MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

FISHERIES DIVISION

JOB PROGRESS REPORT

State: Montana

Project Number: F-46-R-1
Job Number: II-c

Project Title: Statewide Fisheries Investigations
Study Title: Survey and Inventory of Cold Water Lakes
Job Title: Southwest Montana Cold Water Lakes Investigations

JOB OBJECTIVES

1. Increase late summer and fall reservoir pool in Ruby Reservoir (post-irrigation levels) to provide greater amount of aquatic habitat.

   Worked with Ruby Valley water users and SCS to formulate a reservoir management plan using predicted water availability. In order to make these water availability predictions more accurate a low elevation Snotel moisture measurement site was installed in the drainage.

2. Insure that land uses do not adversely affect lake water quality or tributary stream spawning habitat.

   Comments on U.S.F.S.timber sales and grazing allotments of in critical areas where affected reservoir or tributary stream spawning habitat.

3. Collect necessary information to properly manage mountain lake fisheries as time and funding allows.

   A total of 15 high mountain lakes were gill netted and a stocking plan was formulated for each lake.

4. Maintain catch rates at an acceptable level for mountain lake cutthroat fisheries.

   McBride lake cutthroat trout were stocked in those mountain lakes scheduled for stocking in 1988.

5. Maintain wild rainbow trout fishery in Hidden Lake sustaining 1000 angler days/ year with catch rates of $\geq$0.5 fisher/hour. Maintain densities reflected in average sample of $\geq$20 fish per 125 ft. floating gill net set.

   Floating gill nets were set in Hidden Lake to evaluate the population of wild rainbow trout. Data has yet to be analyzed.

Maintain fishery of Elk Lake sustaining 4000 angler days/year with catch rates of 0.5 fish/hour. Maintain densities reflected in average sample of ≥18 cutthroat trout per 125 ft. gill net set with opportunity to catch trophy grayling.

Gill nets were set in Elk Lake to evaluate the cutthroat trout and grayling fishery. Data has yet to be analyzed.

7. Maintain wild rainbow and brown trout fishery in Ruby Reservoir sustaining 4000 angler/year with catch rates of 0.5 fish/hour and rainbow densities reflected in average samples of ≥18 fish per 125 ft. gill net set.

   Gill nets were set in Ruby Reservoir to determine trend data for the wild rainbow and brown trout population. Data has not yet been analyzed.

8. Develop a consistent rainbow trout fishery with opportunities to catch edible size yellow perch in Dailey Lake.

   Gill nets were set in Dailey Lake to determine densities of rainbow trout and yellow perch. Data has not yet been analyzed.

9. Introduce Eagle Lake strain rainbow trout to Haypress Lake and establish population as a brood source for further introductions.

   Initial plants of Eagle Lake rainbow trout were introduced into Haypress Lakes.

10. Manage Culver Pond as a trophy brook trout fishery with the opportunity of catching brook trout ≥14 inches.

    Gill nets were set in Culver Pond to evaluate the number and sizes of brook trout present. Data has not yet been analyzed.

11. Manage McDonald Pond as a trophy rainbow trout fishery, with the opportunity of catching rainbow trout ≥18 inches.

    Gill nets were set in McDonald Pond to determine the number and sizes of the wild rainbow trout population. Data has not yet been analyzed.

12. Provide opportunity for catching trophy size cutthroat trout in selected mountain lakes of the region.

No activity in this objective.

VARIANCES

12. No lakes were identified during this period as having potential for a trophy sized cutthroat trout fishery.

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