

Four 6"-8" Yellowstone cutthroat trout removed from the stomach of an adult lake trout.

A Cutthroat in Crisis


The iconic population of Yellowstone cutthroat trout in Yellowstone Lake has been decimated by the introduction of non-native lake trout and needs your help! While the Yellowstone Lake/Upper Yellowstone River system was once home to an estimated 4,000,000 Yellowstone cutthroat trout, the size of the current population is unknown: latest estimates place it at no more than 10%, likely less than 5%, and potentially **as low as 1-2% of historic levels.**

Conserving, protecting & restoring Wyoming's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds



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S A V E T H E



Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout



The unique environment of Yellowstone Lake was once considered a stronghold for genetically pure Yellowstone cutthroat trout and relatively safe from the impacts of climate change. In addition, Yellowstone cutthroat trout are noted as a keystone species for this entire ecosystem with over 40 other species dependent on them for survival.



Some of the more than 40 species affected by the decline of the native cutthroat trout.

The Insidious Invader

While theories as to the time and means of the illegal introduction of lake trout in Yellowstone Lake vary, they were officially discovered in the lake in 1994. Of the main threats to Yellowstone cutthroat trout subsistence that have been identified lake trout are overwhelmingly recognized by fisheries biologists to be the most significant.

To combat invasive lake trout the National Park Service has been employing gill netting on Yellowstone Lake since 1995 and currently spends approximately \$1,500,000 annually on the effort. To date a total of over 1.1 million lake trout have been netted; 302,000 in 2012 alone. The lake trout population is now estimated at 500,000 adult fish.

Working Towards Recovery

The key to Yellowstone cutthroat trout recovery is major suppression of lake

trout while, at the same time, cutting off recruitment into the lake trout population. The first step in cutting off that recruitment is gathering information on lake trout spawning beds and travel corridors. To accomplish this goal a hydroacoustic telemetry study on Yellowstone Lake was initiated on August 16, 2011.

A total of 221 hydroacoustic tags have been surgically implanted into lake trout. Eighty of these monitor fish depth and water temperature. The movements of these fish are monitored by 52 strategically placed receivers and VPS arrays to pinpoint their spawning beds. This three-year telemetry effort requires a significant National Park Service (NPS), US Geological Survey (USGS), and non-governmental organization (NGO) commitment of money, research time, and support. NGO's such as Trout Unlimited have already donated \$134,000 to support the project in 2011 and 2012. In 2013, we are committed to raising \$118,000 in additional money. NPS and USGS have committed \$685,000 in manpower, scientific analysis, and direct support.



The combined efforts of the NPS, USGS and NGO's are making a difference for the Yellowstone cutthroats. All of the indicators for lake trout population decline and cutthroat population rebounds are positive. One spawning bed is now well studied and others are tentatively identified. Testing of ova suppression has begun.

A major advancement has been initiation of a three-year hydroacoustic telemetry study to identify lake trout movement patterns and spawning beds.



It is not too late to save the **Yellowstone cutthroat trout.**

We need your help to make it happen. Support this effort by donating the cost of a hydroacoustic tag at \$400, a depth-recording telemetry tag at \$750, or more for a receiver. **Every donation is crucial to success.**

YES! I want to help **SAVE the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout!**

Please accept my tax-deductible donation.

- \$1,400 (telemetry receiver)
 \$750 (depth-recording telemetry tag)
 \$400 (hydroacoustic tag)
 \$200 \$100 \$50 \$25
 \$ _____ Other (please specify)

(please PRINT clearly)

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250 N. 1st St.
Lander, WY 82520

OR

Save The Yellowstone Cutthroat
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