

YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT

Collaborative Working Group – Round 3

Summary of Round 3 Meetings

INTRODUCTION:

Three (3) meetings for Round 3 of the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Collaborative Working Group were held across the Big Horn Basin:

- Lovell, March 5, 2018 (combined Round 2 & 3)
- Worland, March 7, 2018 (combined Round 2 & 3)
- Cody, March 28, 2018 (Round 3)

The Lovell and Worland Round 2 meetings were extended to include Round 3, which offered time for participants to identify specific locations for potential restoration projects and express endorsement on each suggested location. The identification and endorsement phase of Round 3 occurred at a separate meeting in Cody.

ROUND 3 MEETING AGENDA

At each meeting location, Round 1 and Round 2 meeting presentations and discussions were briefly recapped and general questions were addressed. Then, participants at each meeting were invited to focus on geographically pertinent watersheds as follows:

1. Lovell: Big Horn Lake
2. Worland: Nowood
3. Cody: Clark's Fork, North Fork, and South Fork

Focusing on the respective watersheds participants identified locations where restoration projects could occur. Discussion, including reference to maps and historical user information, was held for each suggested location. To the fullest extent possible, participants and WGF D personnel worked together to identify how fully each location matched the recommendation criteria. Recommendation criteria, established during Round 1 and 2 meetings, are described on Table 6 of this document, as well as online at: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Get-Involved/Cutthroat-Trout/Cutthroat-Meetings>.

Following discussion, participants were asked to share their numerical level of endorsement for each location where restoration projects could occur. The levels of endorsement were:

- 1: Like it
- 2: Live with it, have some reservations
- 3: Opposed, due to major reservations

Participants offering a #2 or #3 level of endorsement were asked to articulate their reservations. Additionally, participants were invited to abstain from offering endorsement ratings if they felt they did not have enough information. Additionally, several locations identified at Round 3 meetings occur lacking enough information to evaluate. WGF D will conduct additional research and conduct appropriate groundwork for further evaluation. The tables below, categorized by watershed, are the locations suggested for restoration, along with the count for each level of endorsement, and the reservations articulated by participants.

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Table 1: Big Horn Lake (Lovell meeting)

Granite Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	1
	2 (some reservations)	3
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for cabin owner input 		
Shell Creek (above and including Shell Reservoir)	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	5
	2 (some reservations)	0
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reservations offered 		
Porcupine Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	1
	2 (some reservations)	1
	3 (opposed)	4
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popularity of existing brook trout fishery History of prior social concerns 		
Trapper Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	4
	2 (some reservations)	1
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access concerns 		
Willett Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	6
	2 (some reservations)	0
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reservations offered 		
Additional location(s) suggested that require further investigation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crystal Creek Five Springs 		

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Table 2: Nowood (Worland meeting)

Canyon	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	5
	2 (some reservations)	0
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private land / access 		
Leigh	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	5
	2 (some reservations)	0
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reservations offered 		
East Tensleep	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	5
	2 (some reservations)	0
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reservations offered 		
Meadowlark Lake (including Lake Ck and East Tensleep Ck)	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	1
	2 (some reservations)	2
	3 (opposed)	2
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High use area; complicated social issues High quality brook trout fishery 		
Additional location(s) suggested that require further investigation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Otter – not moved forward to receive level of endorsement due to private land concerns among participants. 		

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Table 3: Clark’s Fork (Cody meeting)

Crandall Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	18
	2 (some reservations)	4
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of future barriers may inhibit kayaking • Large scope / size of the project, and accessibility to the entire system 		
Line Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	10
	2 (some reservations)	7
	3 (opposed)	3
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scope / size of the project • Historical administrative hang-ups (MTEPA & USFS Research Area) 		
Littlerock Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	17
	2 (some reservations)	5
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Many unknowns at this point 		
Sunlight Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	NA
	2 (some reservations)	NA
	3 (opposed)	NA
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted by breakout group participants as a candidate stream that would meet the majority of the recommendation criteria. • The project was not moved forward to the larger group for further consideration due to broad acknowledgment of the popularity of the existing brook trout fishery and the expectation of elevated social concerns should the project be recommended. 		
Additional location(s) suggested that require further investigation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 		

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Table 4: North Fork (Cody meeting)

Eagle Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	18
	2 (some reservations)	2
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of prior social concerns • YSC restoration may result in increased use of an already high-use area 		
Elk Fork	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	2
	2 (some reservations)	10
	3 (opposed)	9
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding risks at campground • High use area; complicated social issues • Cutoff existing Rainbow Trout spawn • Meandering stream may mean high barrier failure risk 		
Fishhawk	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	5
	2 (some reservations)	15
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access in wilderness area, and many (18+) crossings 		
Grinnell	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	15
	2 (some reservations)	4
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on Brook Trout populations • Questions on barrier potential 		
Trout	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	4
	2 (some reservations)	12
	3 (opposed)	4
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landowner access • Existing diversion structure • History of dewatering 		
Additional location(s) suggested that require further investigation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 		

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Table 5: South Fork (Cody meeting)

Ishawooa Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	16
	2 (some reservations)	3
	3 (opposed)	0
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access in wilderness areas 		
Rock Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	3
	2 (some reservations)	5
	3 (opposed)	7
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Limited habitat 		
Boulder Creek	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	3
	2 (some reservations)	13
	3 (opposed)	1
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical stocking failed to establish self-sustaining population(s) • Risk of flooding 		
South Fork Shoshone (Bliss Creek Meadows)	RATING	COUNT
	1 (like it)	NA
	2 (some reservations)	NA
	3 (opposed)	NA
Reasons for Reservations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended by several participants during the breakout group and after the meeting. These participants recognized this as a quality candidate but also acknowledged complications with wilderness and the need to blast a barrier below the meadows. 		
Additional location(s) suggested that require further investigation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 		

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Table 6: Recommendation Criteria

Criteria	Indicated on Table	Description
Developed from Restoration Principles		
Current Population	(Y/N)	Whether or not a current YSC population exists in the stream.
Miles Occupied	(#)	Number of miles currently occupied by YSC, reflecting a desired outcome for 5 isolate populations (occupying at least 5 miles) and 1 metapopulation (occupying at least 25 miles) in each of the 5 drainages.
Barriers Present	(Y/N)	The presence of a known natural barrier (e.g. waterfall), reflecting the need for a barrier of at least 6 feet for streams to be a candidate for YSC restoration.
Rainbow Trout (RBT) Present	(Y/N)	The presence of RBT, reflecting the need for any successful restoration to be YSC in isolation.
Brook Trout (BKT) Present	(Y/N)	The presence of BKT, reflecting the need for any successful restoration to be YSC in isolation. .
Probability of Successful Intervention	(L/M/H)	The presence of additional desirable habitat qualities including stream size, large- and fine-scale habitat, water temperatures, etc. indicating the likelihood of project success.
Barriers Potential	(L/M/H)	The potential for an improved barrier to be created, reflecting an alternative for a more efficient, cost-effective barrier when a natural barrier is not present.
Life History Diversity	(L/M/H)	The potential for YSC populations to represent stream-resident, lake dwelling, and migratory, reflecting an adequately diverse population.
Developed from Articulated Public Interests		
Historically Occupied	(Y/N)	Whether or not a current YSC population existed in the stream historically, reflecting the public desire for utilizing historically occupied waters when possible.

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Expansion Potential	(L/M/H)	Whether or not the stream represents an opportunity to expand an existing YSC population, a proxy for the public desire for protecting existing populations whenever possible.
Project Costs	(L/M/H)	The approximate costs of YSC restoration projects, reflecting the public desire for fiscal responsibility in projects.
Front or Back Country	(F/B)	The accessibility of the stream, reflecting the public desire for angling experiences in both settings.
Diversity Opportunities	(Y/N)	The ability to maintain fisheries for a variety of species within a given area/drainage, reflecting the public desire for diverse fishing experiences to be maintained (angler skills, ‘quantity’ of catch, etc.)