

YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT

Collaborative Working Group – Round 1

Summary of Themes from Public Input:

INTRODUCTION:

Three (3) meetings were held across the Big Horn Basin:

- Worland, January 25, 2018
- Cody, January 28, 2018
- Lovell, January 30, 2018

At each meeting, attendees received a brief presentation on Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout (YSC) restoration by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), then were invited to discuss the following question:

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?

THEMES:

After reviewing input from the approximately 80 participants spanning three meetings across the Big Horn Basin, several themes were identified. Several themes are considered *Interests and Concerns*, or ideas that must be considered and balanced, and other were considered *Questions and Information Needed*, which include clarifying information to be offered at future meetings.

INTERESTS AND CONCERNS:

Overall, a need to find BALANCE among:

- Opportunities to fish for native and nonnative trout species
- Opportunities for both consumptive & non-consumptive Users
- Opportunities for both backcountry & frontcountry experiences
- Access considerations (public/private; motorized/non motorized)

Additionally, interests include:

- Preserving the populations of YSC we already have
- Better understanding impact of regulations (Catch & Release, Creel Limits, Bait, etc.)
- Many anglers value quantity of catch, and youth/new angler experiences
- Many anglers value the unique experience of fishing a native species
- Being responsible with resources (funding, agency time, etc.)
- Understanding the WGFD's "end game" or ultimate goal
- Improving public education and understanding of native species (in general) and the YSC issues (specifically)
- Timely action to avoid future adverse effects, including endangered species concerns

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QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION NEEDED:

#1: Understanding YSC and Other Trout Species

YSC History and Current Status

- Historic and current distribution of YSC
- Population changes – #'s then and now, and reason for change/decline

Other Salmonids (Brook, Rainbow, Brown trout)

- Historic and current distribution of brook, brown, rainbow trout
- Population changes – #'s then and now, and reason for change/decline

Related Topics

- Competition between YSC and other salmonids
- Genetic "purity" of YSC and impacts of hybridization
- Comparison and "catchability" of YSC vs other salmonids

#2a: Habitat and Stream Systems

Criteria for good restoration/introduction sites for YSC

- Barriers (natural and constructed)
- Seasonal habitat requirements
- Spawning habitat

#2b: The Restoration Process

Understanding the Restoration Process

- Selection of viable streams (using information requested above, #2a)
- Rotenone: what it is and does
- Impact of the fish already present (browns, brookies, etc.)
- How long until a fishery is fishable again
- Methods of establishing YSC populations
- Costs and resources involved in restoration projects