

Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Collaborative Working Group – Round 1

Worland Jan. 25, 2018

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?

- Uniqueness/value of Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YSC)
- History of catching big YSC as a youth at East Ten Sleep Creek, Baby Wagon; disappointed to only be catching brookies and wants to see YSC again
- What are the effects of YSC restoration on other trout species?
 - Does not want to eliminate other species of trout.
- Values the quality of experience AND aesthetic value having YSC on the landscape
 - There are a lot of opportunities out there for the “ice chest” fishing, but not many for the other quality experience.
- Relaxing experience coming from Cody area to Bighorns for fishing; don’t have to carry bear spray
- Bighorns fishing is kid-friendly, more family oriented. Family connecting to fishing is important.
- Native species bring a certain magic that excites a new level of experience. They were here way before us; given the choice, I would rather catch a native.
 - Values in knowing natives exist, even if you don’t utilize resource.
- What caused the reduction of cutthroat trout. Reasons for decline?
- Noted a tremendous amount of interest in CuttSlam program
- We have to recognize that youth/family need to have opportunities with volume of brookies
- Public education important to reduce the aura of “what are they messing with now?!”
- Wants to hear more follow up, report on past projects sharing success stories.
- Need more education, telling the story of YSC and why it’s special.
- Sportsmen need to have high volume, easily accessed fisheries. Diversity of desires, understanding. People want very different things from their experiences.
- How will this get youth involved?
- Costs: We have to equate cost to value and be up front about cost
- Does access to creek with ATVs have an influence cutthroat? Does the pressure effect populations?
 - Select areas that may not have good access, less pressure.
- Perception that YSC is an elitist fish and brings in the “Patagonia” crowd
- Do people have the knowledge of biological parameters that cutthroat/restoration need?
- Understand potential streams where introduction or restoration can occur
- Reintroduction process: Where do they come from, how do you raise them, transplant them? How much does a project cost?
- We need to move this project along fast enough to prevent listing on ESA. Timing is of importance. And so we don’t lose unique populations of YSC, genetics.