

**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS
FISHERIES DIVISION**

JOB PROGRESS REPORT

State:	<u>MONTANA</u>	Element 1:	<u>FISHERIES MANAGEMENT</u>
Project No:	<u>F-78-R-1</u>	Job No:	<u>3531</u>
Project Title:	<u>STATEWIDE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM</u>	Job Title:	<u>SOUTH CENTRAL MONTANA COLDWATER FISHERIES INVESTIGATIONS</u>

Project Period: July 1, 1994 - June 30, 1995

OBJECTIVES AND DEGREE OF ATTAINMENT

Activity 1 - Survey and Inventory

Objective: To survey and monitor the characteristics and trends of fish populations, angler harvest and preferences, and to assess habitat conditions in selected waters.

During spring we completed mark-recapture runs on two sections of the Musselshell River, one at the Winnecook Ranch and one near Barber. We also collected samples in Bluewater Creek near the state hatchery to test for whirling disease.

In summer, we surveyed 45 lakes in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, including 25 in the Clarks Fork Drainage, three in West and five in East Rosebud Drainages, six in the Stillwater Drainage, and six in the Rock Creek Drainage.

We surveyed Cooney, Deadman's Basin, and Bighorn reservoirs in spring and fall, and the Afterbay in fall. We sampled East and West Rosebud and Emerald lakes during spring for trend analysis and whirling disease testing. We also netted Otie Lake in the Stillwater Drainage.

Activity 2 - Fish Population Management

Objective: To implement fish stocking programs and/or fish eradication actions to maintain fish populations at levels consistent with habitat conditions and other limiting factors.

During FY95, 27 lakes were planted with trout in Region 5. One was also stocked with kokanee salmon.

Activity 3 - Technical Guidance

Objective: To review projects by government agencies and private parties which have the potential to affect fisheries resources; provide technical advice or decisions to mitigate effects on these

resources; and provide landowners and other private parties with technical advice and information to sustain and enhance fisheries resources.

We responded to many phone calls and written requests from the public regarding coldwater issues in southcentral Montana, particularly about building, stocking, and managing private ponds. We also prepared many EA's (20+) for pond permits.

We attended six conservation district meetings, addressed three 310 applications, and about eight Stream Protection Act applications. With NRCS, we began the cooperative process pursuing habitat restoration on Careless Creek. As members of the Musselshell Basin Commission, we are seeking better allocation of stream flows.

We attended a "Know Your Watershed" workshop for the Musselshell River this winter, and attended other training to enhance technical and managerial skills.

Activity 4 - Aquatic Education

Objective: To enhance the public's understanding, awareness and support of the state's fishery and aquatic resources and to assist young people to develop angling skills and to appreciate the aquatic environment.

We presented the latest fisheries information and/or proposed fishing regulation changes to local sports clubs. Two tribal students from Little Bighorn College were part of our mountain lake sampling crew during summer. Cabin owners at Deadman's Basin Reservoir helped in netting during spring and fall.

We provided information for the media and Fisherman Log Newsletter, and are planning an international Public Outreach Symposium in June through the Montana Chapter AFS.

SUMMARY

We progressed in all objectives.

FINAL BUDGET STATUS

<u>Amount Budgeted</u>	<u>Amount Spent</u>	<u>Balance of Funds</u>
\$51,320.00	\$48,697.30	\$2,622.70

Regional Supervisor _____

R. Elli

9/19/95