

2009 Sheridan Region Angler Newsletter "From the Bighorns to the Blackhills"



Wyoming Game and Fish Department
"Conserving Wildlife-Serving People"

Special points of interest:

- Know your native species; the channel catfish
- Updates on several Cloud Peak Wilderness Lakes
- Ask a Fish Culturist FAQ's
- Re-establishing Yellowstone cutthroat trout

Greetings

Welcome to the 2009 Sheridan Region Angler Newsletter. We hope you find it informative and useful and we'd love to hear you if you have any comments or questions for us.

The Sheridan region is one of the largest regions in the state covering over 18,000 square miles, eight counties, 3,000 miles of streams and 19,000 acres of lakes.

The diversity of fish and fishing opportunities within the region is tremendous. From high mountain lakes in the Cloud Peak Wilderness, elusive brown trout in Sand Creek, to the ever popular walleye in Keyhole, the Sheridan Region literally has it all.

We try to highlight some of the more popular waters within our region, some of the projects we're working on, and some of Wyoming's lesser known species.

To reach us by phone, call **307-672-7418** and ask for one of the fish biologists. To send us a letter or email, please see the back page of this newsletter. Happy fishing!!



Paul Mavrakis



Andrew Nikirk



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Bill Bradshaw

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2009 Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Restoration Project

Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YSC) were native and once common to the Little Tongue River drainage in the Bighorn Mountains, but over the years have nearly disappeared. A chemical treatment to remove non-native trout is being planned for this summer so the YSC can be restored. The project is planned for about 15 miles of the Little Tongue River drainage above Fallen City and is scheduled over 4-5 days during the 3rd week of August.

The treatment requires that a chemical called

rotenone be applied to several sections of the stream. Rotenone occurs in some plants and is used by South American native people to catch fish for consumption, is commonly used to control garden pests, and is widely used by the livestock industry for tick control. More importantly, fisheries managers have used it safely and effectively for decades as a management tool to eradicate undesirable fish species in streams, lakes, and ponds. Because rotenone affects creatures with gills, there will be a short-term loss of aquatic

Yellowstone project continued on page 9

Keyhole Reservoir Update

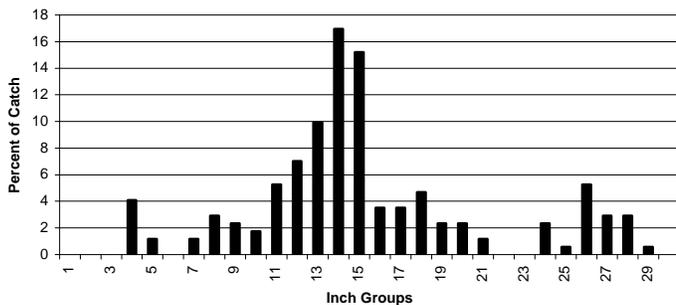


10 pound walleye sampled at Keyhole in 2008

Water levels have improved slightly and the fishery continues to hold on at Keyhole Reservoir near Moorcroft, Wyoming. With decent snow melt and good spring rains in 2008, water levels rose to just shy of 50% full (Keyhole was only 35% full in 2007). We were busy this year at Keyhole. We conducted two spring sampling events to look for gizzard shad to see if they made it through the winter and to gain better sample sizes on walleye and pike. We also conducted one night of electrofishing to gain samples on the “net shy” species such as smallmouth bass. Our sampling concluded with two nights of sampling in late August. The goal of each sampling event is to gather as much data as possible such as population abundance, size structure, and overall condition or health of the fish.

Our fall sampling of walleye wasn't that great this year but if you look at all the data that we collected throughout the year, 171 walleye were sampled ranging in size from 4.0 to 29.4 inches and 0.08 to 11.0 pounds. Strong year classes were found in the 11 to 15 inch range and also lots of larger fish in the 24 to 29 inch class.

Walleye Length Frequency Histogram Keyhole Reservoir 2008



With improving water levels at Keyhole, and assuming 2009 will be good too, we expect some good year classes coming into the population. Higher water levels means more habitat, more food availability, and a greater chance to avoid predation. So the walleye that reproduce naturally and the walleye that are stocked should be of catchable size in a couple years assuming water levels remain constant and or rise in 2009.

Crappie continue to do well at Keyhole. Over 220 crappie were sampled this year ranging in size from 7 to 12 inches and 0.20 to 0.75 pounds. If you love panfishing, look no further than Keyhole!

Northern pike are highly sought after by anglers and this year's catch proved to be a good one, especially our two spring sampling events. Pike are very difficult to catch in our sampling gear.

These wary fish are ambush predators that lie and wait for food to come to them. With this being the case, we decided to sample in the spring to improve our catch. During early spring, pike are on the move looking for spawning areas, thus they are a little more vulnerable to our nets. This year 32 pike were sampled, ranging in size from 20 to 33 inches and 2 to 9 pounds.

This year's nighttime electrofishing sampling proved to be somewhat unsuccessful. We like to electrofish in May when fish are generally closer to shore looking for spawning and feeding areas. However, with bad weather and other commitments we weren't able to get out there until July. We still sampled several smallmouth bass ranging in size from 4 to 12 inches. The rocky areas near the dam, Cottonwood Bay, Coulter Bay, and Pat's Point seem to have the highest concentrations of smallmouth.

Keyhole fish have made it through some relatively tough times the last few years with the drought. Assuming the trend of rising water levels continues in 2009, the fish and the fishing should get better.

With higher water levels we should expect some good year classes coming into the population



11 pound walleye sampled at Keyhole in 2008.



North Tongue River and Bull Creek Update

The **North Tongue River**, west of Sheridan in the Bighorn Mountains provides excellent fishing opportunities, especially to the fly-fishing enthusiast. Population estimates within the North Tongue have increased steadily since 2000. Below Bull Creek, outside the catch and release section, estimates range from 2,400 to 2,900 fish/mile. Above Bull Creek, within the catch and release section of the river, estimates range from 1,400 to 1,800 fish/mile. One major contributing factor for the increase in numbers is the increase in rainbow trout. Rainbow trout have increased 8% at Burgess Road and greater than 100% at 5 other electrofishing stations throughout the river. Previous studies have shown that natural reproduction within the river is quite limited due to the cold temperatures and lack of good spawning gravel. However, it appears that rainbows are reproducing naturally.



The two species of cutthroat (Yellowstone and Snake River) are thriving as well. We continue to stock 1,000 of each species every year to augment hooking and natural mortality. These stocked fish receive a fin clip prior to stocking so that we can identify a stocked fish versus a naturally reproduced fish. As it turns out, rainbows are not the only fish finding somewhere to reproduce. Several wild cutthroat were caught this year as well. It is unclear at this point what changed within the river to allow fish to reproduce so well. Several factors may be contributing such as increased beaver activity (warms the water), less harvest outside the catch and release section, river morphology changes (exposed gravel where previously there was none), and perhaps climate change (warmer water). Several more years of study will be needed to see if these trends continue.



Nice Snake River cutthroat from the North Tongue



Yellowstone cutthroat from the North Tongue.



Bull Creek continues to support excellent numbers of fish, especially for a high mountain, cold water stream. In 2008 estimates were 900 fish/mile, 780 fish/mile were greater than 6 inches. This last summer, in conjunction with the US Forest Service, investigations began on the best methods to enhance spawning habitat within Bull Creek. Similar to the North Tongue, small, naturally reproduced fish have been captured in Bull Creek. If we were able to enhance some of the spawning habitat it may make Bull Creek an even better fishery.



Snake River cutthroat from the North Tongue.



Yellowstone cutthroat from Bull Creek.



Powder River channel catfish

Know Your Native Species: The Channel Catfish

The channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) is native to the rivers of the Missouri River drainage, which includes the Bighorn, Tongue, Powder, Clear Creek, and the North Platte in Wyoming. The channel catfish's popularity has led to introductions west of the Continental Divide in the Little Snake and Green River drainages.

The world record channel catfish was 58 pounds from Santee-Cooper Reservoir in South Carolina. The Wyoming state record is 27.99 pounds from Flaming Gorge Reservoir. However, the average size found in Wyoming is generally 2 to 4 pounds with a 10 pound fish considered quite the trophy.



Powder River channel catfish

In the Sheridan Region, channel catfish are found in fairly large numbers in the Powder, Clear Creek, Belle Fourche, Keyhole Reservoir, Tongue, and Prairie Dog Creek. Most anglers associate channel catfish with the midwest or southern US, but they are a Wyoming native.

Channel catfish are omnivores feeding on a wide variety of food items including plants, algae, insects, live and dead fish. They possess very keen senses of smell and taste. At the pits of their nostrils are very sensitive odor sensing organs full of olfactory receptors allowing them to sense amino acids in very minimal amounts. Taste buds are distributed over the surface of their entire body with the highest concentrations on their four pairs of barbels (whiskers). The combination of senses of smell and taste allows the channel catfish to find food in dark, stained, muddy waters with ease.

The WGFD is currently gathering genetic information to determine if there are any differences between Wyoming's catfish and those from elsewhere in the country. It is believed that Wyoming's catfish may be adapted to handle the cold water temperatures and short growing seasons in Wyoming.



Keyhole Res. catfish

South Tongue River Update

The upper South Tongue River around the Dead Swede campground continues to support extraordinary numbers of brook and brown trout!!



A "cross vane" structure concentrates the flow towards the middle of the channel which helps to alleviate bank erosion but also provides pool habitat for fish.

For four consecutive years, the WGFD has been monitoring fish population trends at the Dead Swede campground to see how they responded to the installation of instream bank stabilization structures. Prior to the installation of the structures in October of 2003, population estimates revealed approximately 11,537 fish/mile throughout this section, with only 2,500 fish/mile greater than 6 inches. Lots of small fish!

In 2008, five years after installation, population estimates are approximately 5,500 fish/mile with 2,800 fish/mile greater than 6 inches. Although there are fewer fish in this section, the fish are considerably bigger. In 2000 (prior to construction) the average weight of a fish in this section was only 0.08 pounds. In 2008, this average weight per fish has increased to 0.14 pounds. One very interesting aspect on this stretch of river following construction is the shift in species composition. Prior to construction, most of the fish were brook trout with approximately 10,300 brook trout/mile and only 1,200 brown trout/mile. Now, following the construction, the species composition is approximately 50/50 with 3,000 brook trout/mile and 2,500 brown trout/mile. It appears that these bank stabilization structures are providing some good cover for brown trout.



A bank stabilization structure preventing bank erosion while creating fish habitat.



Just downstream of the Dead Swede campground, another section of river is scheduled to have bank stabilization structures installed in 2009. We have been doing population estimates through this stretch as well, prior to the construction, so that we can monitor any changes following the construction.

There may be no better place in the Bighorn Mountains than the South Tongue River if you like to catch brook and brown trout!

Cloud Peak Wilderness Sampling

July and August is our chance to escape the heat in Sheridan and head to the mountains for our high mountain lake surveys in the Cloud Peak Wilderness. In 2008, we sampled 13 lakes to monitor fish populations, fish health, and our stocking regimes.

Willow Lakes 1 thru 4

Willow Lake #1 and #2 are overpopulated with grayling and as a result, their average size is about 9 inches. Although the fish are on the smaller side, these lakes are still good places to catch grayling. Willow Lake #3 was fishless prior to this year, but somehow grayling have found their way in and have grown to large sizes with the average being almost 16 inches. Willow #4 is fishless.

Long Lake: Nice lake with brook trout averaging almost 11 inches and Yellowstone cutthroat averaging 8 inches.

Ringbone: Another good lake, just north of Long Lake. Yellowstone cutthroat averaged 9 inches and grayling averaged 10 inches.

Seven Brothers Lakes 1 thru 7

These are a neat set of lakes in the North Clear Creek drainage. Lake #1 has lake trout averaging 15 inches. Lake #2 has rainbow trout averaging 14 inches. Lake #3 has rainbow trout averaging 12 inches and lake trout averaging 13 inches. Lake #4 has lake trout averaging 14 inches. Lake #5 had lake trout averaging 15 inches and rainbow averaging 11 inches. Lake #6 had Snake River cutthroat averaging 16 inches and Lake #7 had Snake River cutthroat and rainbow averaging 15 inches and lake trout averaging 11 inches.

Anglers and wilderness users are reminded to be prepared for adverse conditions and to follow the regulations of the Bighorn National Forest.

For information on the lakes and streams within the Cloud Peak Wilderness contact the Sheridan Regional Office at **307-672-7418**. For information on rules, regulations, and usage within the wilderness contact the Bighorn National Forest at **307-674-2600**.



Large grayling from Willow Lake #3



Lake trout from Seven Brothers Lake #1.

2008 Fish Stocking in the Sheridan Region

The fish culture section of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department is always busy stocking fish across the state and the Sheridan Region is no exception. In 2008, 460,900 fish were stocked in the Sheridan Region, including 75 lakes (28 high mountain lakes via a helicopter) and 9 sections of streams. The fish stocked in 2008 included Yellowstone cutthroat, Snake River cutthroat, Bear River cutthroat, Colorado River cutthroat, three strains of rainbow, brook, brown, splake, and walleye. If you get a chance, make sure to thank the guys and gals who work so hard to raise and stock all of these fish. Without them, many of our waters wouldn't have fish!!!

Wilderness Lakes

Stocking of Cloud Peak Wilderness Lakes via helicopter resumed in 2008. These lakes are stocked either on a 2 year or 4 year rotation de-

pending on fishing pressure, natural reproduction, and availability of fish to be stocked. The lakes stocked in 2008 were Angeline, Bard, Florence, Golden, Hope, Lame Deer, Long, Loomis, Lost Wilderness, Martin, Mead, Powell 1 and 2, Ringbone, Sawmill 1 and 2, Sawmill Reservoir, Seven Brother 1-7, Sherd, South Piney Creek Lakes 1 and 2, and Willow Lake 1.



Stocking with a helicopter at Willow Lake #1 in the Cloud Peak Wilderness.



Helicopter stocking at Willow Lake #1 in the Cloud Peak Wilderness

Story Hatchery Update

Eggs! Eggs! Eggs! This, in three words, sums up the operations at Story Hatchery. Although the facility and grounds are currently closed to the public until late fall for completion of the new state of the art broodstock building, the workers are staying busy supplying millions of high quality eggs for hatcheries across the state and nation.

Due to the construction, the Eagle Lake rainbow were moved to the front side of the grounds for this years spawn. This has resulted in some space related challenges but they seem to be doing well. Approximately 2.7 million eggs will be collected this spring with the bulk being kept in state. A half million eggs will again be sent to the Jones Hole National Fish Hatchery in Utah for eventual stocking into Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

The lake trout have also been moved to a pond out front until their home pond is revamped. Because there are very few lake trout broods in captivity, the bulk of these eggs (about 865,000) are sent out of state to places such as NJ, TN, CA, and ID in trade for warm water species such as walleye and catfish that we don't raise in Wyoming. We continue to work with Idaho to pressure-treat their share of eggs in order to make a sterile, or non-fertile fish. Approxi-

mately 450,000 additional lake trout eggs are crossed with milt from a male brook trout in order to make splake for Wyoming and Colorado; these too are used trade for warm water fish.

Because of a decreased wild population of fish at Soda Lake near Pinedale, Story Hatchery is now the sole provider of brook trout eggs statewide. As a matter of fact, we may now be the only specific pathogen free source of brook trout eggs in the entire U.S.! After all in-state requests are met, the bulk of these eggs are sent, also in trade, to Colorado and two private hatcheries in Wyoming.

Lastly, this year we received a small group of golden trout that, with any luck, will become the only captive broodstock of this species anywhere in the nation. Other hatcheries have long struggled to meet the environmental requirements of these fish. The hope is that, because our water experiences temperature fluctuations similar to that of wild streams, the golden trout will feel more at home here and reliably produce eggs beginning in 2010.



Brook trout spawning



Eagle Lake rainbow spawning

Ask the Fish Culturist-Spawning and Eggs

What is spawning/What is a brood stock? Spawning is the act by which fish release and fertilize eggs. The fish that we keep specifically to spawn are called the broodstock. The spawn occurs once per year with timing dependent on species. The Eagle Lake rainbow spawn over a period of about 6 weeks in the spring (March-May). Brook and lake trout spawn over a four week period in the fall (October). We presume that the golden trout will spawn sometime in late spring or early summer.

What do you mean by "sorting the fish"? What we mean is that we are separating them by sex and age. We do this for several reasons. First and foremost, we sort by age to eliminate the risk of crossing close relatives resulting in inbreeding. Second, spawning goes much faster when each age and sex are already in a pen where they can be netted easily. Third, the male brook and rainbow trout are very aggressive during the spawning period and can sometimes injure the egg-laden females. Lastly, we have noticed that males fight less and have much lower post-spawn mortality when they are separated from the females as early in the spawning season as possible.

What do you mean by a fish being "ripe"? Ripe means ready to spawn. With the males it is easy to tell- we look for a large hooked jaw that is used for fighting and the bright color that is taken on by most male trout during this period. The females require a gentle squeeze on the belly- if eggs come out she's ripe; if not she is considered "green" (not ready) and checked again the following week. It is interesting to note that the rainbow and lake trout also take on a faint purple glow as they become ripe.

How exactly do you get the eggs? First, we put the fish into an FDA approved solution that makes them relax; this cuts down on struggling, reduces stress to the fish, and helps to prevent egg breakage. Once the female is fully "knocked out", we gently put pressure on her belly and collect the eggs in a plastic pan; depending on age and species, there are anywhere from 400 to 4,000 eggs released. Next, we gently squeeze a male and add his milt (sperm) and gently swirl the pan to mix the two.



Brook trout



Eagle Lake rainbow



Large brown trout from Lake DeSmet



Big, fat, and healthy walleye from DeSmet



Lake DeSmet Update

Lake DeSmet is one of the more popular waters in the Sheridan area. Great opportunities are available for both the boater and the bank fisherman. DeSmet has several game fish species including rainbow, brown, cutthroat, perch, rock bass, and the illegally introduced walleye.

Our sampling at DeSmet is done in the spring and fall in order to keep tabs on this popular fishery. The goal of the spring sampling is to target trout species, while the fall sampling is primarily geared to trying to sample walleye.

This year large brown trout were sampled ranging in size from 17 to 28 inches and 2 to 10.5 pounds. In both sampling events we captured 132 rainbow ranging in size from 11 to 21 inches and up to 3 pounds.

Walleye. In both sampling events combined we captured 97 walleye ranging in size from 10 to 25 inches and up to 7.5 pounds. Aging data collected from these walleye show that fish are between 1 and 6 years old with large year classes at 2 and 5 years of age. Lake DeSmet's walleye are probably some of the fattest walleye in the whole state! We use a measurement called relative weight, a relationship of length to weight, to judge a fish's health. For walleye, a relative weight above 90 is a nice healthy walleye. The relative weight for walleye in DeSmet ranged between 83 and 132, with the average around 110.

We have had some complaints this year from anglers saying that the trout fishing is not as good as it used to be. Over the past few years our catch per unit effort (CPUE = number of fish captured divided by number of hours the net set) has decreased for rainbow trout. In 2008 our CPUE for rainbow was 0.13 fish/hour compared with 0.27/hour in 2006 and 0.31/hour in 2005.

What does this mean? More than likely the increase in the walleye population is starting to have an impact on the trout fishery. So how can we have both trout and walleye? Like other waters across the state that have trout and walleye fisheries (Alcova, Pathfinder, Seminoe, Boysen), DeSmet will have to be stocked with bigger trout in order for the majority to avoid walleye predation. Starting in 2010 we will start stocking 9 inch rainbows instead of 7 inch rainbows. A study conducted at Pathfinder Reservoir showed that 9 inch rainbow returned to the creel 25% better than 7 inch rainbow.

The fact is, walleye are here and they are here to stay and we'll have to change our management strategies to provide the best fishery that we can.

Muddy Guard #1 Update



Large rainbow from Muddy Guard #1

What can you say about Muddy Guard #1 other than this is one great, trophy trout fishery!! In 2004 this lake was drained and chemically treated to remove white suckers and to improve the trout fishery. Not only did it work, it has worked well. In 2008 our sampling has shown the trout continue to grow at astonishing rates. Brown trout ranged from 16 to 22 inches and 2 to 4 1/2 pounds. Rainbow trout ranged in size from 9 to 21 inches and up to 3 1/4 pounds. Snake River cutthroat are doing very well ranging from 7 to 20 inches and up to 3 1/4 pounds.

Anglers are reminded that Muddy Guard #1 is managed as a trophy trout fishery. The creel limit on trout is one (1) per day or in possession. All trout less than 20 inches must be released to the water immediately. Fishing is permitted by flies and lures only.

Story Continued (from page 7)

The eggs are then rinsed in clean water to remove any waste or broken shells. Unlike salmon, trout do not die after spawning and can be used for several years before egg/milt production decreases.

What happens after you have fertilized the eggs? After rinsing, the eggs are put into a large insulated cooler, to sit undisturbed for one hour; this allows the eggshells to harden so that the eggs may be safely moved. If the eggs are to be incubated here at Story Hatchery, they are brought to the incubator room and placed into our incubators. If the eggs are to be sent to another hatchery for incubation we put them into a plastic bag, bubble in some oxygen, and send them (cooler and all) on their way. We use the coolers to maintain a constant water temperature for the eggs and the plastic bag to hold the water in case the drain plug comes loose. There is usually little to no mortality during transport.

What happens in the incubator room? First, the eggs are disinfected in an iodine solution to kill bacteria and fungus; we do this to every egg that goes in or out. Next, they are put into one of three types of incubators (Jar, Drip, Heath) where the basic idea is simply to keep the eggs moist and undisturbed while they develop. Because fish are cold blooded and development is related to water temperature, we now have two options. Most hatcheries prefer Story's eggs because our cold spring water causes the eggs to develop at a much slower rate and these late eggs fit better into their plans. Or, we have the option to use the instantaneous water heater to warm the water and speed up egg development. We use this primarily to bring different groups of eggs up to the same stage of development. For example, we have the ability to make eggs spawned 35 days apart hatch on the same day if needed.

How do you know how many eggs you have? Because we deal with so many eggs each year, (around 5 million) it is not practical to count each one. Instead, we use math to come up with a very close approximation. First, we take several samples of a group of eggs using a Von Bayer Trough. This instrument is simply two pieces of flat metal put together to form a "V"; its length, about 10 inches, is such that the number of eggs it holds is equal to the number of eggs in one liquid ounce. We then measure all of the eggs with beakers to determine the total number of ounces. Multiplication then gives us the total number of eggs. Example: 198 eggs per ounce X 1200 ounces = 237,600 eggs.

How do you ship the eggs to other states? Shipping eggs is actually an easy process and we have had good luck over the years with survival. The shipping box consists of a thick styrofoam cooler wrapped in a plastic bag inside of a heavy cardboard box. The eggs are placed in wet cloths on wooden trays that fit into the cooler. The top tray contains ice that slowly melts, drips, and keeps the eggs moist. The eggs are then shipped overnight via Fed Ex or UPS to their new home.

Yellowstone Cutthroat Restoration Continued (from page 1)

insects, but populations normally rebound quickly.

Small tributaries in the project area probably don't get much fishing pressure, but the main stem Little Tongue River along Black Mountain Road is a popular camping area. We'll be on hand to answer questions during the treatment, but folks who fish there will notice a lack of fish over the next couple of years. That's because we have to treat over two years to make sure we get all the non-native fish and any young fish that might emerge from the gravel after the first treatment (rotenone doesn't affect fish eggs in the gravel).

We believe this is an important and safe project, but recognize that people might want to know more about it. Unfortunately, there isn't room here to answer all the questions people are likely to have. We held an open house at the Sheridan Game and Fish office on March 12, but if we missed you there, or you still have questions, we'd love to talk to you. Please stop by and visit Bill Bradshaw at the Sheridan Game and Fish Department office on East 5th Street, or call him at 307-672-7418 to find out more about this project.



Egg collection



Putting up eggs in incubators



Yellowstone cutthroat



Little Tongue River

Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) is the general term to describe exotic, non-native organisms, that may cause negative impacts to fisheries, recreational water resources, and municipalities. These organisms (plant or animal) can have ecological, recreational, and economic impacts. They can be transported easily via boats, trailers, and waders. While Wyoming is greatly concerned with whirling disease, eurasian water milfoil, and New Zealand mudsnails, the two species of greatest concern are quagga and zebra mussels.



Quagga mussel (top) and zebra mussel (bottom)

Adults are usually 1 to 2 inches long and grow in clusters containing many individuals. These mussels are very prolific and females can produce up to 1 million eggs each season! The young are called veligers. These microscopic larvae float in the water column and can be carried (and spread) in live wells, bilge water, minnow buckets, or any other equipment holding water.

These mussels can have great impacts on power plants, municipalities, irrigation, and a host of other water users. They can impede water transport by clogging pipes, turbines, pumps, and filtration equipment. Adult mussels can also clog water intakes on boat motors causing them to overheat (see picture below).



Fisheries are also impacted by these mussels. Mussels are filter feeders and in this process they remove phytoplankton (tiny green algae). As phytoplankton disappear so do the zooplankton (tiny invertebrates). And as the zooplankton disappear, so do forage fish and juvenile game fish, ultimately resulting in a population crash of your favorite game fish! For example, the lake trout population in Lake Ontario has declined by 95% in the past 10 years as a result of mussel infestation!

While most mussel infestation is east of the Mississippi River, zebra and quagga mussels have recently been discovered in four of Wyoming's neighboring states; Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Utah.



So what can anglers and boaters do to help keep mussels out of Wyoming? We are asking people to 1) **DRAIN** all water from boat motors, live wells, and ballast 2) **CLEAN** all plants, animals, and mud from boats and equipment including all crevices and hidden areas (especially boat trailers) and 3) **DRY** your boat and equipment completely before launching in other waters. These three steps are critical if you use your boat in any infested water but are good practice when going to any different water. It only takes one boat to infect an entire watershed. Anglers and other recreation users are asked to help spread the word about this problem. The more people are informed, the less likely the threat. Please visit the websites below for more information on AIS.

<http://www.protectyourwaters.net/>

<http://www.100thmeridian.org/>

<http://gf.state.wy.us/fish/AIS/index.asp>



We welcome your comments or suggestions about this newsletter. Please feel free to contact us with the information to the left or send us an email at:

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Dates to Remember

September 10th - 12th: Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo, Casper Events Center. 1-888-EXPO-WYO.

June 6th, 2009

Wyoming's Free Fishing Day
Check the Game and Fish website or your fishing regulations for further details.



Upcoming Work for 2009

Thanks for taking the time to view our newsletter! Please feel free to stop by our office, give us a call, or catch us out in the field. Although we'll be very busy this summer with field work, we'll be happy to answer your questions about fishing and fishing opportunities within the Sheridan Region. Here is a list of work that we have planned for the 2009 field season. Stay tuned for updates on these waters in our next newsletter. Happy fishing!

- Fish passage work on lower Clear Creek.
- Sample North Tongue, Bull Creek, Clear Creek through Buffalo, Blue Creek, Big Willow Creek, Owen Creek.
- Sample Lake DeSmet, Healy Reservoir, Park Reservoir, Muddy Guard #1 and #2, Kleenburn Ponds, Keyhole Reservoir, LAK Reservoir, Tie Hack Reservoir, Kearney Reservoir, Cloud Peak Reservoir.
- We will also sample several high mountain lakes in the Cloud Peak Wilderness including; Deer, Florence, Golden, Mead, Diamond, Sapphire, Glacier, South Piney Creek Lakes.
- Yellowstone cutthroat restoration work on the Little Tongue and Elkhorn Creek.

