



CODY REGION newsletter

Get involved with Game and Fish's season setting

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department's public comment period on 2016 hunting season setting regulations is now open. Individuals interested in the changes to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission's regulations are encouraged to attend a public meeting in the Bighorn Basin and provide written input. Online commenting is available as well.

"Your thoughts on these regulations and the hunting season are deeply welcomed. We at Game and Fish make adjustments to these drafts based on what we hear from you and we try to provide as many ways for the public to get involved as possible," said Game and Fish Director Scott Talbott.

Members of the public can provide comments through the [Game and Fish Public Meeting website](#), by mail, or through a series of statewide public meetings. The deadline for submitting public comment through any medium is 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 25, 2016.

Bighorn Basin meeting schedule:

Powell Open House	March 10	Park Co Fairgrounds	6-8 p.m.
Cody Open House	March 14	Bighorn Federal Bank	6-8 p.m.
Greybull Open House	March 15	Town Hall	6-8 p.m.
Meeteetse Open House	March 15	Senior Center	6-8 p.m.
Thermopolis Open House	March 16	Bighorn Federal Bank	6-8 p.m.
Lovell Open House	March 17	Fire Hall	6-8 p.m.
Worland, Final meeting	March 21	Washakie Co Fairgrounds	6-8 p.m.

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In the water

Public meeting on proposed Eagle Creek treatment well attended

A recent informational meeting held in Cody to discuss the proposed treatment of Eagle Creek to restore native Yellowstone cutthroat trout was well attended. Online public commenting on the proposed action has been extended through March 6.

During a meeting held at the Park County Public Library Feb. 8, Cody Region Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt presented information on the proposed treatment of Eagle Creek. A question and answer session followed the presentation. Cody Region Fisheries Supervisor Sam Hochhalter said 46 people attended the meeting. “As with any project of this caliber, there are both supporters and opponents of the project,” Hochhalter said. “So far, we have received 25 online comments and anticipate more. It is important to note the online commenting period has been extended a week and comments are now due by midnight March 6.”



Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt presented information about the proposed Eagle Creek treatment at a recent public meeting in Cody.

Yellowstone cutthroat trout have been reduced to a small fraction of their historic range and have been identified as a species of greatest conservation need in Wyoming. “There are numerous causes for the declines in Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations and nonnative trout are a major contributor to these declines,” Burckhardt said. “Isolation of Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations from the invasion of nonnative trout is necessary to maintain this species over the long term. Eagle Creek is an ideal location because it has ample habitat above a natural waterfall barrier that will prevent the invasion of nonnative trout.”

In cooperation with the Shoshone National Forest, Game and Fish is proposing to use the chemical rotenone to remove the existing brook trout fishery in Eagle Creek, a tributary to the North Fork Shoshone River west of Cody. Treatment will occur above a waterfall barrier approximately eight miles upstream from the confluence with the North Fork Shoshone River. Detoxification will occur immediately below the treatment reach to ensure no rotenone reaches the North Fork Shoshone River. Yellowstone cutthroat trout will be stocked in the drainage after all brook trout have been removed.

Written comments will be accepted online until 12 a.m. March 6 at <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Regional-Offices/Cody-Region/Eagle-Creek-Yellowstone-Cutthroat-Trout-Restoration>. Details of the proposed restoration action are available online or by contacting the Cody Region Game and Fish office at 307-527-7125.

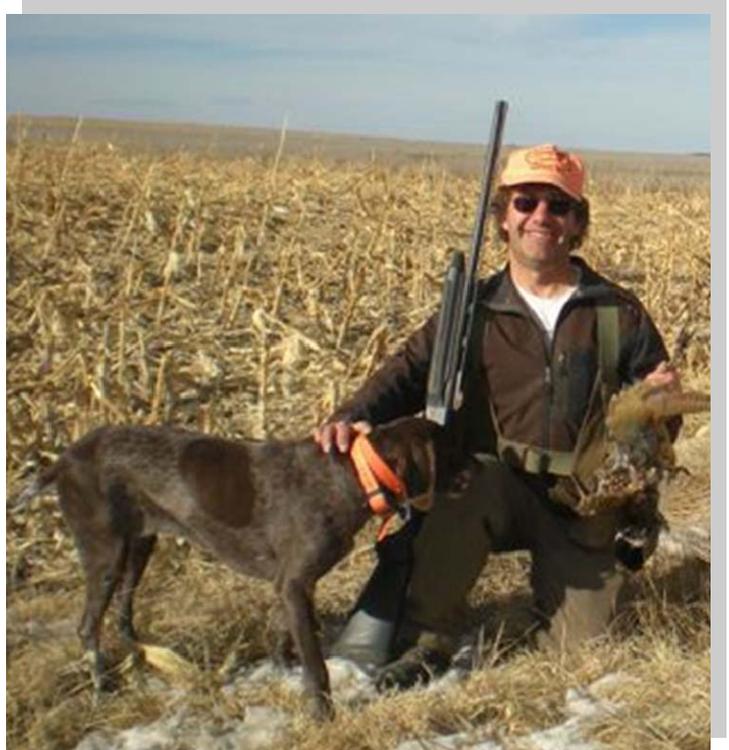
Of interest

Bighorn Basin youth encouraged to apply for Tom Easterly Memorial Award

The application period for the Tom Easterly Memorial award is now open and youth in the Bighorn Basin are encouraged to apply. Recipients of this award will each receive a lifetime Wyoming game bird/small game license and lifetime conservation stamp. Applications are due by April 1.

Greybull Game Warden Bill Robertson said youth in the Bighorn Basin ages 14-17 can apply by submitting an application and essay describing why the applicant hunts and why wildlife is important to that individual.

“The Tom Easterly Memorial Award was established in the spirit of former Greybull biologist Tom Easterly’s belief in our future generations of conservationists,” Robertson said. “This is the second year the award will give two area youth a lifetime Wyoming game bird/small game license and lifetime conservation stamp.”



Tom Easterly

Tom Easterly served as the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Greybull area biologist from 1992 through 2014. “Tom’s passion was introducing young hunters to the sport of bird hunting and sharing the importance of well managed wildlife habitat with them,” Robertson said.

To be eligible, applicants must reside within the boundaries of the Greybull Biologist District which include Basin, Burlington, Cowley, Greybull, Lovell, Manderson, Ten Sleep and Worland and be a resident who has continuously resided in Wyoming for at least 10 years immediately preceding the date of application.

Applicants will be judged by their application qualifications and the content of their essay by a committee of five. Applications may be downloaded at wgfd.wyo.gov and are available at the Cody Region Game and Fish office.

Left: Tom Easterly collaring a bighorn sheep several years ago.



On the ground

McWhirter recognized by the Wild Sheep Foundation

Doug McWhirter, Wyoming Game and Fish Department Cody wildlife biologist, was inducted into the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) 2016 Wild Sheep Biologist's Wall of Fame. The [WSF Wild Sheep Biologist's Wall of Fame](#) was established in 2006 to honor and acknowledge the passion, commitment, and vision of men and women dedicated to the sound, biological management of, and hunting opportunities for, North America's wild sheep.

For many years, McWhirter has co-chaired the Game and Fish Bighorn Sheep Working Group, the Wyoming Statewide Domestic Sheep/Bighorn Sheep Interaction Working Group, and the Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Bighorn Sheep committee. McWhirter also coordinates implementation of bighorn sheep disease surveillance throughout Wyoming, was instrumental in initiating a tri-state (Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho) bighorn sheep and mountain goat research project in collaboration with Montana State University, and has served for many years as the Game and Fish representative to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Wild Sheep Working Group.

"Doug has been an outstanding employee for Game and Fish, has established himself as a wildlife professional of the highest regard and is an expert in the area of wild sheep management. Our sincere appreciation to Doug for a job very well done and recognition well deserved," said Scott Talbott, director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.



Doug McWhirter

WSF's mission is to enhance wild sheep populations, promote professional wildlife management, and educate the public and youth on sustainable use and the conservation benefits of hunting while promoting the interests of the hunter and all stakeholders. Inductees to the Biologist Wall of Fame are based on their scientific contributions to the enhancement of North America's wild sheep and sheep hunting, to honor those that have dedicated their professional lives to conservation and management of wild sheep.

"The Wild Sheep Foundation is proud to induct Doug in our WSF Wild Sheep Biologist's Wall of Fame. Doug epitomizes the high-caliber professional wildlife manager that WSF values so highly." said WSF President and CEO Gray N. Thornton. "Doug's recognition speaks volumes for him as an individual, and for our partner in wild sheep conservation, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department."

On the ground

Elk classifica-



Worland Area Biologist Bart Kroger counts and classifies elk in Hunt Area 64 from a helicopter.

During the winter months, Game and Fish biologists collect ratio data on elk populations through aerial observations using a helicopter. Game and Fish collects a sample of the total population and classifies the animals into the following groups: females, juveniles, and males. From the total number of elk sampled, biologists evaluate the number of calves per 100 cows, the number of adult bulls per 100 cows and the number of yearling bulls per 100 cows. In combination with other data, this information is used to evaluate hunting seasons, assess herd productivity and determine over-winter survival.

