

September 2012, notable developments since last update:

Most importantly, all major indicators of the Yellowstone cutthroat population in the system have shown a minor but significant recovery over the past two to three years. These indicators along with the lake trout suppression numbers lead us to believe that the corner may have been turned in saving and recovering this iconic Yellowstone Cutthroat population.

Native Fish Conservation *Memorandum of Understanding* is now officially signed by all parties: National Trout Unlimited, Wyoming Council Trout Unlimited, Montana Council Trout Unlimited, Idaho Council Trout Unlimited, National Parks Conservation Association, and Yellowstone National Park.

As of September 9, 2012, Park Service and contractor crews had netted more than 260,000 lake trout during the summer general suppression efforts, higher than any previous year. Netting will continue until mid-October or ice-formation on the lake. Professional contract netters have recently set one trap net directly around Carrington Island (the only currently known spawning area) and have already netted over 500 spawners starting to congregate there.

The Yellowstone Lake Working Group fundraising effort to raise money for the USGS telemetry project aimed at evaluating lake trout movement and identifying spawning sites (to better direct suppression efforts) has raised more than \$113,000.

122 lake trout have been implanted with sonar tags, including 80 that provide depth and water temperature data.

As of mid-August the 52 receivers in place around the Lake have logged over 10 million individual lake trout locations (hits). Preliminary analyses of the data are proving invaluable in determining lake trout movement patterns. The USGS/NPS are hiring a specialist to more thoroughly analyze the substantial amount of data.

Examples of the kind of information learned include the fact that over half of tagged lake trout seem to have frequented Carrington Island spawning beds during fall 2011 spawning season indicating Carrington Island may be a major spawning location. Also, there is a mass movement of lakers out of West Thumb into the main lake after spawning season. Temperature loggers also indicate their preferred temperature and depth range.

This fall research efforts shift to ova/fry suppression investigations at Carrington Island. Smith-Root, Inc. will visit the Lake the end of September to begin the development of a special electroshocking unit for use on spawning beds. Researchers from Lake Michigan will visit to initiate the development of fry traps to evaluate the ova/fry lethality of electroshocking. New technology from Vemco consisting of special triangulating receivers will be deployed at Carrington in September to study spatial and timing movements of lake trout to the spawning bed.

In August the Park Service released the 2011 science review panel evaluation of the lake trout suppression effort at Yellowstone Lake. The final report can be viewed (pdf) on the TU website under the Science banner, Science Team Publications. *Confronting a Lake Trout Invasion of Yellowstone Lake: An Interim Scientific Assessment*.