

Four 8"-12" 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.



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 \$1,000,000 annually on the effort. To date a total of over 800,000 lake trout have been netted; 220,000 in 2011 alone. The lake trout population is now estimated at 300,000 - 400,000 adult fish.

Working Towards Recovery

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

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

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 study on Yellowstone Lake was initiated on August 16, 2011.

A total of 141 hydroacoustic tags were surgically implanted into lake trout. The movements of these fish are currently being monitored by 40 strategically placed receivers. This three-year telemetry effort requires a significant National Park Service, US Geological Survey (USGS) and non-governmental organization commitment of money, research time, and support. Non-governmental organizations such as Trout Unlimited have already donated \$40,000 to get the project started in 2011 and committed to raising, as a minimum, an additional \$85,000 by spring 2012 to support the second year of the study.

The National Park Service has committed to assisting with this study and to continuing the expanded lake trout suppression program while the USGS has committed to research staffing and project coordination.

To more accurately assess the situation, the USGS would also like to increase the scope of the study by doubling the number of receivers and hydroacoustic tags and adding 50 depth-recording telemetry tags.



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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Cody, WY 82414