



# Upper Snake River Annual Fisheries Report

## 2008 Activities and Accomplishments



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### Personnel Change

The Upper Snake fisheries program regrettably lost Jim Fredericks to a lateral promotion in April. Jim now works for IDFG in the Panhandle Region. Dan Garren accepted a promotion to Jim's vacated Fisheries Manager position.

Greg Schoby was promoted to Dan's empty Regional Biologist position, and is eager to get a full field season under his belt. Greg most recently worked on Lake Pend Oreille with our research division. See page 8 for more information on these changes.



Issue 4

April 2009

**Greetings.....**and thanks for your interest in the fourth annual Regional Fisheries Newsletter. For the past three years we've produced a brief summary of our activities to help folks better understand the region's fishery resources and know what IDFG is doing to manage them. We hope you'll agree that 2008 was a productive and interesting year for the Upper Snake regional fisheries program. With the introduction of new species, numerous fish population surveys, and the seemingly endless challenges of water management, there weren't a lot of dull moments. This newsletter, along with those from past years, will be posted on the IDFG website on the "Fishing" page, under "Fishing Reports/Info" (Upper Snake). If you find it interesting, please tell your friends and fishing partners and pass it along. We can most effectively serve anglers when they stay informed and involved, so if you have questions or want to share your thoughts, please give us a call.

## Henry's Lake Turns On!

Anglers lucky enough to have spent some time on Henry's Lake in 2008 were treated to some of the best fishing the lake has seen in several years. Although IDFG did not collect specific information on catch rates with a creel survey, many anglers reported great fishing. Some anglers even stated it was the best fishing they had seen in the past 25 years.

The late winter conditions we saw during 2008 created a situation we have not seen in quite some time. The lake was ice covered well into May, which as many anglers know, keeps the fish oriented towards the shore. We did not see the ice melt completely until a week or so prior to Memorial Day

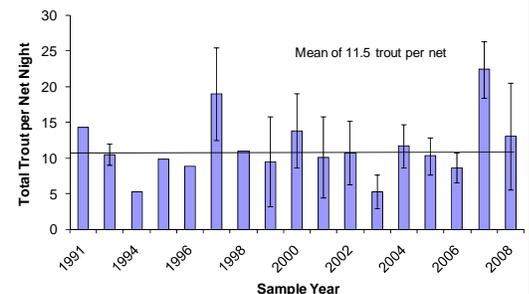
### Anglers stated that the 2008 season was the best they had seen in the past 25 years

weekend, and anglers reaped the benefits. Further, conditions remained cool through most of the summer, and the tributaries had good flows as a result of the better snowpack in the surrounding mountains. The combination of these events meant good fishing for anglers.

The catch rates experienced last year were correlated with higher gill net catch rates in IDFG population monitoring. Each year in May, gill nets are set throughout the lake to capture trout and provide an index of how robust the trout population is. Our gill net trend surveys are one way we monitor trout populations. As seen in the figure on the right, catch in 2008 was well above our average catch

of 11.5 trout per net, and explains in part the increased catch rates experienced last year.

Another interesting thing to look at is the high gill net catch rate found in 2007, which was the highest we have documented since we began using gill nets in 1991. Based solely on this information, we would have expected to see very high catch rates two years ago. However, environmental conditions were drastically different two years ago compared to last year. During 2007, we experienced an early spring followed by a hot and relatively dry summer—neither condition is conducive to good angling on Henry's Lake. As a result, anglers did not catch the number of fish they did in 2008. This is a good example of how environmental conditions can impact a fishery regardless of how many fish are actually swimming underneath the water.



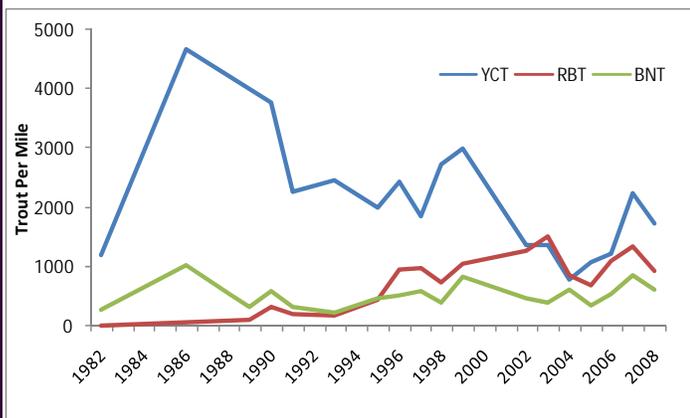
Anglers should keep an eye on the weather forecast this spring, and consider heading to Henry's Lake for Memorial Day weekend. With a little luck, we may have a repeat of last year.

## South Fork Snake River

### Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Continue to Improve

The South Fork Snake River is widely recognized as a world-class fishery and is home to one of the most important Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations in their native range. As we saw in 2007, angling on the South Fork Snake River was excellent this past year. Anglers reported good catch rates, and consistent fishing throughout the year. Further, anglers reported seeing more and larger Yellowstone cutthroat trout than they have in years past. Our electrofishing surveys, which we use to monitor trout populations in the river documented trout densities similar to but slightly lower than those found in 2007. Although cutthroat trout densities looked good, rainbow trout continue to maintain abundances higher than what we would like to see. IDFG is concerned with rainbow trout abundance in the river because they can breed with the native cutthroat trout, and degrade the gene pool. Hybrid offspring of these two species are fertile and can further reduce cutthroat genetics.

Rainbow trout have been a component of the South Fork fishery for decades, but starting in the late 1990s their populations began to increase at the same time cutthroat trout were experiencing a decline. Given that the South Fork is one of the last remaining places anglers can go catch native Yellowstone cutthroat trout in a river system, coupled with an attempt to get them listed as an endangered species prompted a three-pronged approach to recovery (flow management, tributary weirs and harvest). The intent of this recovery program is not to eliminate rainbows from the South Fork—that would be impossible. More so, it is to keep rainbow trout to no more than 10% of the species composition, which is similar to what was



present in the early 1990s. Recent research has shown that if rainbows were to become the dominant trout in the river, populations would only be about 60% as abundant as under a cutthroat trout dominated system. Given the widely accepted trait that cutthroat are easier to catch than rainbows, anglers could expect catch rates to decline under a rainbow trout dominated system.

All three of the prongs on the recovery program are important to control rainbow trout, and likely work in combination with each other. Of the three, the one anglers can control is harvest. By keeping all rainbow trout you catch, you can have a direct effect on shaping how the South Fork will look in coming years.

### New Weirs Show Promise

IDFG built fish traps or weirs on all of the major spawning tributaries to the South Fork in the late 1990s. Since then, we have operated these facilities with varying degrees of success, and have modified the design of several to improve our efficiencies. The weirs provide a means to weed out non-native rainbow trout and allow refuge areas for cutthroat trout to spawn. Several designs have been tried, including floating weirs and picket style weirs, but none have been as successful as we had hoped. A new design—an electric barrier—was tried in 2006 and 2007 on Palisades Creek. Results from this design were encouraging. We obtained grant money from the Bonneville Power Administration to re-build all four of the weirs during 2008 and 2009. Two have been completed or are nearly complete—one on Burns Creek and one on Palisades Creek.



Burns Creek Fish Weir, South Fork Snake River

The Burns Creek weir took advantage of the steep stream gradient in the area where the old weir was located. We designed a velocity barrier in combination with a small waterfall to prevent trout from moving upstream. There is a fish trap off to one side that should be attractive to migrating trout, which will allow us to capture and sort all fish moving upstream. Rainbow trout will be removed from the system, and relocated to local ponds for the public to fish for.

The Palisades Creek weir is an electric barrier with an attached fish trap, which is similar to the one we tested in years past. This new and improved version is a permanent structure in the same location as the old weir. We are hopeful we can get construction completed on this structure and have it up and running for the spring migration.

## Creel Survey Help Evaluate Regional Fisheries

### Henrys Fork Creel Survey Estimates Angler Use and Success

During 2008, IDFG completed a survey of anglers fishing from Island Park Dam downstream to St. Anthony. The purpose of this survey was to document angler use (effort), catch rates and harvest.

The upper portion of the river (Island Park Dam downstream to Riverside Campground) is managed with catch-and-release regulations, and we were happy to see that anglers were following the rules. We did not observe any harvested fish, and documented good catch rates in the Box Canyon section. Based on our preliminary analysis of the data, we estimated anglers were catching almost one fish for every hour of angling. The Ranch section, which is in Harriman State Park, is widely recognized as a challenging place to catch fish due to its slow current, clear water and "educated" trout. Our estimates of catch rates support this, with anglers catching one trout for every 2.5 hours of effort.

The lower sections of the river are managed to provide some harvest opportunity for anglers. The section of river from Riverside Campground down to the Highway 20 Bridge supported the best catch rates found anywhere on the river. On average, anglers were catching over two fish per hour of effort. This section also had the highest amount of harvest, which we estimated at 2800 trout during the survey. Downstream in the Vernon and Chester sections, anglers were catching about one trout for every 1.5 hours of effort, but harvest was low. Preliminary analysis of the data collected during 2008 shows that although the opportunity exists to harvest fish in the lower river, few anglers are choosing to do so. We estimated exploitation (the percentage of the population that is harvested by anglers) to be less than 5% in the Vernon and Chester sections.

### Population monitoring on the Henrys Fork

Each spring, IDFG monitors trout populations in multiple reaches of the Henrys Fork. This is primarily done with electrofishing equipment in drift boats. We monitor two to four sites on the river each year depending on weather conditions and manpower availability. During 2008, we had a late spring, with lots of snow on the ground well into May, which made accessing our sample reaches a challenge. However, we did manage to collect data in two reaches—the Box Canyon section, and the Harriman Ranch section. Our estimates incorporate all fish that are six inches or better. We estimated a density of over 2,500 rainbow trout per mile in Box Canyon, which is just shy of our long-term average for that reach. We recognize that winter flows have a big impact on the fishery in this section, and have been working with the Bureau of Reclamation, Henrys Fork Foundation and local irrigators to provide critical winter flows over the past several years. The better winter flows have produced an increasing trend in our rainbow populations, showing the success of these flow negotiations.

We also estimated trout densities in the Harriman Ranch section of the Henrys Fork. As many anglers know, this section of river is wide and somewhat shallow, which makes it difficult to sample fish with our gear. In spite of the difficulties associated with sampling, we managed to get an estimate of 377 trout per mile, which is similar to the last estimate we had for this reach (441 trout per mile in 1994). Interestingly enough, both of these estimates are between 11 and 15% of densities estimated in the Box Canyon section for the same years. This lends credence to the assumption that populations in Box Canyon are reflective of what's going on in the Ranch. Increases in the Box Canyon should equate to increases in the Ranch if this holds true. One other change in the estimate from the Ranch is that there were more large fish in 2008 compared to 1994—25% of the population was 16" or better in 1994 compared to 37% in 2008.

### Chester Hydropower Project Nears Construction Phase

The proposed hydropower project located on the existing diversion dam on the Henrys Fork at Chester is nearing the construction phase. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a license to construct the facility to Symbiotics LLC during 2008. The facility will create electricity after several generators are built alongside the existing diversion dam. The project will operate as "run-of-the-river", with water flowing downstream as opposed to being stored in a reservoir and metered out based on demand. The project includes several features that are considered beneficial to the river and its fisheries, including a trash rack on the turbine intakes, screens on the two irrigation canals on either side of the dam, and a fish ladder over the existing structure. The screens and trash rack are designed to reduce or even eliminate the passage of most fish into the turbines or into the canals, while the fish ladder provides a way up and over the Chester Dam that currently does not exist.

Licensing of this project is the culmination of several years of coordinated negotiation and technical studies by the applicant, IDFG and many of our partners, including the Henrys Fork Foundation, the Snake River Cutthroats, the US Forest Service and others.





**Modular screens such as the one above were installed on Howard and Targhee Creeks to prevent entrainment of cutthroat trout**

## Targhee Creek and Howard Creek Fish Screen Projects

During the winter of 2007-08, a grant was acquired to install fish screens on two previously unscreened diversions on Targhee and Howard Creeks, tributaries to Henrys Lake. These screens will reduce or eliminate entrainment of Yellowstone cutthroat trout that spawn in these creeks. We acquired permits, designed and built the modular screens for both creeks in the spring of 2008. Instal-

lation was completed later that fall.

The IDFG Screen Shop, located in Salmon, Idaho constructed, and installed the structures. Local suppliers were used for fill materials.

With the completion of the new bridge spanning Targhee Creek in 2005, additional spawning habitat was opened up in the upper Targhee drainage. The Targhee Creek screen provides improved survival for the migrating adult trout that make their way from Henrys Lake to the

upper reaches of the drainage and fry moving downstream.

The Howard Creek screen provides enhanced survivability to thousands of naturally spawned fry that make their way back to Henrys Lake after hatching in Howard Creek.

The projects were completed with landowner support and involvement. Ray Clements and Tom Cole were behind these projects from the beginning. Matching funding was provided by the Henrys Lake Foundation.

## Duck Creek Fish Weir and Riparian Improvement Project

The benefits of several years of planning came to fruition in the fall of 2008 on the Debbie Empey property. The historical ranch property on Duck Creek along the shores of Henrys Lake became the focus of a riparian restoration effort that involved numerous government and non-government entities. Most importantly the Empey family and the Wayne Johnson trust, unselfishly supported the pro-

ject for fisheries and wildlife enhancement.

The project involved:

- ◆ Installation of a fish weir to improve passage at a diversion site
- ◆ Installation of riparian fencing along a previously unfenced section of Duck Creek and Kelly Springs Creek
- ◆ Installation of a fish friendly culvert on Kelly

- ◆ Springs Creek
- ◆ Construction of three rock hardened watering areas

The Henrys Lake Foundation deserves special recognition for their support on this project.



**The new weir pays off with passage of Yellowstone cutthroat assured.**

## Another Targhee Creek Fish Screen Replacement Project Submitted - Other Projects in the Works

**“HABITAT IS THE CRITICAL ELEMENT IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT. WITHOUT GOOD HABITAT, ALL OF OUR FISHERIES PROGRAMS SUFFER”**

A Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) grant has been submitted to replace an antiquated fish screen on the Stockton property on Targhee Creek, a tributary to Henrys Lake. The old structure is no longer sufficient to protect Yellowstone cutthroat trout fry

from being diverted down the irrigation ditch. The new structure will not only improve survival of naturally spawned Yellowstone fry, but will lessen maintenance for both irrigators and IDFG field crews, who maintain these structures.

Upcoming Fishery Habitat Projects:

- ◆ A riparian fencing project on the Teton River is scheduled for the spring of 2009
- ◆ Flow/temperature monitoring device installation on major tributaries of Henrys Lake

## Dewey Canal Fish Screen Grant Accepted

A FRIMA grant has been approved to install a fish screen on the Dewey Canal. The Dewey Canal is an irrigation canal that feeds off of the Henrys Fork, near the town of St. Anthony. The Dewey is one of 14 unscreened irrigation canals in the lower section of the Henrys Fork. Thousands of native fish are entrained annually at the Dewey site and the fish screen will provide benefits to native fish immediately upon completion.

This project is an important step in protecting

and enhancing the fish populations within the Henrys Fork drainage.

Construction will begin during the summer of 2009. Matching funds or in-kind service will be provided by the Henrys Fork Foundation, IDFG, and the HIP program.

Design, engineering, and construction will be completed by the IDFG engineering bureau.

The project will tie in nicely with the Chester hydro-power project, which has set a

precedent for future efforts that will protect the fisheries resource, while maintaining traditional uses of water.

US Fish and Wildlife funding via the FRIMA program serves as an important avenue for funding fisheries protection programs.



**The current structure diverts fish down a canal and entrains fry, fingerlings, and adults.**

## Duck Creek Fish Screen LIP Grant Will Improve Fishery



**The old non-functional fish screen is long overdue for replacement.**

A Landowner Incentive Grant has been approved to replace a dilapidated structure on the John Taft property along Duck Creek on Henrys Lake. The old structure was no longer functioning correctly, and entrained fry into the irrigation ditch that feeds the Taft owned lands.

The new structure will be a rotary screen, modular design and will be constructed with perforated plate. Installation is scheduled for the fall of 2009 and will be providing improved fish survival by the summer of 2010.

This new screen will see added benefits with the recent fish weir installation on Duck Creek. Improved

passage at the weir will provide enhanced natural production on this important Henrys Lake tributary. The new screen on the lowest lateral diversion, will prevent entrainment of fry and subsequent losses to the fishery. The Landowner Incentive Program grant provides yet another win for anglers and landowners alike.

## Antelope Creek Splitter State Wildlife Grant Funds Acquired

A State Wildlife Grant has recently been approved on Antelope Creek, a tributary to the Big Lost River. This grant will fund installation of a splitter structure on Antelope Creek that will help irrigators improve water delivery and ultimately aid in reconnecting Antelope Creek to the Big Lost River. Antelope Creek is an important tributary for the Big

Lost whitefish, a species that has recently been in decline. Reconnecting Antelope Creek to the Big Lost River will also benefit sport fish such as rainbow trout, that inhabit both the creek and the river.

The project is a win for both native fishes and for irrigators, who are instrumental partners in this project's completion.

Additional funding sources and/or cooperators include US Fish and Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, US Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, water users, and private landowners.

The project is slated for construction in the fall of 2009.

**“Another example of collaboration and cooperation is the Antelope Creek Splitter, which will soon be operational and improving fish habitat in the Big Lost River ”**

## Ririe Reservoir Sees Changes

### Illegal Walleye Introduced into Ririe Reservoir

A research crew that was evaluating the effects of stocking Ririe with sterile kokanee inadvertently discovered an illegal fish introduction. While pulling a gill net, the crew discovered two walleye, which were not documented in Ririe before this survey. Our regional staff acting on a tip from an angler were able to capture five additional walleye in the upper portions of the reservoir in the fall of 2008. Walleye are an unwanted addition to the reservoir fishery, and were likely introduced by an angler a year or two ago. These fish are highly predatory, and once established, have the ability to alter the fish community. Further, if walleye move out of the reservoir into other water bodies, their impacts may be spread over a much wider area than just Ririe.

IDFG has strict rules that govern what fish can be introduced into Idaho waters, and when anglers step outside of these guidelines and take introducing fish upon themselves, the results can be devastating. For instance, if walleye are able to establish a reproducing population in Ririe, and forage heavily on stocked kokanee, we may lose our ability to provide a quality kokanee fishery. This would mean the Idaho Falls area could lose one of its best winter ice fisheries. This is a loss to the hundreds of anglers, who spent many days this past winter fishing for kokanee, and it would be an economic loss to the region as well. We are also concerned about impacts to native Yellowstone cutthroat trout in Willow Creek, which feeds the reservoir.

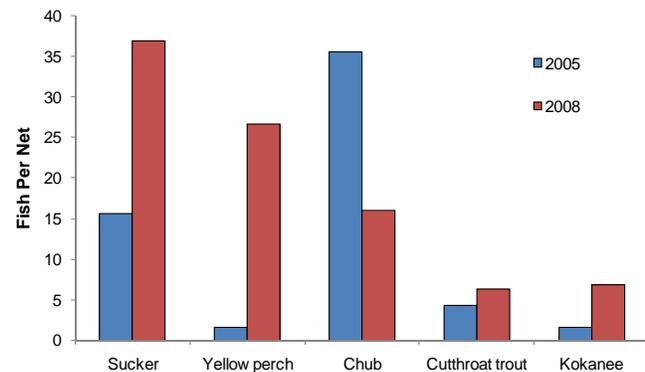
We plan to monitor and evaluate the walleye population in 2009, and have tracking equipment ready to deploy once we start catching walleye. If we can get transmitters into some fish, we can follow them around through the year and learn what areas of the reservoir they use, and where they congregate. We can then educate anglers on how to target walleye in the hopes they can suppress this population and limit their impacts to the existing fishery.



Illegal walleye caught in Ririe Reservoir, 2008

### Ririe Fishery Doing Well

In light of the negative aspects of an illegal fish introduction, the fishery in Ririe Reservoir appears to be doing well. Gill net catch rates showed a dramatic increase in yellow perch and kokanee abundances and an lesser increase in Yellowstone cutthroat trout compared to data collected in 2005. The increase in yellow perch abundance may be a result of higher reservoir storage in 2006 and 2007 during the spring spawning period.



The winter ice fishery on Ririe was exceptional, especially early on. Although a formal creel survey was not conducted, many IDFG personnel spent time on the lake, sometimes working enforcement, and sometimes just fishing. Anglers reported great catch rates, and occasionally were able to limit out on kokanee in as little as 15 minutes. The kokanee fishery is driven by our stocking program, which was expanded in 2003. Prior to this date, we stocked about 70,000 kokanee annually, and maintained a limited fishery. Recognizing the potential for improvements, we tripled the stocking rate to 210,000 fish annually. Within a couple of years, angler catch rates increased dramatically. We are also experimenting with sterile kokanee, which may live longer than fertile kokanee and may provide anglers with a larger fish in the coming years. We hope to be able to continue to provide anglers with a quality fishing experience on Ririe in the coming years.

### Anglers Please Report Illegal Introductions

Several newspaper articles were published following the discovery of walleye in Ririe. This raised awareness of the issues of non-authorized fish introductions with the public, and we received numerous phone calls from anglers who were aware of other introduced fish species. The list included yellow perch in a small pond connected to the Henrys Fork (we later discovered perch in Ashton Reservoir that likely migrated from this pond), and brown trout in the Teton River. The brown trout in the Teton are especially concerning, as the native Yellowstone cutthroat trout in this river are in peril, and brown trout may add to the problems cutthroat are facing. If you see or hear of anyone releasing fish, please call your local IDFG office immediately with as much information as possible (vehicle license plate and description, etc.). Remember, it is illegal to possess, transport or cause to be transported any live fish or fish eggs without a permit.

## Regional Projects

### **New Fishing Water Added to the Idaho Falls / Rexburg Area**

Although we are fortunate to have a multitude of blue-ribbon fisheries in the vicinity of Idaho Falls, we do not have an abundance of waters that provide easy opportunities for families or new anglers to go experience high catch rates. This year, we were lucky enough to work with the Jefferson County Commission to create a new urban fishery in Rigby Lake (aka: Jefferson County Lake).

This pond, which is located off the North Rigby Exit is an old gravel pit that is fed with ground water and holds water from about May through December.

Since it goes dry for part of the year, we recognized that the pond would need to be stocked each year to provide a fishery. In July 2008, IDFG stocked over 5,000 catchable sized trout in Rigby Lake, including nearly 500 "banana" trout which are a rainbow trout that lacks a color pigment and are similar to albino trout in appearance. Most trout were about 10 inches or so, but some exceeded 18 inches at the time of stocking. An additional load of trout were stocked in September. Anglers were slow to pick up on the newly created fishery, but by the time fall came around, anglers were flocking to the lake. Anglers were ice fishing well into January as the water receded. IDFG plans on stocking the lake again in 2009, and is also looking for similar opportunities to create fisheries in close proximity to urban areas.



Involved in TIC also get to help IDFG spawn fish, and have a hands-on lesson in fish dissections.

Teachers interested in getting involved in the TIC program should contact their local IDFG office for more information. There are some equipment costs associated with starting a program like this, but several partner agencies such as Trout Unlimited may be able to help defray costs. There are also several grants that can be applied for. Visit the IDFG website for additional information and to identify other possible avenues for funding.

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### **Free Fishing Day Event a Success!**

For one day every year during June, the IDFG allows anyone interested in going fishing to do so without a license. The event is called Free Fishing Day, and it's an opportunity for folks interested in seeing what fishing is all about to do so without the costs associated with buying a license.

Over the past several years, we have partnered with the Elks Club to host an event in coordination with Free Fishing Day. The Elks Club members gather a few days before the event to fill sand bags which are then placed in the shallow creek channel that runs through Freeman Park. The sandbags create pools that are then stocked with hatchery trout for kids to catch. This year, we saw upwards of 300 kids come out to take part in the event. IDFG provides loaner fishing poles for anyone without their own equipment, the Snake River Bait Company supplied bait, and tackle was supplied by Sportsman's Warehouse. There were also volunteers available to teach knot tying, casting, and basic fishing techniques. Other volunteers cooked hot dogs and handed out sodas. We received many positive comments from attendees, and plan on coordinating a similar event this year. So if you are interested in participating, come by Freeman Park on June 13, 2009!

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### **Trout in the Classroom**

We've expanded our involvement in the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program in the Upper Snake Region. Trout in the Classroom is an exciting, hands-on program that gives students and teachers the opportunity to raise trout in a classroom aquarium. The trout arrive as tiny eggs and, over the course of several months, develop into 1- to 2-inch fry. In the spring, students release the fry in an approved stream or pond.

The purpose of TIC is to educate youth about healthy aquatic ecosystems, including the role of fish in nature and the importance of clean water systems. Teachers use the trout as a resource to teach their students about biology, math, language arts, social studies, art and physical education.

Aside from raising fish in the classroom, students in-



*The Upper Snake Region is known for its passionate anglers, active conservation groups and non-governmental organizations. In addition, we are fortunate to have an outstanding group of scientists in our partner agencies and universities that help IDFG accomplish its mission. We are proud of our efforts and accomplishments over the past year, but we know full well that we could accomplish very little without the cooperation and support from the many groups and individuals who help us. In addition to the countless anglers who've simply expressed support for what we do, we'd like to thank:*

*IDFG Volunteers  
Henrys Fork Foundation  
Trout Unlimited  
Snake River Cutthroats  
Henrys Lake Foundation  
Friends of the Teton River  
Upper Snake Flyfishers  
Teton Regional Land Trust  
Idaho Falls Elks Club  
The Nature Conservancy  
Greater Yellowstone Coalition  
Fremont Madison Irr. District  
Big Lost River Irr. District  
Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Rob Van Kirk (ISU)  
Brett Roper (USU)  
Bonneville Power Administration*



## Personnel Changes—2008

Jim Fredericks, who was our regional manager for the past 8 years, was promoted to a position in the Panhandle region with IDFG. Jim was a tremendous asset to the fisheries program in the region, and was instrumental in starting the South Fork Snake River Yellowstone cutthroat trout recovery program among other accomplishments.

Dan Garren was promoted to the Regional Fisheries Manager position following Jim's move to the Panhandle. Dan has spent the past 8 years as the Regional Fisheries Biologist in the



Idaho Falls office, working on the Henrys Fork, Henrys Lake and many other regional waters. Prior to coming to Idaho, Dan worked for Virginia Depart-

ment of Fish and Game and for West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. When not working, he enjoys fishing and hunting in and around the Idaho Falls area.

Dan's Regional Biologist position was filled in September by Greg Schooby, who was most recently stationed in Bayview, ID studying interactions between lake trout, rainbow trout and kokanee on Lake Pend Oreille. Greg received a bachelors degree from Central Washington University and a Masters Degree from Idaho State University before working for IDFG in the Salmon Region for 6 years.

Greg enjoys hunting, fishing and fly tying, and is looking forward to learning the Upper Snake Regional waters.



## 2008-2009-2010 Regulations Process

Don't throw away your 2008-2009 fishing regulations just yet. IDFG has decided to postpone its normal two-year regulations cycle, and will keep the 2008-2009 regulations in effect during 2010, and issue a new regulations packet that will go into effect January, 2011.

Fishing regulations are typically one of two types—either biological or non biological. Biological regulations are the ones most anglers are familiar with, and deal with season lengths and bag/size limits. Non biological rules are gear type (hook size, for instance) or other restrictions that don't fit under the biological category. Non biological regulations require approval from the legislature, and cannot be implemented by IDFG without this approval. The timeframe for moving through our regulations scoping process combined with the requirement for legislative approval has made it necessary to postpone our typical two

year regulations renewal process by one year.

That being said, IDFG will be soliciting input from anglers towards improving our current management in the coming months. We are currently looking for your ideas (scoping) non biological regulation changes. We will take input provided through March, formulate regulations based on this input and other factors, seek IDFG commission approval, and present our regulations proposals to the public in June. Once a formal non biological regulations packet is developed, we will seek legislative approval, and ultimately implement the new regulations in January, 2011. We will follow a similar process next year for our biological regulations changes. Feel free to contact us if you have suggestions for ways we can improve our current regulations.

## IDFG Hatcheries Work to Make Fishing Better

Our newsletter would not be complete without acknowledging the contributions from our three hatcheries in the Region. We have hatcheries located in Ashton, on Henrys Lake, and in Mackay. These hatcheries combined produced over 2.3 million trout for the region. These fish were then stocked in 47 different local waters. In addition to the fish stocked from our three local hatcheries, we also had an additional 1.1 million fish stocked from Idaho hatcheries outside of the region. Catchable sized trout are stocked for anglers in areas where natural reproduction is limited, or angler harvest is higher than can be supported with natural repro-

duction. Fingerling trout are stocked in areas that can support higher densities of trout than are available through natural reproduction. All our hatcheries are open to the public to come and visit, so if you have an interest in what's happening, feel free to stop by and visit one of our hatcheries!

