout fisheries in the Region

Anglers who visited Fremont Lake in 2010 likely noticed our Aquatic Invasive Species Inspectors working the check station at the entrance to the lake. During 2010, our inspectors checked over 1,400 boats at Fremont Lake as part of our efforts to combat the spread of invasive species. None of the boats that were inspected were found to be transporting invasive species, and sampling efforts in 2010 did not indicate the presence of any in the lake. Similar efforts will be conducted in 2011 as we continue to combat the spread of these devastating invasives.

The information we obtain from our area fisheries is invaluable in terms of how we manage these resources in the future. Annual monitoring and assessment efforts help direct our management efforts and allow us to make informed decisions regarding their status. For additional information or questions regarding how we collect this information and apply it to managing these important resources, please feel free to contact our staff anytime. We are always glad to share our information and gain your insight.

- Darren Rhea



Average relative weight, or body condition of lake trout in Boulder Lake from 2001-2010

Management actions may be needed to help restore the predator/prey balance in Boulder Lake if things continue the way they have for the past several years. In the mean time, anglers should strongly consider harvesting any lake trout they catch in Boulder Lake to help maintain this popular sport fishery.

Anatomy of a Fishing Regulation

Managing fishery resources often requires the use of multiple specialized “tools”, designed to address the biological, social, and economic values a fishery provides. Some of the “tools” commonly used by biologists to manage these resources include hatchery fish for stocking, habitat enhancement and improvements, and fishing regulations. Fishing regulations are an important tool because they are used to manage the human use of fishery resources.



Regulations are used to provide sustainable harvest of fish and other aquatic organisms, while protecting against over-utilization or exploitation. They can be tailored to meet the biological objectives of a fishery, but they are also used to achieve social, political, and even economic objectives. Regulations can be designed in a number of different ways to target or protect various species, life-stages, or habitats. Regulations can be used to limit the number, size, or even species of fish harvested. They can also be used to protect various life-stages or their habitats through seasonal closures or area closures on specific habitats.

Establishing a regulation or changing an existing regulation is a multiple step process designed to involve all stakeholders and incorporate input from multiple sources. In many cases, the establishment of a fishing regulation begins following intensive investigation of a fishery by area biologists to document the status of the fish community and determine if the current regulation provides the necessary level of protection or allows for the appropriate level of harvest by anglers. If data collected by biologists indicates significant changes in angler use or fish community structure, then a proposal is drafted to establish a new regulation designed to achieve established goals for managing a particular fishery.

Regulation proposals are typically developed following discussions among area biologists, supervisors, and staff administrators. Once developed, proposals are then distributed to area Game Wardens and Wildlife Division personnel for comments regarding enforcement concerns or logistics. Following internal discussions, regulation proposals are then circulated among

the public through public meetings and forums. Once public comments and concerns have been incorporated, final drafts of regulation proposals are sent to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission for consideration and approval.

An important component of the regulation process is public input. Because regulations can be used to achieve a variety of management objectives, it is important that members of the public, particularly anglers, provide input regarding their support or opposition for any proposed regulation. Public meetings are scheduled throughout the state whenever regulation changes are proposed to discuss any changes and their desired effects. In addition, formal commenting periods are also created to provide opportunities for input from the public regarding regulations. Public comments are considered by the Department when we make our recommendations to the commission. Written comments received during the open commenting period are forwarded to the Commission for consideration prior to approving any regulation changes. Dates and times for public meetings and open commenting periods are typically published in local news outlets, and all members of the public are encouraged to participate. For questions regarding public meeting times or locations, contact your local Game and Fish office or visit us online at <http://gf.state.wy.us>.

- Darren Rhea

WYOMING FISHING REGULATIONS

2010 – 2011
WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION



Conserving Wildlife
Serving People



HOW TO USE THESE REGULATIONS

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review the laws and regulations including methods of take and unlawful practices (pages 3-11). 2) Review general creel limits (page 3). 3) Consult statewide map (page 19) for drainage boundaries. 4) Use color indexed pages for easy reference to regulations and seasons for drainage areas 1-3 (pages 20-30). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Only exceptions to general fishing or boating regulations are shown for each area. Look for area wide, drainage and individual water exceptions within each area (pages 20-30). 6) New or revised regulations and information for 2010-2011 are highlighted in blue throughout this booklet. Regulations that apply to a broad geographic area are highlighted with YELLOW. 7) If a specific water or drainage of interest is not listed, statewide creel limits (page 3) apply.
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This fishing regulation booklet was printed in December 2009.

2009 Daniel Fish Hatchery Update

Three dedicated department personnel; Superintendent Tim Kurtz, Assistant Superintendent Greg Anderson and Fish Culturist Brian Blutt are stationed at the Daniel Hatchery and are responsible for the egg care, incubation, fish rearing, and stocking of over 500,00-750,000 fish a year in addition to the facilities general maintenance and operation.

The Daniel Fish Hatchery, located 15 miles north of Pinedale maintains the departments Bear River (Bonneville) cutthroat trout and Colorado River cutthroat trout brood stocks. Daniel begins its spawning season in mid April and continues through the first part of June. The hatchery anticipates a take of over a million green eggs for the Bear River and 500,000 green eggs for the Colorado River cutthroat trout.



Joe Gillis and his mule Duke stock cutthroat trout from the Daniel Fish Hatchery into Big Sheep Mountain Lake

Offspring from these brood stocks are used for restoration efforts as well as for stocking in fishing waters throughout the state. Bear River cutthroat are stocked in waters that include the Bear River proper and Sulphur Creek Reservoir near Evanston, the Smiths Fork River near Cokeville, and the Laramie "Plains Lakes": East Allen and Diamond Reservoirs. Colorado River cutthroat are stocked into several drainages on the east slope of the Wyoming Range Mountains which include the LaBarge and Cottonwood creek drainages and portions in the Unita Mountains near Mountain View.

Another service provided by the hatchery is due to Daniel's cold water. Fish grow very slow in Daniel's 43° F water. Slow growth of fish provide small fish for helicopter, horse packing, backpacking, ATV stocking and fish transfers to the States other nine hatcheries and rearing stations.

The Daniel hatchery provides fish to several management regions around the state. Regional Fish Management Crews request certain number, size and species to be stocked based on

their decisions of available habitat, fishing pressure, and management objectives for each water. Most waters are stocked with small fish that grow and provide fishing over several years.

The hatchery is open to the public and welcomes scheduled group and walk in tours of the facility. Visiting hours are from 8 am to 5 pm daily. The hatchery is located 15 miles northwest of Pinedale on U.S. Highway 191, and 2.4 miles west on Sublette County Road 23-150 (Pape Road).

-Greg Anderson

Daniel Hatchery Fish Stocking Summary for 2010

Species Name	Number Stocked	Pounds Stocked
Brook Trout	5,496	39
Bear River Cutthroat	122,205	5,324
Colorado River Cutthroat	181,181	3,660
Kokanee Salmon	187,015	565
Splake	43,309	353
Golden Trout	26,233	318
Total	565,439	10,259

Summary of Fish Transferred to Other Facilities for 2010

Species Name	Number Transferred	Pounds Transferred
Brown Trout	19,663	241
Brook Trout	4,320	27
Bear River Cutthroat	23,075	71
Eagle Lake Rainbow	220,950	268
Fall Rainbow	8,880	120
Golden Trout	10,075	130
Total	286,963	857

Daniel Hatchery Spawning Summary for 2010

Species	Number Green eggs	Number Eyed eggs	Percent Eyed*
Bear River Cutthroat	953,768	705,266	79
Colorado River Cutthroat	546,759	331,837	61

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

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<http://gf.state.wy.us>

YOU CAN ALSO FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE!



CCC Ponds

(Continued from page 2)

able to move from Fremont Lake to CCC Pond, the resulting catch can be something besides what the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) stocks, and may include other species from the lake such as brook trout and kokanee salmon. Rainbow trout and brown trout are now the primary species in the pond, but opportunities to catch other species are not uncommon. The average rainbow trout in CCC Pond is around 11 inches long, but fish up to 14 inches have been caught. Brown trout on-the-other-hand, appear to be bigger, and last year fish managers caught brown trout up to 19 inches long (Table 1). So if you are in need for a walk, enjoy listening to birds, watching waterfowl, and casting a line without taking a long drive outside town, CCC Pond in an excellent option.

- Hilda Sexauer

Table 1. Average Length and Range of Rainbow Trout (RBT), Brook Trout (BKT), and Brown Trout (BNT) Captured with gillnets in CCC Pond 1996–2010.

	RBT	BKT	BNT
1996	10.3 (9.2 – 11.5)	5.6 (5.5 – 5.7)	-
1997	9.5 (8.5 – 10.8)	9.1 (7.7 – 9.8)	-
2000	10.9 (10.2 – 11.5)	10.1 (9.9 – 10.3)	-
2003	10.1 (8.2 – 13.7)	-	-
2004	9.8 (6.9 – 12.9)	-	-
2005	10.8 (9.5 – 12.3)	-	-
2006	10.6 (8.1 – 14.1)	-	-
2008	10.5 (10.3 – 10.6)	-	10.0 (9.7 – 10.3)
2010	11.0 (9.7 – 12.2)	-	17.0 (15.2 – 19.9)

2011 Calendar of Events

June 4: Kids Fishing Day

10:00 am - 3:00 pm, CCC Ponds, Pinedale

All kids ages 13 and under are encouraged to attend the annual “Get Hooked on Fishing” event hosted by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, U.S. Forest Service, and Trout Unlimited. There will be a series of short educational activities, free lunch, and the opportunity to catch a variety of trout in CCC Ponds. Youngsters will have the opportunity to learn basic ecology and fish I.D., fishing skills, and gear applications. Some fishing gear and bait is provided, and the event is free to the public.



Children learn valuable angling skills at the annual “Get Hooked on Fishing” event at the CCC Ponds

June 4: Wyoming Free Fishing Day

No license or conservation stamp is required to fish during Wyoming’s Free Fishing Day. All other rules and regulations apply.

Sept 8-10: Annual Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo

Casper Events Center, Casper, Wyoming



Attendees explore the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo at the Casper Events Center