Fisheries Division
Federal Aid Job Progress Report

Montana Statewide Fisheries Management

Federal Aid Project Number: F-113-R-6

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Project Title: Montana Statewide Fisheries Management

Job Title: Havre Area Coldwater Fisheries Management

Abstract:

The cool water fisheries in Hill, Blaine, and Phillips Counties experienced low summer flows, reduced reservoir pool levels, and a prolonged winter in 2022/2023 resulting in a mass winterkill of fish at most of the smaller regional ponds. Water conditions have improved, and all cool water pond fisheries have received one to two supplemental stocking events (2023-2024). Several algal blooms were observed at multiple reservoirs by August and September, a trend that continues to become more common. Stocked rainbow trout survival and recruitment in Beaver Creek Reservoir has been poor for several years and is likely due to multiple reasons. Rainbow trout densities and growth in Bearpaw Lake have been stable but white sucker densities remain high. Beaver Creek Reservoir, Bearpaw Lake, and select ponds and reservoirs in Hill, Blaine, and Phillips Counties were monitored in 2024 and results and management recommendations for all these waters are presented.

OBJECTIVES AND DEGREE OF ATTAINMENT

Survey and Inventory: Objective is to survey and monitor the characteristics and trends of fish populations, angler harvest and preference, and to assess habitat conditions in selected waters. Objective accomplished, data presented.

Fish Population Management: Objective is to implement fish stocking programs and/or fish eradication actions to maintain fish populations at levels consistent with habitat conditions and other limiting factors. Objective accomplished, data presented.

Technical Guidance: To review projects by federal, state and local government agencies and private parties that has the potential to affect fisheries resources, and to provide technical advice or decisions to mitigate impacts on these resources. Provide landowners and other private parties with technical advice and information to sustain and enhance fisheries resources. Objective accomplished: (3) 310 and (18) 124 projects were reviewed along with one 310 violation that was mitigated with the Blaine County Conservation District and the landowner. Attended three walleye unlimited meetings and helped with three school programs and fishing events.

METHODS

Various sampling gears and methods were used to obtain the fisheries information presented in this report (Appendix 1). Whenever possible, captured fish were sorted by species, counted, and measured for total length (TL: inches (in.)) and weighed to the nearest 0.01 pound (lbs.).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Beaver Creek Reservoir

Beaver Creek Reservoir, located south of Havre, is a 185-acre reservoir with a maximum depth of 70 feet. Its proximity to the city of Havre makes this reservoir a valuable local resource and it has been managed intensively for a variety of species. The statewide fishing pressure survey for 2021/2022 indicated it received 2,229 angler days (MTFWP Fisheries Bureau 2023). Annual drawdowns have ranged from 8-15 feet since 2017, and harmful algal blooms have occurred annually in August/September.

Currently this reservoir receives annual plants of catchable size Arlee and Arlee x Erwin rainbow trout, as well as 10,000 fingerling and 5,000 advanced fingerling walleye.

Population Status of Adult Fishes

Water levels in September 2024 were near full pool during our sampling effort, with a moderate algal bloom occurring. Water levels remained high throughout the fall.

Rainbow Trout

Historically, rainbow trout densities have exhibited high annual variation. The trend can be attributed to variable rainbow trout stocking densities, predation, and flushing during high water events.

In 2017 and 2019, sampling took place at the same time as the fall rainbow trout plant. This was unintentional and resulted in inflated rainbow trout relative abundance and reduced average length (Figure 1). Rainbow relative abundance observed since 2018 are the lowest on record, with no rainbow trout collected in 2023 and 2024 (Figure 1). Stocking densities increased in 2020, and larger trout have been stocked since 2021, yet reported angler catch (personal communication) and returns to our sampling gear remain minimal (Table 1). Walleye densities remain high and recent stomach analysis on walleye and pike indicate increasing predation on stocked rainbow trout.

Figure 1. Relative abundance (fish/net) and average total length of rainbow trout collected in fall gillnet surveys at Beaver Creek Reservoir, 2015-2024.

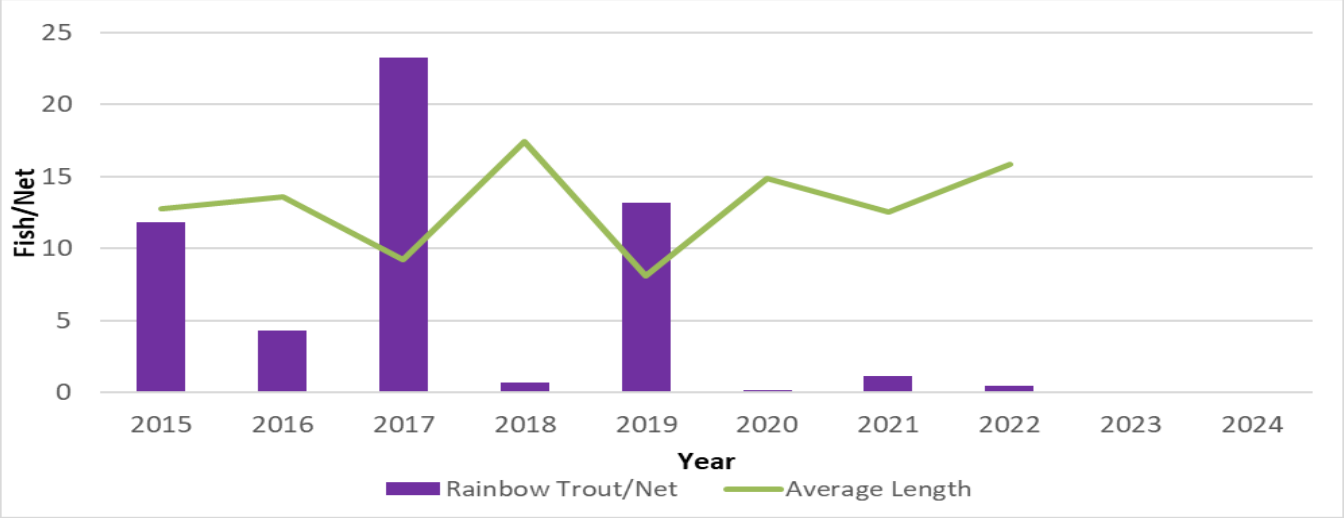


Table 1. Rainbow trout historic stocking rates as it relates to numbers stocked, strain, length, and month on Beaver Creek Reservoir, 2015-2024. Strains include A-Arlee R- Arlee x Erwin G- Gerrard.

Year	# Stocked	Strain	Length (Inches)	Month Stocked
2015	36,160	A, R	7-8.2	April/September
2016	20,137	R	6.0-7.0	April
2017	41,424	A, R	7.0-8.5	April/September
2018	24,020	A, R	7.1	May/September
2019	22,483	A, R	7.5	April/September
2020	20,740	G	5.3	October
2020	82,709	A, R	3.7	July
2020	20,500	R	6.8	April
2021	40,134	A, R	7.4-8.0	May/October
2022	64,891	A	3.3-7.3	May/September
2023	40,110	A, R	6.8-7.8	May/September
2024	38,202	A, R	6.8-8.0	May/October

Bearpaw Lake

Bearpaw Lake is a very popular 45 surface-acre reservoir located on Beaver Creek in the Bearpaw Mountains and received 5,018 angler days in 2023 (MTFWP Fisheries Bureau 2023). Bearpaw Lake has been managed as a trout fishery since 1960 and is currently maintained with annual plants of 15,000 catchable Arlee and 5,000 Eagle Lake rainbow trout (Table 2). Wild brook trout migrating out of Beaver Creek are also found in the reservoir.

Bearpaw Lake and Beaver Creek also sustain a very robust population of wild, naturally reproducing white suckers, which has been shown to negatively affect the rainbow trout fishery (Leslie 2007). To limit white sucker abundance, FWP introduced smallmouth bass which have been naturally reproducing in the reservoir since 1998.

Population Status of Adult Fishes

From 1989-2015, manual removal efforts of white suckers were attempted annually. Removal efforts involved setting five or more trap nets for one to two weeks during their peak spawning period (Appendix 1). Traps were checked daily, and white suckers were killed and returned to the lake or dumped at a landfill. Limited trap netting has occurred from 2016-2023 to remove adult white suckers and regulation changes occurred in 2023 to allow the legal collection of white suckers from Beaver Creek by commercial and recreational bait collectors (Table 3).

Rainbow Trout

Rainbow trout have been stocked in Bearpaw Lake since the 1960s and recently stocked at a rate of 20,000-30,000 catchables annually (Table 2). Stocking densities were reduced in 2018 and 2019 due to reduced hatchery budgets but increased in 2020 (Table 2).

The relative abundance of rainbow trout has varied greatly since their introduction (Table 4). The primary reasons for these fluctuations are stocking densities, fishing pressure, flow (flushing) over spillway, and competition with white suckers (Table 4). Rainbow and brook trout have had relatively poor growth rates in Bearpaw Lake.

White Sucker

The white sucker population has always thrived within the Beaver Creek watershed, specifically Bearpaw Lake (Table 3 and 4). Chemical rehabilitation was attempted in 1983 however white suckers quickly re-populated the lake from upstream sources in Beaver Creek.

White suckers have accounted for >80% of the total catch during fall surveys and densities have remained high since 2012 (Table 4). Manual white sucker removal efforts temporally reduce relative abundance. However, during the period 2008-2012, significant declines in white sucker relative abundance were observed without manual removal (Table 4). This period is characterized by significant water outflows from Bearpaw Lake. It appears flushing of suckers during high water events may have a greater influence on white sucker abundance than manual removal efforts.

Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass were introduced by FWP in 1992 to assist with the control of YOY white suckers. Since 1998, smallmouth bass have been successfully reproducing and recruiting to the population. In addition to providing control of white suckers, smallmouth bass have become an important addition to the fishery. Anglers continue to report catching many smallmouth bass throughout the reservoir during the summer months. Approximately 50 juvenile smallmouth bass (3”-5”) were removed and stocked into East Fork Reservoir, on Rocky Boy in 2023.

Walleye

Since their introduction walleye exhibited slow growth and are now likely extirpated from Bearpaw Lake (Table 4).

Table 2. Stocking summary of rainbow trout in Bearpaw Lake, 2015-2024. Strains include A-Arlee I- Eagle Lake G-Gerrard.

Rainbow Trout

Date	# Stocked	Strain	Month	Size (inches)
2015	20,328	A and I	May/Sept.	7.5
2016	19,777	A and I	May/Sept.	6.4
2017	17,725	A and I	Sept./Oct.	8
2018	12,757	A and I	Sept./Oct.	7
2019	12,715	A and I	Sept./Oct.	7.3
2020	30,214	A and I	July/Sept.	3.3-7.3
2021	30,049	A, I and G	Oct.	5.0-8.0
2022	30,850	A, I and G	Sept.	4.7-7.3
2023	20,393	A and I	Sept.	7-7.4
2024	19,686	A and I	Sept.	7.2-7.5

Table 3. - Number of white suckers removed from Bearpaw Lake by trap netting and fall gill netting, 2015-2024. Totals incorporate data collected since 1989.

Year	Number Trap Netting	Number Gill netting	Total Number	Total Pounds
2015	1,392	99	1,491	1,491.00
2016	--	159	159	196.00
2017	--	185	185	263.00
2018	--	182	182	263.00
2019	--	209	209	192.00
2020	383	372	755	385.05
2021	--	238	238	216.58
2022	--	438	438	420.48
2023	--	234	234	149.76
2024	--	249	249	159.36
Totals	143,136	9,207	152,343	73,877

Table 4.- Summary of relative abundance (catch per unit effort (CPUE)), total length (TL), and relative weights of fishes collected in fall gillnetting surveys in Bear Paw Lake since chemical rehabilitation in 1983.

			Rainbow Trout			Brook Trout			Yellowstone Cutthoat Trout			White Sucker			Smallmouth Bass			Walleye		
Date		Nets	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt	CPUE (fish/net)	Ave TL (in.)	Rel Wt
Sep-84	1984	2	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	15.50	10.13	86.34	13.50	8.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sep-85	1985	3	1.33	12.03	97.49	1.00	9.05	109.72	27.33	11.50	86.83	6.33	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sep-86	1986	3	0.00	--	--	3.33	10.41	106.78	16.67	11.01	86.45	94.33	6.40	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sep-87	1987	3	17.00	11.27	93.31	3.00	10.31	103.48	25.67	9.52	86.21	192.67	7.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Aug-88	1988	3	9.33	10.66	83.05	1.33	10.48	100.24	9.00	7.60	90.08	210.33	11.67	93.74	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sep-89	1989	3	15.33	8.64	88.09	0.67	9.50	106.91	19.33	8.08	85.50	173.67	8.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Aug-90	1990	3	9.00	9.95	81.94	0.33	7.20	86.56	22.33	8.71	77.85	277.67	8.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Aug-91	1991	3	4.00	10.23	88.55	0.67	7.45	104.75	15.00	9.12	85.36	255.33	8.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sep-92	1992	3	17.00	9.83	90.97	0.33	10.10	90.14	58.67	8.79	77.22	212.00	8.00	--	--	--	--	0.33	13.90	97.61
Sep-93	1993	3	0.00	--	--	0.33	9.30	105.94	6.00	9.15	81.65	258.33	8.00	--	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--
Sep-94	1994	3	6.33	10.59	101.87	0.00	--	--	13.67	9.09	79.87	208.67	8.00	--	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--
Sep-95	1995	2	21.50	9.07	92.20	0.00	--	--	89.50	7.82	81.30	399.00	8.00	--	1.00	5.80	111.70	0.00	--	--
Sep-96	1996	3	1.67	10.36	102.97	0.33	8.40	90.25	60.67	8.94	85.64	146.00	8.80	--	0.67	6.80	96.44	1.33	8.73	81.46
Sep-97	1997	3	24.67	9.16	93.58	0.00	--	--	26.00	8.47	80.26	76.00	10.00	--	0.67	9.90	103.82	1.00	7.73	72.03
Sep-98	1998	3	10.00	9.34	86.71	0.00	--	--	3.67	8.84	72.68	44.33	12.02	84.89	0.33	6.00	90.19	1.33	8.43	80.59
Sep-99	1999	3	43.33	8.31	97.60	0.00	--	--	19.33	8.54	79.14	57.33	12.00	--	0.00	--	--	1.33	10.43	83.95
Sep-00	2000	2	46.00	11.36	97.54	1.50	9.67	98.77	20.00	10.81	80.53	14.00	12.00	--	6.00	9.76	103.09	3.50	11.30	88.39
Sep-01	2001	2	11.00	13.39	98.99	6.50	11.36	101.16	15.00	10.91	81.14	6.00	8.00	--	2.00	10.83	102.66	0.00	--	--
Sep-02	2002	2	19.50	12.58	98.57	0.00	--	--	6.50	11.31	83.45	3.00	13.52	99.67	0.00	--	--	2.00	19.50	82.57
Sep-03	2003	3	16.33	12.72	94.32	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	37.67	8.00	--	5.67	12.21	112.80	1.00	19.60	101.96
Sep-04	2004	3	13.33	11.11	--	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	36.67	12.60	--	0.33	14.50	--	0.67	20.45	--
Sep-05	2005	3	24.67	11.12	92.19	0.00	--	--	0.33	--	--	44.67	13.14	99.05	5.67	9.07	112.75	1.33	20.53	101.17
Sep-06	2006	3	32.00	10.62	98.00	0.00	--	--	0.67	9.35	96.10	28.00	15.31	108.20	9.00	9.84	109.80	0.33	15.40	104.20
Sep-07	2007	3	13.33	11.20	96.30	0.00	--	--	2.33	9.20	80.90	28.00	13.40	102.30	9.00	9.00	115.70	4.33	7.60	96.10
Sep-08	2008	3	30.33	9.73	94.58	0.00	--	--	7.67	9.03	84.95	14.00	14.12	108.86	5.67	10.94	147.97	5.00	8.07	97.96
Sep-09	2009	3	9.66	10.50	73.45	0.33	10.00	100.88	9.00	9.33	62.37	12.33	14.58	95.00	7.66	11.31	104.73	2.66	10.25	80.07
Sep-10	2010	3	14.33	10.90	104.35	0.33	10.00	111.49	0.00	--	--	7.67	13.80	104.10	1.67	8.94	117.20	6.00	10.62	98.00
Aug-11	2011	3	26.33	10.56	98.91	0.33	10.60	106.02	0.00	--	--	10.00	14.28	102.92	0.00	--	--	0.67	12.40	103.88
Sep-12	2012	3	34.67	11.15	99.37	1.33	9.73	99.80	0.00	--	--	12.00	12.26	103.03	0.66	10.80	106.63	1.66	14.90	102.83
Sep-13	2013	3	24.00	10.47	146.81	0.66	8.55	98.05	0.00	--	--	33.33	12.79	106.65	1.66	12.20	104.72	0.33	17.10	109.51
Sep-14	2014	3	52.30	10.46	97.25	4.00	10.05	90.72	0.00	--	--	25.70	13.01	98.94	0.33	12.90	106.22	0.00	--	--
Sep-15	2015	3	55.67	10.36	91.26	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	33.00	12.18	94.10	0.33	12.90	107.95	0.00	--	--
Sep-16	2016	3	22.30	9.83	90.11	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	53.00	14.00	95.10	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--
Sep-17	2017	3	27.00	10.64	93.51	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	61.70	14.43	97.30	2.33	10.77	95.77	0.00	--	--
Sep-18	2018	3	28.00	11.31	88.00	0.33	10.30	82.45	0.00	--	--	60.70	11.97	93.55	2.67	14.49	108.22	0.00	--	--
Sep-19	2019	3	11.67	10.82	93.93	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	69.70	11.97	89.95	0.33	8.40	92.02	0.00	--	--
Sep-20	2020	3	31.33	11.13	98.87	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	124.00	12.32	92.75	4.33	12.28	103.43	0.00	--	--
Sep-21	2021	3	21.67	10.18	87.13	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	79.33	12.26	88.14	0.67	9.60	87.58	0.00	--	--
Sep-22	2022	3	7.67	9.54	82.64	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	146.00	13.12	87.17	2.33	13.77	96.87	0.00	--	--
Sep-23	2023	3	24.00	9.90	92.03	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	78.00	12.20	84.76	0.67	17.60	120.80	0.00	--	--
Sep-24	2024	3	1.67	11.56	94.35	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--	83.00	13.00	89.83	0.00	--	--	0.00	--	--

Blaine County Ponds

Ponds throughout Blaine County were sampled using gill and trap nets to assess species composition, relative abundance, and size distribution of fish or the voluntary creel boxes were maintained.

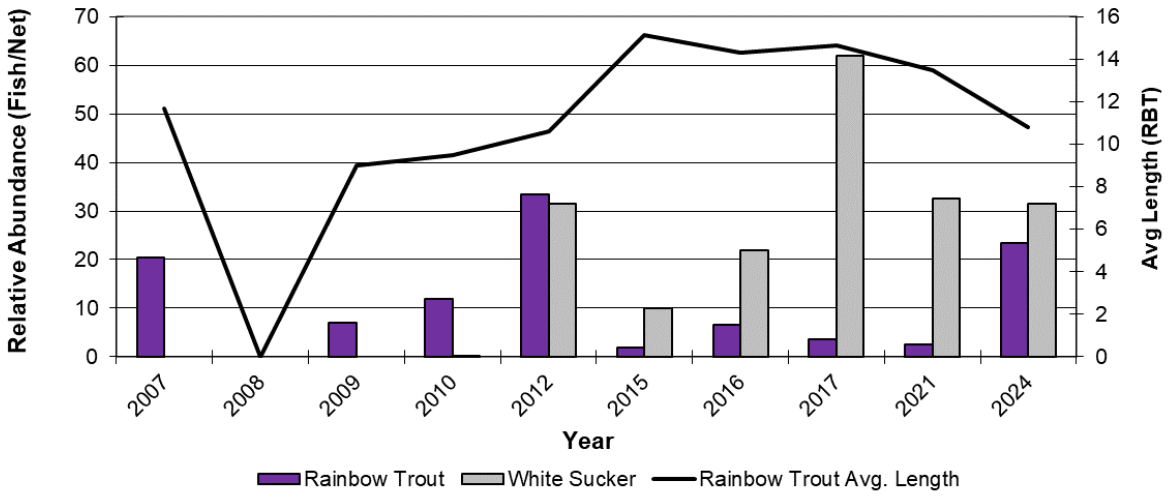
Grasshopper Reservoir

Grasshopper Reservoir is a privately owned 19 surface-acre reservoir located approximately 12 miles south of Chinook and received 509 (± 311) angler days in 2019/2020 (MTFWP Fisheries Bureau 2020). Grasshopper Reservoir was first stocked with rainbow trout in 1947, and trout have exhibited good growth and survival rates in this reservoir. Grasshopper is currently maintained with annual plants of 4,000 fingerling Arlee rainbow trout and biennial plants of 3,000 advanced fingerling Eagle Lake rainbow trout.

White suckers were chemically removed in 1991 and were undetected in netting surveys until 2010, when one white sucker (TL=7.4; WT=0.16 lbs.) was captured. White suckers have since established themselves within the reservoir and are successfully reproducing (Figure 2). Tiger muskies were stocked in 2013 as a biological control on the white sucker population, their impact is undetermined at this time, and three tiger muskie were observed during our 2021 surveys ($\bar{x}$ TL=23.0 in.) and none were observed in 2024. Pearl dace, a species of special concern is present in this reservoir, which makes a chemical rehabilitation effort very difficult. The landowner has also expressed disinterest in use of chemicals to remove white sucker.

In 2024 rainbow trout relative abundance increased to 23.5 fish/net with an average length of 10.8 inches (Figure 2). White sucker relative abundance remains high at 31.5 white suckers/net and the population has remained stable. In addition to the standardized sampling FWP personnel did seine and trap net for pearl dace in 2024, four pearl dace were observed during this effort.

Figure 2. - Relative abundance of rainbow trout and white suckers and average total length of rainbow trout in Grasshopper reservoir based on gill netting surveys from 2007 to 2024.



Phillips County Ponds

Ponds throughout Phillips County were sampled using gill and trap nets to assess species composition, relative abundance, and size distribution of fish or the voluntary creel boxes were maintained.

Flake Reservoir

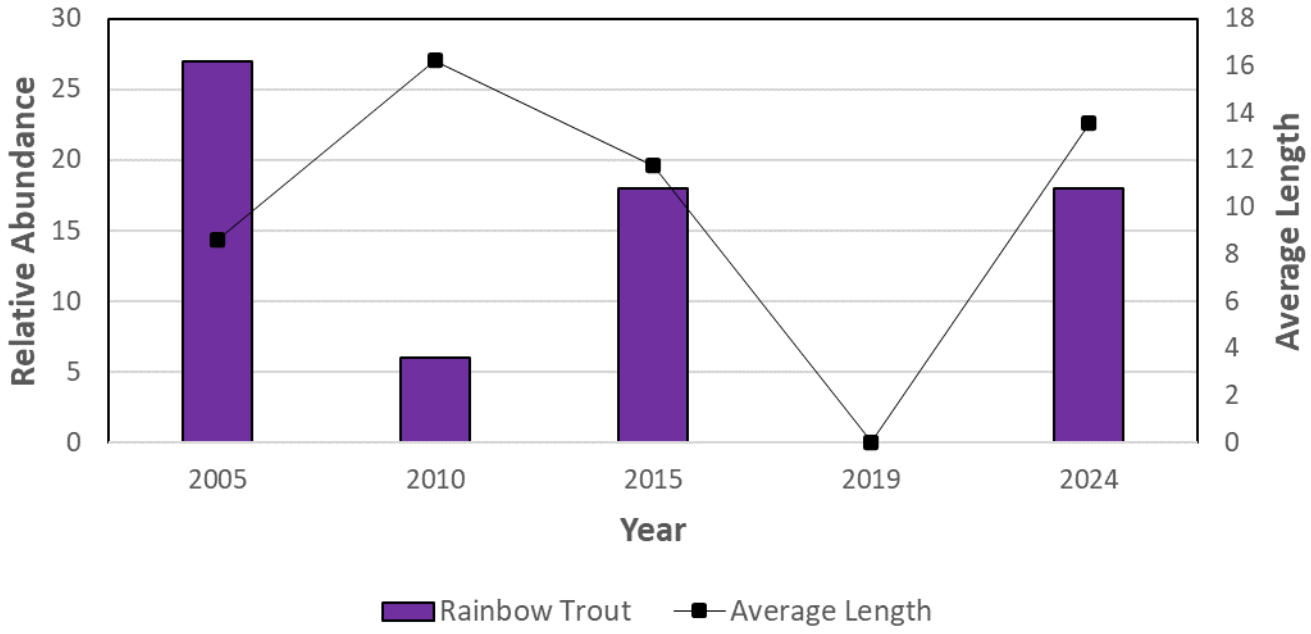
Flake Reservoir is a 6-acre pond located on BLM lands in north central Phillips County. This reservoir has been managed as rainbow trout fishery since 1982 and currently receives annual plants of 250 fingerling rainbow trout. The success of this fishery is highly influenced by reservoir water levels and winter severity (winterkill). In 2013 anglers reported catching rainbow trout larger than three pounds during the spring and summer months. In the spring of 2014, there was a report from a BLM employee that a winterkill had occurred. During the summer of 2014 one gill and trap net were set to assess the severity of the reported winterkill. No fish were captured and suggested a total winterkill had occurred. In 2024, one gill net captured a single rainbow trout, and the trap net captured four rainbow trout and 3,700 fathead minnows. The rainbow trout ranged from 13.5-23.5 inches, suggesting multiple age classes are present.

Rebate Reservoir

Rebate is BLM reservoir located in a deep coulee off Rock Creek and is surrounded by pine trees. This reservoir has been managed as a rainbow trout fishery since 1996. Currently, 250 fingerling rainbow trout are stocked annually.

In 2010, gill netting surveys indicated good survival and growth of stocked rainbow trout (relative abundance 6 fish/net; ($\bar{x}$ TL=16.2 in.; $\bar{x}$ WT=1.65 lbs.; Figure 3). The trap net contained one rainbow trout (TL=5.1; WT=.06). In 2015, rainbow trout relative abundance increased to 18 rainbow trout ($\bar{x}$ TL=11.8 in.; $\bar{x}$ WT=0.58 lbs.; Figure 3) and the trap contained two rainbow trout. In 2019, no rainbow trout were captured in the gill net and the trap net captured two rainbow trout ($\bar{x}$ TL=5.7 in.) and 26 fathead minnows (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Relative abundance (fish/net) and average total length of rainbow trout collected during periodic summer gillnet surveys at Rebate Reservoir, 2005-2024.



Rotator Cup Reservoir

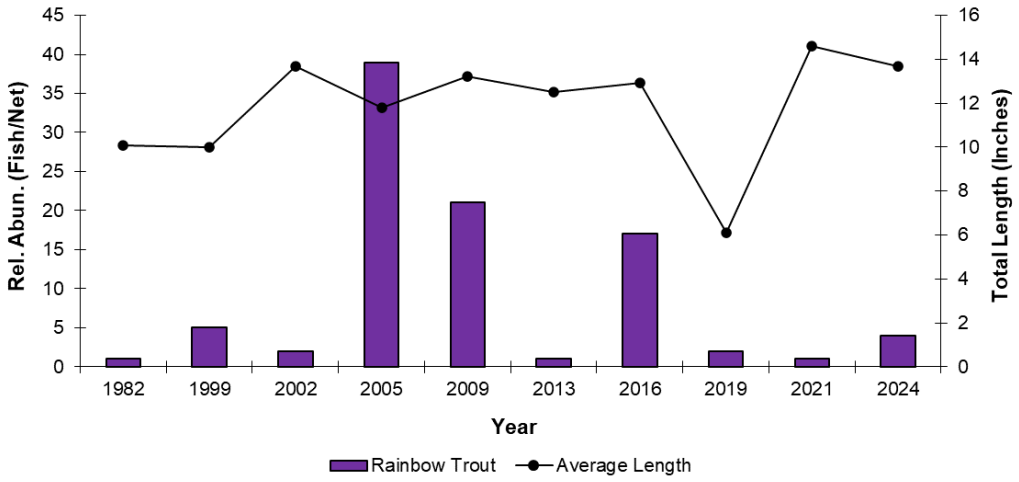
Rotator Cup is a BLM pond that has been managed as a rainbow trout fishery since 1996, maintained with biennial plants of 1,000 fingerling rainbow trout. In 2010, rainbow trout relative abundance was 9 fish/gill net ($\bar{x}$ TL=16.3 in.; $\bar{x}$ WT=1.70) and the trap net contained one rainbow trout (TL=15.3; WT=1.74). In 2015 and 2019 no fish were collected during our netting surveys. In 2024, rainbow trout relative abundance was 24 fish/gill net and averaged 5.8 inches.

Sentinel Reservoir

Sentinel is located on BLM land in south Phillips County, managed as a rainbow trout fishery since 1970. Sentinel receives annual plants of 6,000 fingerling rainbow trout.

Rainbow trout relative abundance has been in decline, with little variability in the average length of rainbow trout collected (Figure 4). Declines in trout abundance may be due to reduced depths and reservoir aging. Several major flood events have occurred in this area over the last ten years and may be impacting survival, growth, flushing, etc., more data will be collected to better understand exact reasons for the continued decline of trout abundance.

Figure 4. - Relative abundance and average total length of rainbow trout in Sentinel reservoir based on gill netting surveys from 1982 to 2024.



Shallow Reservoir

Shallow reservoir is located on BLM land and has been managed as a rainbow trout fishery since 1994. The fishery is currently maintained with annual plants of 250 fingerling rainbow trout. Presence and survival of rainbow trout has been fair and may be due to fluctuations in water levels (winterkill or entrainment during high water events). In 2024, the relative abundance of rainbow trout was 10 fish/net ($\bar{x}$ TL=13.2 inches). One trap net set overnight captured 98 fathead minnows.

Spanky Reservoir

Spanky Reservoir is a BLM pond that has been managed as a rainbow trout fishery since 1996. Currently, Spanky is maintained with annual plants of 250 fingerling rainbow trout. No fish have been captured during the last two sampling events (2019 and 2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Beaver Creek Reservoir: Reduced annual stocking of catchable size Arlee rainbow trout in 2025 to 20,000. Continue to monitor fishery annually with the use of seining and gill netting at fixed sites. Continue to monitor the impacts to the fishery during extreme water years and impacts of flushing over the spillway.

Bearpaw Lake: Continue annual stocking of catchable size Arlee and Eagle Lake rainbow trout. Commercial bait collection is now allowed in Beaver Creek, upstream of Beaver Creek Reservoir in 2023. The objective of this action was to stimulate commercial bait collection of white suckers. Continue to evaluate the various methods used to remove and manage adult suckers in this drainage. To date, stocking predators such as walleye and smallmouth bass hasn't worked. Manual removal using trap nets has yielded marginal results but is very time/labor intensive and white suckers quickly re-populate when these efforts cease. Continue to monitor fishery annually with the use of fall gill netting at fixed stations.

Blaine County Ponds: Monitor ponds every three to five years to assess survival and growth of stocked fish. Continue public education program alerting the public to the problems associated with the use of live bait (where illegal) and illegal dumping of fish into Montana waters. Continue to look for other ponds with suitable habitats to create new fisheries, work with the FWP access staff, area wardens, and landowners to help identify potential ponds. Work with BLM on identifying and implementing habitat enhancement projects at select ponds and reservoirs with the goal to increase pond productivity, reduce winterkills, and maintain fisheries value.

Phillips County Ponds: Monitor ponds every two to three years to assess survival and growth of stocked fish. Continue to look for other ponds with suitable habitats to create new fisheries, work with FWP access staff, area wardens, and landowners to help identify potential ponds. Include pond updates in periodic Region 6 Pond Fishing Guide. Work with BLM on identifying and implementing habitat enhancement projects at select ponds and reservoirs with the goal to increase pond productivity, reduce winterkills, and maintain fisheries value.

Key Words or Fish Species:
Region 6; ponds; Hill County; Blaine County; Phillips County; Havre; Chinook; Malta; Arlee; Eagle Lake; Erwin; rainbow trout, brown trout; brook trout; mottled sculpin; longnose dace; mountain sucker; fathead minnow; lake chub; white sucker; white sucker control; smallmouth bass; walleye; northern pike; yellow perch; Beaver Creek Reservoir; Bearpaw Lake

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Appendix 1. Sampling methods and equipment used to conduct fish monitoring activities at various regional waterbodies.

Waterbody	Gear Type	Mesh Size (Inches)	Net Dimensions (L X W)	Number of Nets Used	Time of Year (month)	Frequency	Purpose
Bearpaw Lake	Experimental Floating Gill Net	0.75"-2.0"	125' X 6'	2	September	Annually	Species trends and abundance
	Experimental sinking Gill Net	0.75"-2.0"	125' X 6'	1	September	Annually	Species trends and abundance
	Trap Net	0.25"	3' X 4'	Multiple	April-June	Periodic	White sucker removal
Beaver Creek Reservoir	Experimental Floating Gill Net	0.75"-2.0"	125' X 6'	3	September	Annually	Species trends and abundance
	Experimental sinking Gill Net	0.75"-2.0"	125' X 6'	3	September	Annually	Species trends and abundance
	Beach Seine	0.25"	75' X 10'	6 Hauls	August	Annually	Reproduction success and forage availability
Small Ponds (< 20 surface acres)	Experimental sinking Gill Net	0.75"-2.0"	125' X 6'	1	June/July	Variable	Species trends and abundance
	Trap Net	0.25"	2' X 3' and/or 3' X 4'	1-2	June/July	Variable	Species trends and abundance

Appendix 2. Rainbow trout stocking in 2024 on select ponds and reservoirs in Blaine, Hill, and Phillips Counties. Table highlights year and month, as well as number, strain, and size of fish stocked.

Water	County	Date	Species	Strain	Number	Size
Anderson Reservoir	Blaine	10/7/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	1000	8.09
Anderson Reservoir	Blaine	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	2000	2.92
Br 028 Reservoir	Blaine	7/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	250	7.24
Brookie Pond	Blaine	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	500	2.92
Chouteau Reservoir (Choteau)	Blaine	10/7/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	1000	8.09
Chouteau Reservoir (Choteau)	Blaine	7/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	2000	7.24
Dry Fork Reservoir (Schwartz Reservoir)	Blaine	6/6/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	5000	3.23
Faber Reservoir	Blaine	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	10000	2.92
Grasshopper Reservoir	Blaine	5/28/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	4000	3.23
H.C. Kuhr Reservoir	Blaine	5/28/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	3000	3.23
Harrys Pond	Blaine	5/28/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	500	3.23
North Faber Reservoir	Blaine	6/12/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1500	7.25
North Polly Reservoir	Blaine	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	1000	2.92
Petrie Pond	Blaine	7/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	143	6.58
Petrie Pond	Blaine	7/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	357	7.93
Reser Reservoir	Blaine	6/6/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	3000	3.23
Salmo Reservoir	Blaine	6/3/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.19
South Polly Reservoir	Blaine	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92
Normandy Coulee Pond	Hill	6/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1019	8.2
Supenau Reservoir	Hill	6/12/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.25
Unnamed	Hill	6/11/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	498	8.2
Allery Reservoir	Phillips	7/12/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	300	8.28
Batosh Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	500	2.92
Cole Pond NNW	Phillips	6/7/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.25
Cole Pond NW	Phillips	6/7/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.25
Cole Pond SW	Phillips	6/7/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	2000	7.25
Current Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	3000	2.92
Douchette Lake	Phillips	7/18/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.24
Flake Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92
Flinstone Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	1000	7.24
Hump Lake	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	500	2.92
King Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	1500	2.92
Paleface Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	250	7.24
Pr 018 Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	250	7.24
Pr 022 Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	500	2.92
Rebate Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92
Rotator Cup Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	1000	2.92
Sagebrush Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	500	7.24
Sentinel Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	6000	2.92
Shallow Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92
Snag Retention Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	500	7.24
Spanky Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92
Taint Reservoir	Phillips	7/16/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	R	500	7.24
Wrangler Reservoir	Phillips	5/14/2024	1 - Rainbow Trout	A	250	2.92