

Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Collaborative Working Group – Round 1

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When you consider the future of cutthroat trout in the Bighorn Basin what challenges, both social and biological, do we need to consider to ensure all interests are met?

Group A:

- Access to river, wading or boating
- Bears in same area as fishing
- Special nature of YSC
- Like to get away from people, go into special places
- Like quick and easy access to fish
- What tools do WGFD have to work with?
- What restrictions can help YSC? What regulations could be used?
- What does suppressing walleye do?
 - Why do walleye taste so good? 😊
- What characteristics of streams are necessary for YSC?
- What is the historic range? When was the 'snapshot' of the historic range?
- What population #'s do we need to get to?
- What is the value of fish to fishermen?
- How do we protect what we already have?
- What kind of education is needed for the public?
- How do we deal with / stop Bucket Biologists?
- Programs like XStream and Cutt-Slam – how do we promote and expand?
- How can we add value to the resource?

Group B:

- How is the population of YSC in Dead Indian, and is it utilized?
- Keeping Porcupine stocked?
- This should not be an ESA issue; this is the right thing regardless of ESA pressures
- How does WGFD ensure stocked population stays in the particular drainages?
- What are the costs of projects?
- Should historically barren drainages be stocked?
- Should special regulations be placed on YSC?
- Some brook trout fisheries should be maintained
- Expanding populations and introducing YSC to new drainages
- Bliss Creek potential?
- Balance limited access to preserve the species, and easy access to serve the public
- How do we ensure these projects don't cause loss of a fishery during the project?
- What are impacts of Rotenone / Chemicals used in restoration?
- Coordinate with other successful projects

Group C:

- No-kill or reduced creel limits on existing YSC fisheries
- Take care of current viable (existing) populations
- Examine historic habitats; did cuts ever inhabit current brook trout territory?

- Silt control on tailwaters – Corbett, Willwood, Buffalo Bill
- Over-competition of other species
- Expense of introduction
- Fish migration needs
- BOLD PRINT REGULATIONS
- Tackle restrictions
- Water management in critical habitat areas; guaranteed in-stream flows
- Cooperation with other agencies
- Who has the final say in management?
- Public vs. Private Waters (access)
- Develop a list of projects for habitat through public survey
- Sacrifice one good fishery for another
- Enforcement of regulations
- Is it worthwhile?
- Balance habitat, agriculture and regulation
- Identify historic YSC vs. locations that would be a good native fishery
 - If it has an existing trout population (e.g. brown, etc.) is it worth changing?
- Expand public outreach
- Citizen science (not bucket biologists)
- Public dollars should lead to public access to good YSC fisheries
- Feedback on projects
- Role that native fish play in the lifecycle of other wildlife species

Group D:

- Sustainability
- Quality of habitat
- Evaluate fishing pressure (harvest, catch & release, slot limits, competition)
- Pressure on YSC by other species (competition)
- Public education
- Economics
- Environmental concerns (water quality, habitat, connectivity)
- Public access
- Hybridization from other species
- Are YSC a priority fish species?
- Legal obstacles
- Just want to catch fish ... don't care what type!
- Why aren't YSC managed in the BHB like they are in Yellowstone National Park?

Group E:

- There are limited acceptable locations with natural barriers
- Water quality (cold water), and threat of climate change
- Competition from brook trout
- Regulations on YSC
- Strive to avoid ESA designation on YSC
- Success stories (Dead Indian, Paint Rock) are worth it to restore YSC
- Failures (Labarge Creek) that we can't repeat

- Education on Rotenone – what does it do
- Public education on genetic purity of reintroduced YSC
- Increasing wildfire activity and impact on YSC population, restoration efforts
- Fishing quality
- YSC as a Heritage Fish
- Challenges to natural spawning
- Challenges of increasing the social value of YSC
- Challenges of livestock impact on streams

Group F:

- Habitat
- Competing Species
- Reproduction
- Historic project data – success stories
- Proactive, not reactive
- Catch and release / creel limits
- Competing use of waters (agriculture, recreation)
- Stream bank preservation
- Access – public vs. private
- Identify the economic value that fish and fishing bring to the Big Horn Basin
- Identify the ecological value of YSC
- Which species does the public prefer?
- Private/public partnerships for habitat and reproduction

Group G:

- Why YSC? Because they are native.
- Already many rivers/drainages with YSC
- Preservation / conservation versus restoration
- Local source for reintroductions
- Potential for federal oversight
- More stocking of native YSC
- Effects of stocking
- Is there a decline, and why?
- What is a suitable habitat? And what are suitable for restoration?
- Economic value: commercial versus personal
- Fishing Pressure
- Consumption vs. Conservation

Group H:

- Overfishing
- YSC don't compete well with other salmonids
- Habitat degradation
- Political and inter-agency conflicts
- Not enough funding!
- Water use – dewatering and water diversion
- Better public awareness for YSC needs

- Hybridizations
- Need larger fish crews, more biologists
- Limited suitable streams for restorations – need streams with natural barriers
- What is our current status?
- Why do we continue to harvest wild YSC?