

The Cutthroat Chronicles

Official Newsletter of the Snake River Cutthroats

October, 2021

A Message from the President

As one of my first official acts as the new president of the Snake River Cutthroats I want to greet you all to another year of activities in the club. I hope you all had safe, healthy and fun filled summer that included some fishing. The board has been faced and dealt with some interesting challenges this summer. One has been how the club will deal with meetings with the resurgence of Covid. It has been decided that we will follow national TU guidance and we will be holding both board and general membership meetings virtually (by Zoom) until further notice.

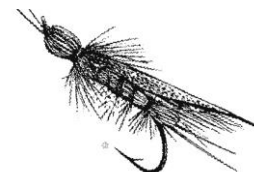
Because we can not make announcements of upcoming events at general meetings will be posting then on the club website. We will be going down to Daniels Resv. on Saturday Sept. 25. I have some ideas for expansion of the club's membership to increase our effectiveness as a partner in the protection of cold water species and their habitat. More on that in coming months. Until that time keep fishing, treat each other and others on the water well, and keep safe and healthy.

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UPCOMING EVENT
General Mambership Meeting
Todd Lanning via Zoom

Wednesday, October 13th, 6:30 PM

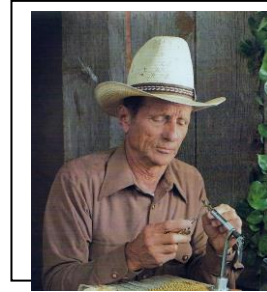




Todd Lanning on Fly Fishing in the Greater Yellowstone Region

Idaho native, ex-marine, and passionate fly fisher, Todd Lanning has carved a niche in the fly fishing world through working for various outdoor retail businesses and because of deep experience in this region and appreciation for its fisheries. He has been a manager for Henry's Fork Anglers (HFA) for several years. Even though the Last Chance- Harriman reach of the Henry's Fork is just across the street, HFA gets plenty of inquiries about fishing nearby Yellowstone National Park waters. And why not: the Park, you see, holds the best concentration of quality salmonid water in the country if not the world. Thus Mike, Chris, Todd and their HFA crew have taken time to visit these waters numerous times in order to develop a strategy for approaching Park waters. So we will learn the benefits of the HFA experience in fishing Yellowstone Park waters through Todd's presentation. Visit www.snakerivercutthroats.org or the Cutthroats Facebook page for a link to access the meeting,

Another Bing Lempke Story



As his reputation as a superb fly tier grew, Bing was invited to demonstrate his skills around the country. Bing was participating in a fly tying event in Missoula, Montana when a wide-eyed young boy was in the front of those watching his magic at the fly tying vise and listening to his dialogue. The youngster commented: "Gee, Mister, you sure can tie flies!" "Thank you, and do you like to fish?", Bing responded. "Yes, we went down the Bitterroot yesterday morning.", the lad offered. "Did you catch anything?", Bing asked. "Yup! And we kept some for dinner.", came the reply. "What did you catch them on?", Bing asked. "Worms.", said the lad. "Heck, I wouldn't eat any fish I caught on a worm!", Bing teased. "Oh, that's OK!", replied the lad, "We cleaned them really good inside and out before we had them for dinner!" Everyone present, including Bing, laughed.

Electronic Newsletters Available

For those still receiving hard copies of the newsletter via standard mail, but would prefer to receive it via email, please send your email address to Carol Staples, our membership chair, at casbas@cableone.net.

Fewer mailings mean more dollars for conservation projects. The fish will appreciate your cost-saving efforts.



Chuck Collins

Generous, intelligent, and far sighted, he was a man of many accomplishments and interests: community contributor, administrator, financial advisor, fly shop owner, and INL property manager on the professional side. In terms of personal interest his spanned a range from coin collecting, jewelry assembly, gemology, wildlife conservation, fly fishing and fly tying.



As a fly fisher Chuck got to know the waters of southeastern Idaho. Later in life, wanting to own a fly fishing shop, he purchased All Seasons Angler in Pocatello from Jimmy Gabettas in 1995. Fly tying became his most enduring interest in the fly fishing world. He created a few patterns such as the Green Caddis Mite and the Baby Mack, but tying traditional patterns was his main interest. Catskill dries, Pott flies, and the Wulff series became of particular interest for Chuck. With time, his prowess at the tying vise and engaging personality attracted attention for invitations to demonstrate his skills at fly fishing shows around the West including every Eastern Idaho Fly Tying and Fly Fishing (EIFTE). Not only did he tie flies at these shows, he quizzed organizers on what is required to produce these. He first put such knowledge gained by administering the second EIFTE held in Pocatello in 1995. He repeated doing so in Pocatello in 1998. In the 1990s when Marvin Nolte came to Idaho Falls to conduct Atlantic salmon fly dressing and 19th century flies workshops, Chuck was among the students. Taking these workshops kindled an interest in obtaining exotic feathers in Chuck. As years passed his collection of such items grew in numbers and value. Next came an interest in framing flies. This activity was intense enough to take over fly framing duties for the FFI's fly tying group in 2019, and Chuck continued this duty until his untimely death this August. So Chuck was a broad scale contributor to the fly fishing world and beyond, and his death is tragic in that with a longer life, he would have made more contributions.

Summer Heat Will Cause Some Trout Mortality, but Halting Fishing Won't Improve the Situation

**By
Joe Kozfkay, Idaho State Fisheries Manager**

Trout are resilient and even extreme weather rarely has a long-term impact on populations

Wild animals for the most part are well equipped to survive fluctuations in environmental conditions, and trout, Idaho's favorite fish, are no different. Although they prefer cold water, trout are highly resilient, productive and adaptive. Because of this, short-term fishing regulation changes are unlikely to affect their numbers long-term, even during an extraordinary heatwave.

Recently, well-intended anglers and angling groups have requested Fish and Game restrict or close fishing during extreme heat because they feel restrictions will reduce fishing-related mortality and preserve more trout for next year when conditions will hopefully improve.

We are concerned, too

Fish and Game biologists, nearly all of whom are anglers, understand and share their concerns and acknowledge that some heat-stressed fish will die from angling-related mortality. However, basing fishing closures on reduced risk to a relatively small portion of the local trout population is unlikely to change the overall numbers in the near or long term.

Extensive monitoring efforts have clearly shown that fishing effort and catch rates decline substantially during late summer when hot weather makes air and water uncomfortably warm for anglers and trout, alike.

Therefore, a relatively low proportion of a stream or river's trout population has slightly higher mortality associated with angling, and in short, it won't affect trout abundance the following year, which makes restrictions or closures biologically unnecessary. Regardless, biologists remain committed to monitoring and researching this topic, and assessing whether regulation changes are needed to ensure these cherished resources remain healthy into the future.

Weather or Not

River flows and temperatures are probably the two most important environmental conditions for Idaho's stream and river-inhabiting trout, and we've seen some wild fluctuations in recent years.

Within the last four years, grandparent-aged trout now at the ripe, old-age of six or seven and approaching the great beyond have experienced a once-in-40 year flooding in 2017 after the now-legendary "Snowmagedon." And as that event was just starting to fade into history, we're confronting record-high temperatures and a surprising water scarcity in 2021 (aka Scorchfest).

Between these extremes was a relatively stable period of average to above-average flows. Quite often, biologists are asked: "How do trout populations respond to such events? What does Fish and Game do to ensure trout populations remain healthy during extreme conditions?"



2021 has brought on more of these questions than usual, and although Snowmageddon and Scorchfest are hopefully rare events, they aren't unprecedented, and trout have thrived before and after similar weather events.

Summer can be scary, but winter is the real peril

For the most part, in largely unaltered watersheds, flows and temperature go hand-in-hand. Good snowpacks, allow for higher flows later into the summer and temperatures remain cool (less than 65-70 F). At the same time, cool water carries more oxygen. Assuming runoff comes off gradually and doesn't scour redds and flush fish eggs out of the gravel, these are good times for trout, and good water years allow for high winter flows.

Winter is often the most important period for trout and can be seen as a filter controlling how many trout will be available for anglers to target the following year. After a series of good water, temperature, and winter flow years, trout populations increase sometimes to the tune of 30 percent above long-term averages.

In contrast and using 2021 as an example, low snow pack, a historic dry spring, and elevated air temperatures have created less-than-ideal conditions for stream and river-dwelling trout. Above-average water temperatures may increase natural mortality rates for trout as they are forced into completing longer-distance migrations to seek out colder waters, or succumb to stressful environmental conditions.

Trout naturally turnover at high rates

Natural mortality rates from disease or predation may also increase as trout get squeezed into less usable habitat. But again, winter is often the most important filter, and trout being territorial critters have less available space and lower quality habitats to survive winter when poor water years contribute to lower winter flows. After a poor water year when flows decline, trout populations usually decline.

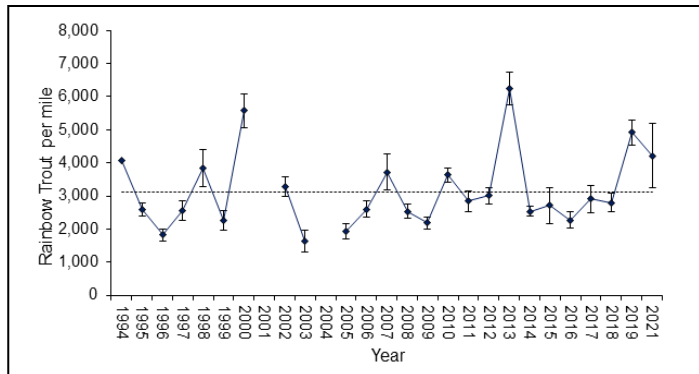
Generally, annual natural mortality rates for Idaho's trout populations range from 30 percent to 60 percent. High reproduction rates, good growth, thousands of eggs per female, and early ages at first spawning allow for trout populations to replace lost individuals with no long-term consequences to population abundance. In addition, these same factors allow for sustainable recreational fisheries, either harvest oriented or catch-and-release.

Recreational fisheries are managed to ensure that fishing-related mortality does not become excessive and cause populations to decline. Fortunately, fish removed from populations due to fishing mortality reduce the likelihood of their brethren being lost due to natural causes. We are fortunate that trout populations compensate in this manner, allowing Idaho angler's to sustainably pursue their favorite fish for enjoyment or sustenance, year-round in some waters.

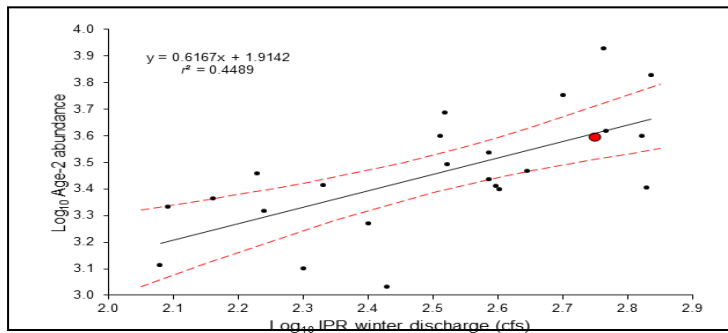


Rainbow Trout Population in Box Canyon Remains Strong
By
John Heckel, IDF&G Regional Fisheries Biologist

Despite low mid-May flows, we conducted our 25th population estimate in the Box Canyon reach of the Henrys Fork. This estimate is conducted in May annually and extends from the confluence with the Buffalo River downstream about 2.5 miles. Based on our long-term dataset extending from 1994, the population estimate in Box Canyon this year (4,209 RBT/mile) is among the top 5 highest recorded. The dashed line in the figure below represents the average number of Rainbow Trout per mile for the previous 24 surveys, which is 3,103.



Island Park Reservoir winter discharge is an important factor for juvenile Rainbow Trout survival and abundance; it is imperative for juvenile Rainbow Trout to have adequate overwintering habitat in Box Canyon by maintaining overwinter flows at least 300 cfs. In the figure below, this year’s estimate of age-2 Rainbow trout abundance in relation to their first winter (i.e., 2019-2020 winter) discharge. Pic 2 here is represented by the red dot. Our estimate falls right on the regression line of this relationship, indicating that the model continues to be a good predictor of age-2 abundance based on first overwinter discharge. Using the model to estimate age-2 abundance, we estimate 4,073 age-2 RBT, which is very close to our observed value of 3,948 age-2 RBT.



The average total length of Rainbow Trout in Box Canyon was 13 inches with fish up to 21 inches sampled in the survey this year. We observed the highest frequency of Rainbow Trout between 12 and 14 inches, which are predominately age-2 fish. At this level of abundance, anglers should expect some fantastic fishing in the Box Canyon reach of the Henrys Fork this year. Furthermore, catch rates should also be very high if anglers can correctly match the hatch!



Fly of the Month

Baby Mack

This is Chuck Collin’s signature streamer pattern. It is a flat wing streamer meaning the covert feather is tied in perpendicular to the hook. Originally Chuck used a canvasback covert, but these are difficult to find, so he changed the wing to either teal or pintail. His pattern represents a lake trout fingerling such as found in some deep lakes in the Greater Yellowstone area.

- Hook:** Daiichi 710, or Equivalent, size 2-6
- Thread:** Black, 6/0
- Tail:** Olive tinged yellow marabou
- Underwing:** Sparse brown marabou with a few strands of dark green Krystal Flash
- Body:** Braided pearlescent Mylar tinsel
- Wing:** Teal or pintail covert tied in flat wing style
- Beard:** Soft, webby red saddle hackle



2021-2022 Calendar

Date	Activity
Wednesday, October 6 th , 2021	SRC Board Meeting, 6:30 PM via Zoom
Wednesday, October 13 th , 2021	Membership Meeting via ZOOM; Guest Todd Lanning, 6:30 PM
Wednesday, November 3 rd , 2021	SRC Board Meeting, 6:30 PM via Zoom
Wednesday, November 10 th , 2021	Membership Meeting via ZOOM; Guest TBA, 6:30 PM
Wednesday, December 1 st , 2021	SRC Board Meeting, 6:30 PM via Zoom
Wednesday, December 15 th , 2021	Christmas Party (TENTATIVE), Sr. Citizens Ctr, 6 PM
Wednesday, January 5 th , 2022	SRC Board Meeting via ZOOM; 6:30 PM

Note: all membership and board meetings are held via ZOOM until further notice. Visit www.snakerivercutthroats.org or the Cutthroats Facebook page for a link to access membership meetings, outings, and other activities. .Board meetings are open to all members.

Snake River Cutthroats
291 Dale Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
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Snake River Cutthroats

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Ex. Vice President: TBA
VP Conservation: Myles Pawlaczyk (949-701-1767)
Treasurer: Jim Mathias (208-684-4200)
Secretary: Joe Timchak (208-569-0630)

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Ron Hover
Cal Johnson
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Bruce Staples
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3 Yr Directors: Dan Smith (908-652-1837), Lee Morse (208-252-0703), Paul Voegeli (303-324-0104),
2 Yr Directors: Wade Allen (208-390-3130), Mike Glissmeyer (208-569-3843), Dakota Roberson ((307-389-5856)
1 Yr Directors: Andy Bosworth (207-713-3457), Brian King (530-310-0529) (208-528-7997), Charlie Allen (208-360-1302)

Committee Chairs

Membership: Carol Staples (208-522-9242)
Historian/Newsletter: Bruce Staples (208-522-9242) (New email address bstaples9740@gmail.com)
Education: Jeff Armstrong (208-522-7005)
Expo: Scott Long (208-520-3750), Rory Cullen (208-419-8477)
Programs: Charlie Allen (208-360-1302)
Publicity: Rob Knox (760-419-1682)
Outings: Marv Stucki (208-589-9677)
Website: Scott Long (520-3750), Rob Knox (760-419-1682), Tim Woodard (208-201-1669)
Youth: Joe Timchak (208-569-0630)
IT/Web Site: Myles Pawlaczyk (949-701-1767)