THOMPSON RIVER ANGLER SURVEY
March 2005 to February 2006

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August 31, 2006

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The Thompson River is a major tributary to the lower Clark Fork River. It provides a valuable recreational fishery, especially for rainbow (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) and ranked as high as 11th in the region in 1999 for annual angling pressure. Bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, also inhabit the Thompson River drainage. The Thompson River and two of its tributaries (West Fork Thompson River and Fishtrap Creek) have been identified as core habitat by the state of Montana (Montana Bull Trout Scientific Group 2000) and critical habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS 2002) for bull trout. Genetically pure native westslope cutthroat trout (*O.clarki lewisi*), which are considered a species of special concern in Montana, inhabit the drainage as well.

There are two roads that parallel the Thompson River for much of its length. These roads are primarily gravel and offer excellent seasonal access to the river for fishing. However, the two roads do encroach on the river and its floodplain and likely have had detrimental effects to the river.

The Western Federal Lands Highway Division proposed to combine the dual road network existing along the Thompson River into one road system and upgrade the road to a suitable standard for improved year-round access. This potentially involved using portions of each of the existing dual roads and removing abandoned portions of the dual roads to restore the river channel and floodplain. It also potentially involved paving the road.

The proposed action would likely increase fishing pressure and affect angler access and accessibility to the Thompson River. To facilitate an environmental review of the proposed project, we proposed to determine the nature and extent of possible direct and indirect impacts of the proposed road to recreational fishing effort, magnitude, and distribution, as well as fishing access. This was accomplished by conducting a creel survey to determine existing fishing effort, magnitude and distribution to serve as baseline data. In addition, we conducted a mail survey of Thompson River anglers to determine potential effects to fishing access and accessibility of the river to anglers. Both the mail and creel surveys helped to determine future fishing access opportunities and opportunities to increase accessibility of the river to anglers.

During the creel survey the Western Federal Lands Highway Division decided to put the proposed project on hold due to environmental concerns that were raised during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This report summarizes the data collected and provides recommendations to minimize impacts of the proposed project to recreational fishing and angler access and accessibility of the river to anglers. The information collected should guide both alternative development and implementation efforts of the forest highway project if brought forward in the future.

Study Area

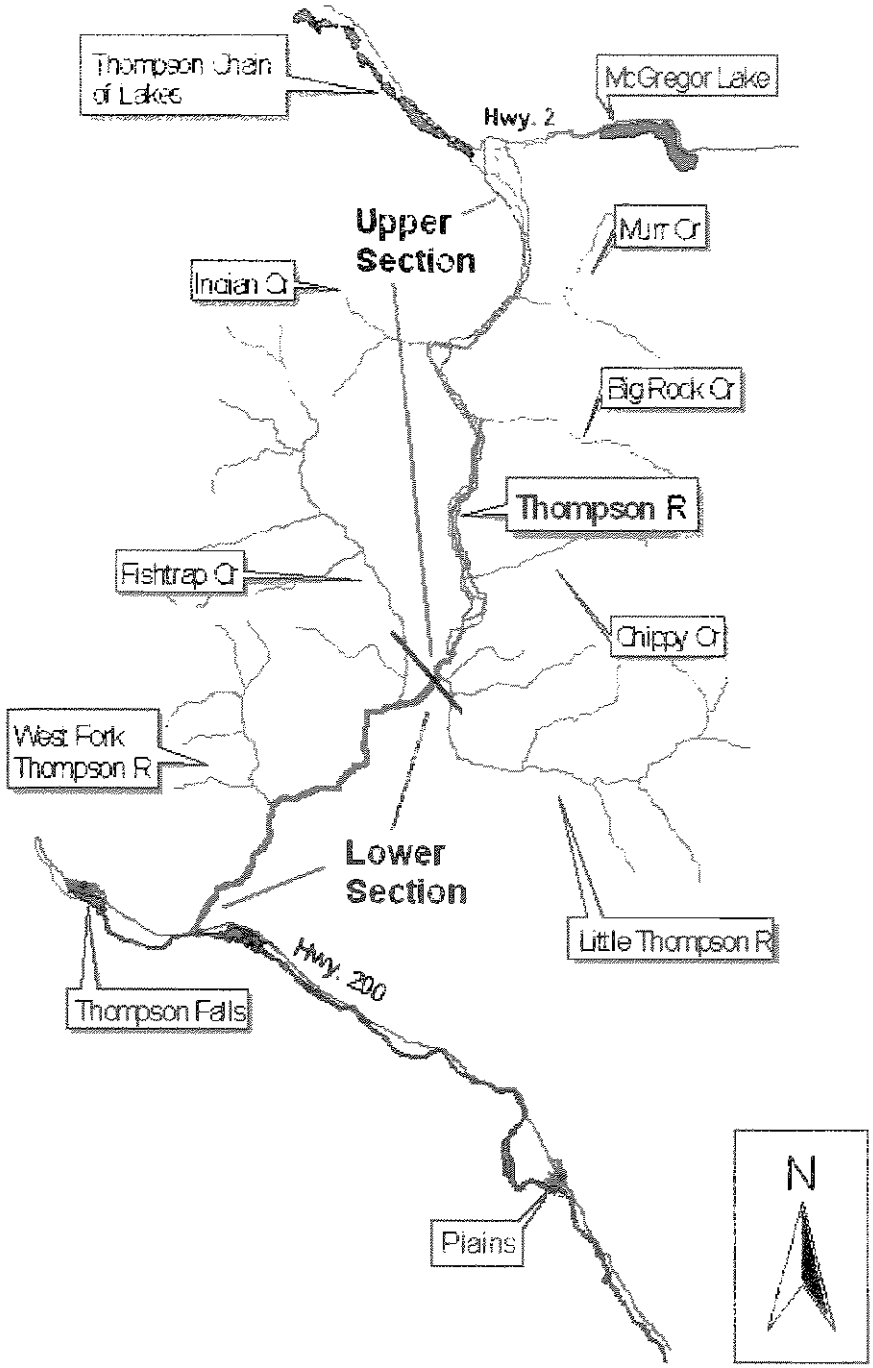
Fishery

The Thompson River is a fifth order drainage originating from the Thompson Chain of Lakes. The river consists of two very different sections. The upper section extends from the lakes to a bridge about 17 miles upstream of the mouth (17 mile bridge)(Figure 1). This section is relatively low in gradient flowing through a wide valley. The lower section, which includes the area from the 17-mile bridge to the mouth of the river, is higher in gradient, flowing through a confined canyon. The Thompson River has several major tributaries including the West Fork Thompson River, Fishtrap Creek, the Little Thompson River, Chippy Creek, and Big Rock Creek. The confluence of the Little Thompson River is near the 17-mile bridge, and both Fishtrap Creek and the West Fork Thompson River join the Thompson downstream of the mouth of the Little Thompson River. Interestingly, the warmest water temperatures in the Thompson River occur just downstream from the confluence of the Little Thompson River and above the confluence of Fishtrap Creek. In most rivers and streams the warmest water temperatures occur near their mouths, but in the Thompson River, the coolest water temperatures occur near its mouth. Therefore, the fish species found in the Thompson River vary in their distribution accordingly. The lower portion of the river contains primarily a rainbow trout fishery, which is most popular with anglers. Brown trout, which also provide an important recreational fishery, tend to dominate the upper portion of the river where water temperatures are warmer. Westslope cutthroat trout are also captured by anglers in the Thompson River, but are more dominant in the tributaries to the river. Mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*) are abundant in the mainstem and provide primarily a winter and spring recreational fishery. The area between the mouth of the Thompson River and the confluence of Fishtrap Creek serves as a migratory corridor for bull trout, although anglers are not allowed to fish for bull trout due to their threatened status. Other species known to inhabit the drainage include some brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), another gamefish, and non-game fish such as suckers (*Catostomus* spp.) and sculpin (*Cottus* spp.).

Fishing is currently open on the Thompson River year-round, however regulations vary with the season. The main fishing season opens the third Saturday in May and goes through the end of November. Since 2000, fishing regulations on the Thompson River between May and November have been catch-and-release only for westslope cutthroat trout, and for other trout, anglers are allowed to keep 3 less than 10 inches in length, or, 2 under 10 inches and 1 over 18 inches. In addition, adults must use only artificial lures, but kids 14 years of age and younger may use bait. Between December 1 and the third Saturday in May, the river is open for fishing only from the confluence of the Little Thompson River downstream to the mouth. Fishing during this time period is also limited to mountain whitefish harvest and catch-and-release fishing for trout and using artificial lures and/or maggots.

These regulations were put in place in 2000 to improve the quality of fishing, due to the results of fish population and angler creel surveys that were completed between 1997 and 1999 (Saffel 2000). The data collected in the late 1990s indicated that angling was having a significant impact on the fishery. During this time period angling pressure began to increase significantly as well.

Figure 1 Map of Thompson River drainage (only major drainages, Forest Hwy. 56, Rd. 9991, Hwy. 200, and Hwy. 2 are pictured) showing the lower and upper sections surveyed between March 2005 and February 2006.



Prior to 2000, the general season regulation of 5 fish, 1 over 14 inches was in place for the entire river with the exception of a catch-and-release section that was in place in the mid to late 1980s (Saffel 2000). The catch-and-release section was determined unsuccessful because fish were not fully protected from harvest due to seasonal fish movement in and out of the protected area. There was also a winter catch-and-release period for trout, which extended into the spawning season upstream from the 17 mile bridge. This was eliminated in 1998 to protect large, spawning fish because population data suggested that the number of adult fish was low.

Fishing Access

The existing road is 42.6 miles in length, beginning at its junction with Hwy. 200 about 5 miles east of Thompson Falls, and ending at the intersection of Hwy. 2 about 39 miles west of Kalispell (WFLHD 1999). The first 4.1 miles of one of the existing dual roads are paved and the remaining 38.5 miles are gravel. Major access routes to the Thompson River are primarily from Hwy. 200 and Hwy. 2 on one of the two existing dual roads that parallel the Thompson River (Forest Hwy. 56 and Rd. 9991).

Much of the Thompson River drainage has public access. The Forest Service administers a large portion of land in the drainage and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has a conservation easement that maintains public access on much of the private land (owned by Plum Creek Timber Company) that borders the river. Although there is some other private land in the upper portion of the drainage, angler access along the Thompson River is currently extremely flexible and opportunities are dispersed along nearly the entire length of the river. There are two Forest Service campgrounds along the lower portion of the Thompson River and many dispersed camping sites along the remainder of the river. Anglers can access the river virtually anywhere along the majority of its length by pulling off the side of the road and parking with the current road system.

Most fishing takes place from shore or by wading due to the size of the Thompson River. However, some floating does occur in spring when flows are adequate. There are currently no official boat access sites along the Thompson River, although an informal access is located about 19 miles up the river and anglers are able to carry a raft or other lightweight boat up the bank at several other sites.

Angling Pressure

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has conducted a statewide angling pressure mail survey since 1982. Samples are drawn from the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks sportsman's database, which includes those who purchase fishing licenses. The statewide angling pressure is estimated for two sections of the Thompson River. Section one includes the mouth to the Bend Ranger Station (about 12 miles from the junction of Hwy. 2) and section two, the Bend Ranger Station to the headwaters of the Thompson River.

Annual estimates of angling pressure in section 1 of the Thompson River varied between 3,452 and 7,857 angler days between 1982 and 1997 (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 1983-1998). By 1999 estimates increased to 10,068 angler days (Appendix A, Table A.1). In section 2, annual estimates of angling pressure have generally increased since the early 1980s from between to 448 to 1,118 angler days (with the exception of 1983 estimated at 4,059 angler days) to as high as 2,930 angler days in 1995 (Appendix A.

Table A.2) (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 1982-1999). Annual estimates of angling pressure in 2001 and 2003 were much less than previous estimates, but this was probably due to a voluntary afternoon angling closure placed on the river during a peak fishing time period, between July 27 and August 30, 2001, and a mandatory afternoon angling closure during a similar time period in 2003 due to low water and high water temperature conditions present in the river (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 2002, 2004). Most of the angling pressure takes place in the summer season in section 1 of the Thompson River (Appendix A, Tables A.3 and A.4).

Methods

Creel Survey

A creel survey was conducted over a one-year period to determine existing fishing effort, magnitude, and distribution on the Thompson River. Information was also obtained about how the anglers accessed the Thompson River. The survey involved a roving technique and contacting a sample of anglers on-site. The survey was stratified by location, season, weekends/holidays and weekdays, and time periods within each day. It also involved vehicle and angler counts twice per survey day to help determine angler effort. A two-stage roving creel technique was employed to contact anglers on-site. One stage of the roving creel involved counting vehicles and anglers, and the other interviewing anglers.

The creel clerks roved by vehicle and were able to cover the survey area well because the existing dual roads parallel the river for most of its length. This method was chosen because multiple access routes to the Thompson River exist making an access point survey difficult. Major access routes to the Thompson River are primarily from Hwy. 200 and Hwy. 2 on one of the two existing dual roads that parallel the Thompson River. Where the two roads join Hwy. 200, they are directly next to each other, but they intersect Hwy. 2 about a mile apart. However, there is also good access via a mostly gravel road (Forest Rd. 7512) from Hwy. 200 in Plains through the Little Thompson River drainage. In addition, there is potential access via gravel roads (Forest roads 4422 and 516) from Hwy. 2 east of Libby through the Fishtrap Creek drainage. Creel clerks began interviews where most of the anglers were located during the counts.

The survey area was stratified into two sections based on logistics for the creel clerks to cover the survey area in about an hour (A. Zale, Montana State University, personal communication), differences in fish habitat, and differences in seasonal fishing regulations. The lower section included the mouth to the 17-mile bridge near the confluence of the Little Thompson River (see Figure 1). This involved the area that was thought to receive the most angler use. In addition, the bridge at the end of the survey section allowed the creel clerk to go up one of the dual roads and down the other to cover the survey section. The section also encompassed the higher gradient section that flows through the confined canyon. It also represented the section that is open to fishing year-round (from December 1 to the third Saturday in May the river from the confluence of the Little Thompson upstream is closed to fishing). The upper section included 17-mile bridge near the confluence of the Little Thompson River to mile 39 on Rd. 9991 (the farthest upstream public access to the Thompson River prior to the junction of Hwy. 2)(see Figure 1). The sections used for the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks statewide angling pressure mail survey were not chosen for several reasons. The Bend Ranger

Station is only about 12 miles from the junction of Hwy. 2 which does not split the over 42 mile river corridor in sections that can be reasonably covered by two people conducting a roving survey. This division does not represent differences in angler use or fish habitat very well either. It also does not divide the river well in terms of seasonal fishing regulations.

The survey was stratified by season and weekends/holidays and weekdays in order to reduce variability associated with fishing effort. The seasonal stratifications also coincided with seasonal changes in fishing regulations. The seasonal stratifications were the following: 1) third Saturday in May to Labor Day (summer), 2) Labor Day to November 30 (fall), 3) December 1 to February 29 (winter), and 4) March 1 to third Saturday in May (spring). The upper section was only open to fishing during the summer and fall seasons and thus was only surveyed those seasons. It was assumed that weekend days and holidays receive consistently higher levels of fishing effort than weekdays. Creel survey effort was greater on weekends and holidays than weekdays because it is recommended that more samples be taken within a stratum if there is more fishing effort within that stratum (Malvestuto 1996). Therefore, two time periods per weekend and holiday (50%) were sampled and three time periods per 5 weekdays (30%) during the spring, summer, and fall time periods. Holidays included New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. An afternoon angling closure was implemented during the peak fishing season between July 22 and September 5, 2005, due to low flows and high water temperatures in the river. Because fishing was permitted only in mornings during the fishing closure, only mornings were sampled. During the fishing closure in August we sampled about 75% of the weekend/holiday and about 40% of the weekday mornings. Because the winter stratum was assumed to receive far less fishing effort, it was only sampled 1 time period per weekend and 1 time period for every two holidays (25%), and 2 time periods per 5 weekdays (20%). Time periods were selected without replacement within each two-week period sampled.

The survey was stratified by the time period in the day as well. This occurred because it is not reasonable for a creel clerk to survey during all daylight hours in a day in summer. Depending on season, the day was divided into two equal parts. During summer this involved a morning period extending from about 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and an afternoon period extending from about 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. During winter only one 8-hour time period covered nearly all daylight hours. Angler interviews began a half hour before sunrise and continued until a half hour after sunset depending on the time period (a.m. or p.m.) the survey took place.

Two counts were obtained per survey day at random start times on the half hour (selected without replacement) within the survey time period. The first count was started at a randomly selected location (either top or bottom of survey section) and the second count started at the opposite location. Information obtained in the counts (Appendix B) included the number of vehicles, location of vehicles (road mile), as well as number of anglers and location of anglers (road mile). In addition, the weather, water clarity, flow, and water temperature were described for the count period.

The count section for the lower Thompson River included vehicles and anglers observed from the Forest Hwy. 56 (west side of the Thompson River) between the junction of Hwy. 200 and the 17-mile bridge (see Figure 1). The lower count section also included vehicles and anglers observed at the access near the mouth of the Thompson River on the

south side of Hwy. 200. The count section for the upper Thompson River included vehicles and anglers observed from Rd. 9991 between the 17-mile bridge and milepost 39. The upper count section also included vehicles and anglers observed along a popular section of the Thompson River on a portion of Forest Hwy. 56 from mile 19.6 to mile 21.3. For the counts, the survey section was stratified into 3-mile lengths based on road mileposts. Vehicles and anglers observed at the access located near the mouth on south side of Hwy. 200 were recorded separately for the lower Thompson River section. Vehicles and anglers observed on the Forest Hwy. 56 from mile 19.6 to mile 21.3 were recorded separately for the upper Thompson River section.

Generally all self-propelled vehicles (i.e., if campers that needed to be towed by vehicle were by themselves they were not counted) that were observed during the count parked on both sides of river and roads, at campgrounds, camping areas, and trailheads were counted. However, vehicles observed at homes (i.e., in town of Snyder) or at cabins (i.e., near 17-mile bridge) were typically not counted. If anglers parked at their cabins or homes were fishing near their cabins or homes, their vehicles were included in the count. In addition, government vehicles were not included in the vehicle count. It was noted on the count data sheet if the vehicle parked was not associated with anglers if known or if suspected (i.e., if vehicle at trailhead and no anglers in vicinity). In addition, it was noted on the count data sheet if the vehicle that anglers came in was not visible.

Each party was interviewed with data recorded on one form for the party in the spring season. Each angler in a party was interviewed with data recorded on separate forms for each in the party that was fishing for the summer, fall and winter seasons. Information obtained from interviews (Appendix C) included where the angler originated (county and state), how the angler accessed Thompson River (i.e., Hwy. 200), number of anglers per vehicle, and the location angler was fishing (i.e., road mile) and parked (i.e., camping area or road shoulder) to help determine fishing access sites used and distribution of anglers in the section. Road mileposts and the vehicle odometer were used to determine the specific location the angler parked and was fishing. Because there were few mile markers on the Forest Hwy. 56 in the upper Thompson River section, each road mile was flagged and the flagging and vehicle odometer were used to determine specific locations where anglers were parked and fishing. Information obtained in the creel survey included (Appendix C) length of time angler fished (including time started fishing and time expected to finish fishing), species sought, and number, species, and length captured and harvested to help determine the magnitude of the fishing occurring. The lengths of the fish released were estimated by the anglers and those harvested were measured by the creel clerk. The creel clerk also recorded other basic information including if the survey occurred on a weekend, holiday, or weekday; if it occurred during the morning or afternoon time period; and survey date and time. In addition, whether the angler was fishing from the bank or a boat; the number in the angler's party; and sex of angler were also recorded. The interviewer also asked if the angler would like to participate in the mail survey regarding fishing access/accessibility to river and if so, recorded the angler's name and mailing address.

Non-anglers were also interviewed as time allowed. Similar pertinent information was recorded for non-anglers as for anglers.

Data was analyzed by month and by season and also by weekdays and weekend/holidays. Pressure was calculated using the number of anglers observed in the count data. Catch

and harvest data was calculated with a total-ratio estimate (Malvestuto 1996). Catch, harvest and pressure data was analyzed by Bob McFarland, fisheries systems analyst, with the same program that is used for the statewide angler survey analyses.

Mail Survey

A mail survey was conducted to supplement the creel survey information obtained about fishing access and the angler's accessibility to the river. The mail survey helped to identify angler concerns about recreational access to the Thompson River if a single road system was constructed or potentially paved. It also helped determine how to maintain desired fishing access and angler accessibility if the single road system was constructed and potentially paved.

The target sample size was 750 to allow for non-response and provide an adequate sample size. The mail survey was sent to those interviewed during the creel survey that were willing to complete the survey (n = 296). In addition, the survey was sent to those that stated they fished the Thompson River in the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks statewide angling pressure mail survey (not including those interviewed) (n = 68). Finally, the survey was sent to a random sample of anglers with fishing licenses in the Thompson Falls area (n = 387)(about 30% of those with fishing licenses in the Thompson Falls area) to meet the target sample size. A follow-up mailing was sent two weeks following the original mailing to remind anglers to complete the mail survey in an effort to reduce non-response.

Because it was not known if all mail survey recipients fished the Thompson River, the first question of the mail survey asked if the angler had fished the Thompson River. If the angler had not fished the Thompson River they did not need to complete the survey and were asked to return the incomplete form. Survey results only include information from those that fished the Thompson River. Information obtained from the mail survey (Appendix D) included where the angler resides (county and state), how the angler accesses the Thompson River (i.e., Hwy. 200), and the locations fished on the Thompson River. It also included time of year the angler fishes the Thompson River and species sought. The mail survey also asked if the angler had concerns about recreational access to the Thompson River if a single road system was constructed or potentially paved and what the desired fishing access and angler accessibility would be if the single road system was constructed and potentially paved.

The mail survey was implemented and its results were analyzed by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Responsive Management Unit.

Results

Creel Survey

A total of 958 angler interviews were conducted on the Thompson River between March 2005 and February 2006. Of the 958 angler interviews, 245 were conducted in spring, 616 in summer, 77 in fall, and 20 in winter (Table 1). Far fewer interviews were conducted in the upper section of the Thompson River than the lower section. Unlike the lower section that is open year-round to fishing, the upper section is only open to fishing in summer and fall, but still only about 27% of the total interviews conducted in summer

and fall occurred in the upper section. Most of the anglers interviewed were fishing from the bank or wade fishing. Less than 1% of those interviewed were fishing from a boat.

Table 1. Number of anglers interviewed in creel survey on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Number of Anglers Interviewed				
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Total
Lower	245	445	62	20	772
Upper	na	171	15	na	186
Total	245	616	77	20	958

A total of 7,074.5 (SD = 581.4) angler-hours were estimated to occur on the lower section of the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Although the upper section is only open to fishing in summer and fall, only 25.8% of the total estimated angling pressure for summer and fall occurred in the upper section. A total of 1449.7 (SD 184.0) angler-hours were estimated to occur on the upper section from May to November 2005.

Angling pressure was greatest during the summer season in both sections. However, angling pressure in spring (3,099.8 angler-hours) was similar to that in summer (3,108.7 angler-hours) in the lower section. Fall received little angling pressure in both sections and angling pressure was lowest during winter (Table 2). May received the most angling pressure followed by June in both sections. However, the estimated angling pressure in April was similar to June in the lower section. In the lower section, weekdays received the highest angling pressure, while in the upper section weekends received the highest angling pressure (Table 2).

When asked what species the anglers were seeking, most anglers interviewed responded that they sought trout in general (97.4%)(Table 3). A small portion of those interviewed were seeking whitefish (66 of 958), however, only 3 were seeking whitefish in winter and 26 in spring when the special regulation allowing the use of maggots to catch whitefish was in place.

Anglers caught primarily trout in both sections. Of the catch, trout made up 80.0% of the catch in the lower section and 96.0% of the catch in the upper section (Table 4). Rainbow trout dominated the catch in the lower section (51.7%), followed by whitefish (19.8%), and brown trout (17.4%), westslope cutthroat trout (6.6%), brook trout (3.3%), bull trout (0.9%), and small numbers of undesignated trout, suckers, and northern pike. Brook (41.4%) and brown trout (33.8%) made up most of the catch in the upper section, followed by rainbow trout (15.4%), westslope cutthroat trout (5.3%), and mountain whitefish (3.5%). Two yellow perch were also captured in the upper section.

Overall, the rainbow trout captured had a mean length of 10.0 inches and a maximum length of 22.0 inches (n = 867). Brown trout also achieved a 22.0 inch maximum length and they averaged 9.4 inches (n = 400). Brook trout captured averaged 7.7 inches and had a maximum length of 13 inches (n = 207). Westslope cutthroat trout captured were a maximum of 16 inches and a mean of 9.3 inches (n = 124). Mean and maximum lengths

Table 2. Angler pressure (angler-hours) by section (upper and lower), month/season, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Weekdays		Weekends/holidays	
			Pressure	SD	Pressure	SD
Lower	2005	March	441.4	114.2	156.0	45.3
		April	451.7	140.7	619.5	147.9
		May	1,050.0	308.1	1,243.1	299.0
		Spring	1,566.5	354.0	1,533.3	298.3
		June	698.1	173.6	399.5	118.1
		July	390.0	96.2	462.0	165.4
		August	247.6	60.2	33.3	12.8
		Summer	1,760.9	236.6	1,347.8	274.2
		September	240.6	55.7	180.5	33.9
		October	157.5	42.4	84.0	29.0
		November	0.0	0.0	21.0	14.4
		Fall	359.1	69.9	236.0	52.8
		December	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2006	January	0.0	0.0	26.3	13.4
		February	99.0	62.8	73.3	35.3
		Winter	102.9	66.8	86.7	33.8
Total (SD)				7,074.5 (581.4)		
Upper	2005	May (only May 21 to May 31)	97.5	79.6	422.5	84.6
		June	115.1	54.0	382.5	84.4
		July	137.5	62.6	206.3	73.9
		August	0.0	0.0	4.2	4.2
		Summer	305.4	97.9	913.0	154.9
		September	0.0	0.0	66.2	27.4
		October	0.0	0.0	18.0	13.1
		November	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		Fall	0.0	0.0	66.6	30.3
Total (SD)				1,449.7 (184.0)		

Table 3. Fish species sought by anglers interviewed on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006. Anglers could give more than one response so percent anglers sought is out of 958 anglers interviewed.

Species	Number Anglers Sought	% Anglers Sought
Rainbow trout	5	0.5%
Brown trout	9	0.9%
Cutthroat trout	3	0.3%
Brook trout	5	0.5%
Trout in general	933	97.4%
Whitefish	66	6.9%
Other	3	0.3%

Table 4. Catch of fish species in Thompson River by anglers interviewed between March 2005 and February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Species	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Overall
Lower	Rainbow trout	11	280	469	49	809
	Brown trout	2	77	187	7	273
	Brook trout	0	1	50	0	51
	Westslope cutthroat trout	0	17	83	4	104
	Bull trout	1	1	9	3	14
	Undesignated trout	0	2	0	0	2
	Mountain whitefish	8	127	129	46	310
	Sucker Spp.	0	0	2	0	2
	Northern Pike	0	0	1	0	1
Upper	Rainbow trout	na	na	50	8	58
	Brown trout	na	na	106	21	127
	Brook trout	na	na	154	2	156
	Westslope cutthroat trout	na	na	19	1	20
	Mountain whitefish	na	na	13	0	13
	Yellow perch	na	na	2	0	2

of each species by month along with data on bull trout and mountain whitefish captured is in Appendix E (Tables E1-E6).

Anglers had an overall success rate of 0.83 (SD = 0.05) fish per hour in the lower section and 1.05 (SD = 0.14) fish per hour in the upper section. The overall trout catch rate was 0.66 (SD = 0.04) per hour in the lower section and 1.01 (SD = 0.14) per hour in the upper section.

In the lower section, monthly catch rates for all fish varied from 0.50 per hour in November to 1.43 per hour in January and for trout varied from 0.32 per hour in October to 0.95 per hour in June (Table 5). Mountain whitefish had the highest catch rates in the lower section (0.91 per hour in October)(Table 6), followed by rainbow trout with catch rates up to 0.86 per hour in January and brown trout with catch rates up to 0.50 per hour in November. Westslope cutthroat trout (<0.11 per hour), brook trout (<0.09 per hour), and bull trout (<0.04 per hour) all had low catch rates in the lower section.

In the upper section, monthly catch rates for all fish varied from 0.19 per hour in August to 1.46 per hour in June and for trout varied from 0.19 per hour in August to 1.42 per hour in June (Table 5). Brook trout had the highest catch rates in the upper section (up to 1.00 per hour in October)(Table 6). Brown trout also had catch rates that were fairly high in the upper section (up to 0.79 per hour in September). Rainbow trout catch rates were moderate (up to 0.30 per hour in September) and westslope cutthroat trout catch rates were low (<0.18 per hour) in the upper section. No bull trout were captured in the upper section.

Most anglers released the fish they captured. Of the 1,614 trout that were captured only 2.7% were harvested and of the 323 whitefish that were captured only 7.4% were harvested (Table 7). This resulted in an estimated 218 (SD = 59.1) trout in the lower section and 61 (SD = 27.2) trout in the upper section being harvested between March 2005 and February 2006. The estimated total harvest for whitefish was 281 (SD = 152.6) for the lower section and none for the upper section (Table 8)(Appendix F, Tables F1-F6).

Table 5. Monthly catch rates in fish per hour of all fish and trout in the lower and upper sections of the Thompson River between March 2005 and February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers interviewed is included as well.

Section	Year	Month	Catch Rate (fish per hour)		
			All Fish (SD)	Trout (SD)	N
Lower	2005	March	1.01 (0.25)	0.45 (0.20)	38
		April	0.54 (0.12)	0.38 (0.09)	69
		May	0.68 (0.07)	0.55 (0.06)	244
		June	1.11 (0.12)	0.95 (0.11)	143
		July	0.90 (0.14)	0.81 (0.13)	141
		August	0.76 (0.17)	0.76 (0.17)	31
		September	0.67 (0.17)	0.63 (0.17)	39
		October	1.23 (0.34)	0.32 (0.12)	20
		November	0.50 (0.50)	0.50 (0.50)	4
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	1.43 (1.00)	0.86 (0.25)	3
		February	0.74 (0.20)	0.48 (0.19)	17
Upper	2005	May (May 21-31 only)	1.28 (0.39)	1.18 (0.39)	41
		June	1.46 (0.27)	1.42 (0.26)	37
		July	0.76 (0.15)	0.74 (0.15)	63
		August	0.19 (0.18)	0.19 (0.18)	7
		September	1.16 (0.39)	1.16 (0.39)	10
		October	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1
		November	0	0	1

Table 6. Monthly catch rates in fish per hour of rainbow trout, brown trout, westslope cutthroat trout, brook trout, bull trout, and mountain whitefish in the lower and upper sections of the Thompson River between March 2005 and February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers interviewed is included as well.

Section	Year	Month	Catch Rate (fish per hour)(SD)						
			Rainbow trout	Brown trout	Westslope cutthroat trout	Brook trout	Bull trout	Mountain whitefish	N
Lower	2005	March	0.38 (0.20)	0.06 (0.03)	0.01 (0.01)	0	0	0.55 (0.19)	38
		April	0.23 (0.04)	0.11 (0.04)	0.05 (0.02)	0	0	0.17 (0.07)	69
		May	0.39 (0.05)	0.12 (0.02)	0.02 (0.01)	0.01 (<0.01)	0.01 (<0.01)	0.13 (0.04)	244
		June	0.55 (0.08)	0.25 (0.05)	0.09 (0.02)	0.05 (0.03)	0.01 (0.01)	0.15 (0.05)	143
		July	0.48 (0.09)	0.15 (0.04)	0.11 (0.04)	0.05 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.09 (0.05)	141
		August	0.45 (0.12)	0.15 (0.08)	0.06 (0.04)	0.09 (0.07)	0	0	31
		September	0.51 (0.15)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	39
		October	0.19 (0.08)	0.09 (0.07)	0.02 (0.02)	0	0.02 (0.02)	0.91 (0.29)	20
		November	0	0.50 (0.50)	0	0	0	0	4
		December							na
	2006	January	0.86 (0.25)	0	0	0	0	0.57 (0.79)	3
		February	0.35 (0.17)	0.09 (0.06)	0	0	0.04 (0.04)	0.26 (0.13)	17
Upper	2005	May (May 21-31 only)	0.25 (0.09)	0.44 (0.15)	0.04 (0.02)	0.45 (0.32)	0	0.10 (0.05)	41
		June	0.11 (0.04)	0.40 (0.15)	0.18 (0.13)	0.73 (0.16)	0	0.04 (0.03)	37
		July	0.18 (0.07)	0.30 (0.11)	0	0.26 (0.08)	0	0.01 (0.01)	63
		August	0	0	0	0.19 (0.18)	0	0	7
		September	0.30 (0.15)	0.79 (0.36)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.04)	0	0	10
		October	0	0	0	1.00 (0.00)	0	0	1
		November	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Table 7. Trout and whitefish captured and harvested by anglers interviewed on the Thompson River between March 2005 and February 2006.

Species	# Captured	# Harvested	% Harvested
Rainbow trout	867	16	1.8%
Brown trout	400	19	4.8%
Brook trout	207	7	3.3%
Westslope cutthroat trout	124	0	0%
Bull trout	14	1	7.1%
Undesignated trout	2	0	0%
Total trout	1,614	43	2.7%
Whitefish	323	24	7.4%

Table 8. Estimated harvest of trout and whitefish by anglers interviewed on the Thompson River between March 2005 and February 2006.

Species	Harvest (SD)	
	Lower Section	Upper Section
Rainbow trout	136 (44.3)	0
Brown trout	80 (36.9)	27 (16.7)
Brook trout	0	34 (21.6)
Westslope cutthroat trout	0	0
Bull trout	2 (2.3)	0
Undesignated trout	0	0
Whitefish	281 (152.6)	0

Most of the anglers interviewed used fly fishing gear on the Thompson River (69.4%) (Table 9). Some anglers interviewed used spinning gear (27.7%), but very few youth with bait were encountered in the creel survey and no anglers interviewed were using a combination of gear types. Nearly 90% of all anglers interviewed were male.

Table 9. Gear type used by anglers interviewed on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

Gear Type	Number Anglers	% Anglers
Spinning	265	27.7%
Fly fishing	663	69.4%
Combination	0	0%
Youth with bait	28	2.9%

Most of those interviewed were from Montana (70.6%)(Table 10), followed by Washington (10.0%), Idaho (8.1%), Oregon (2.8%), California (1.8%), and Wisconsin (1.1%). Anglers from 22 other states and 2 provinces were also interviewed. Of those interviewed from Montana, the majority were from Flathead (45.6%) and Sanders (38.8%) counties, followed by Missoula (6.2%), Lake (3.3%), Lincoln (1.6%), and Ravalli (1.2%) counties (Table 11). In addition, anglers from 7 other counties of Montana were interviewed. In accordance with where the anglers interviewed were from, 62.4% accessed the Thompson River via Hwy. 200 and 35.1% from Hwy. 2. A few (2.4%) accessed the Thompson River on Rd. 7512 from Plains and one from Snider.

Table 10. State or province anglers were from that were interviewed on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

State or Province	Number Anglers	% Anglers
Alberta	2	0.2%
British Columbia	1	0.1%
Alabama	2	0.2%
California	17	1.8%
Colorado	5	0.5%
Florida	2	0.2%
Georgia	2	0.2%
Iowa	1	0.1%
Idaho	78	8.1%
Illinois	1	0.1%
Maine	1	0.1%
Michigan	2	0.2%
Minnesota	3	0.3%
Missouri	2	0.2%
Montana	676	70.6%
North Carolina	3	0.3%
North Dakota	1	0.1%
New Jersey	2	0.2%
Nevada	4	0.4%
New York	3	0.3%
Ohio	1	0.1%
Oklahoma	1	0.1%
Oregon	27	2.8%
Pennsylvania	1	0.1%
Tennessee	3	0.3%
Texas	6	0.6%
Utah	1	0.1%
Vermont	3	0.3%
Washington	96	10.0%
Wisconsin	11	1.1%

Table 11. County anglers of Montana were from that were interviewed on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

County	Number Anglers	% Anglers
Cascade	2	0.3%
Flathead	308	45.6%
Gallatin	2	0.3%
Lake	22	3.3%
Lewis and Clark	6	0.9%
Lincoln	11	1.6%
Mineral	3	0.4%
Missoula	42	6.2%
Pondera	3	0.4%
Ravalli	8	1.2%
Sanders	262	38.8%
Silverbow	4	0.6%
Yellowstone	3	0.4%

Most anglers interviewed in the creel survey parked in road pull-outs (49.8%), but many parked on the road shoulder (28.8%)(Table 12). The remainder of the anglers interviewed parked in camping areas. Camping areas were accessed most often from the Forest Hwy. 56.

Anglers interviewed parked in many locations between the mouth and mile 19 on the Rd. 9991 side of the Thompson River (Figure 2). Between mile 19 and mile 39 on Rd. 9991, fewer locations were used by anglers interviewed for parking. Locations that more than 10 anglers interviewed used for parking on Rd. 9991 included the mouth, miles 0.7, 3.1, 4.2, 11.3, 11.7, 16.2, 17.3, and 26.9 (Appendix G, Table G.1). Attractants at these locations include a camping area and bridge at mile 0.7; bridges at mile 17.3 and 26.9; a camping area and pull-out at mile 11.3; and pull-outs at miles 3.1, 4.2, 11.7, and 16.2.

Anglers interviewed parked in many locations between the mouth and mile 17 on the Forest Hwy. 56 side of the Thompson River (Figure 3). Between mile 17 and 32 on the Forest Hwy. 56 road very few locations were used by anglers for parking. Locations that more than 10 anglers interviewed used for parking on Forest Hwy. 56 included miles 1.1, 1.2, 3.9, 4.0, 6.4, 8.2, 9.2, 9.3, 10.2, and 14.8 (Appendix G, Table G.1). Attractants at these locations include camping areas at miles 6.4, 8.2, 9.2, 10.2, and 14.8; pull-outs at miles 1.1, 1.2, and 4.0; and camping areas and pull-outs at mile 3.9 and 9.3. The camping area at mile 3.9 is the U.S. Forest Service Copper King campground. The camping area at mile 6.4 is at the confluence of the West Fork Thompson River and the camping area at mile 14.8 is at the confluence of Fishtrap Creek.

Locations that interviewed anglers fished usually overlapped locations parked (Figures 4 and 5). Locations that more than 10 anglers interviewed fished from Rd. 9991 were the same as the locations more than 10 anglers parked on Rd. 9991 (miles 0.7, 3.1, 4.2, 11.3, 11.7, 16.2, 17.3, and 26.9). Locations that more than 10 anglers interviewed fished from Forest Hwy. 56 included miles 1.2, 3.9, 4.0, 6.4, 8.2, 9.2, 10.2, and 14.8 that were also locations more than 10 anglers parked on Forest Hwy. 56. In addition, more than 10 anglers fished at mile 7.4 on Forest Hwy. 56.

A total of 65 non-angler interviews were conducted representing 184 non-anglers. The majority of the non-angler interviews took place in the upper section (61.5%). Most non-angler interviews took place in summer (83.1%). Non-angler activities included camping, hunting, riding ATVs, hiking, swimming, picnicking, wildlife watching, berry picking, and photography.

Unlike anglers interviewed, non-anglers interviewed parked most often in camping areas (76.2%), followed by road pull-outs (22.1%)(Table 13).

Locations that greater than 10 non-anglers interviewed used for parking on the Rd. 9991 were different than those used by anglers. These areas included miles 21.1 and 34.6 (Figure 6; Appendix G, Table G.2). Attractants at these locations include a camping area and bridge at mile 21.1 and a camping area at mile 34.6.

Locations that greater than 10 non-anglers interviewed used for parking on Forest Hwy. 56 overlapped somewhat with that used by anglers. These areas included miles 14.8 and 31.9 (Figure 7; Appendix G, Table G.2). Attractants at these locations include a camping area at the confluence of Fishtrap Creek at mile 14.8 and a camping area at the intersection of Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 roads at mile 31.9.

The proportion of the number of anglers observed during the creel survey counts and number interviewed at 3-mile intervals on both Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 roads along the Thompson River compared favorably (Figures 8 and 9). In addition, the proportion of the number of anglers observed and vehicles driven by anglers or unknown entities on both Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 along the Thompson River compared favorably (Figures 10 and 11). There were however some large differences between the proportion of the number of vehicles driven by non-anglers and the proportion of the number of vehicles driven by anglers or unknown entities on both Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 along the Thompson River (Figures 12 and 13). One major difference occurred at the 3-mile interval of 29 to 31.9 on Rd. 9991 (Figure 12).

Table 12. Number of anglers observed in creel survey at camping areas, road pull-outs, or road shoulders on Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

	Rd. 9991	**Forest Hwy. 56**	**Total (%)**
Camping area	33	168	201 (21.4%)
Road pull-out	314	155	469 (49.8%)
Road shoulder	184	87	271 (28.8%)
Total	531	410	941

Table 13. Number of non-anglers observed at camping areas, road pull-outs, or road shoulders on Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 on Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

	Rd. 9991	**Forest Hwy. 56**	**Total (%)**
Camping area	42	96	138 (76.2%)
Road pull-out	35	5	40 (22.1%)
Road shoulder	3	0	3 (1.7%)
Total	80	101	181

Figure 2. Number of anglers interviewed that parked at each road mile on Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

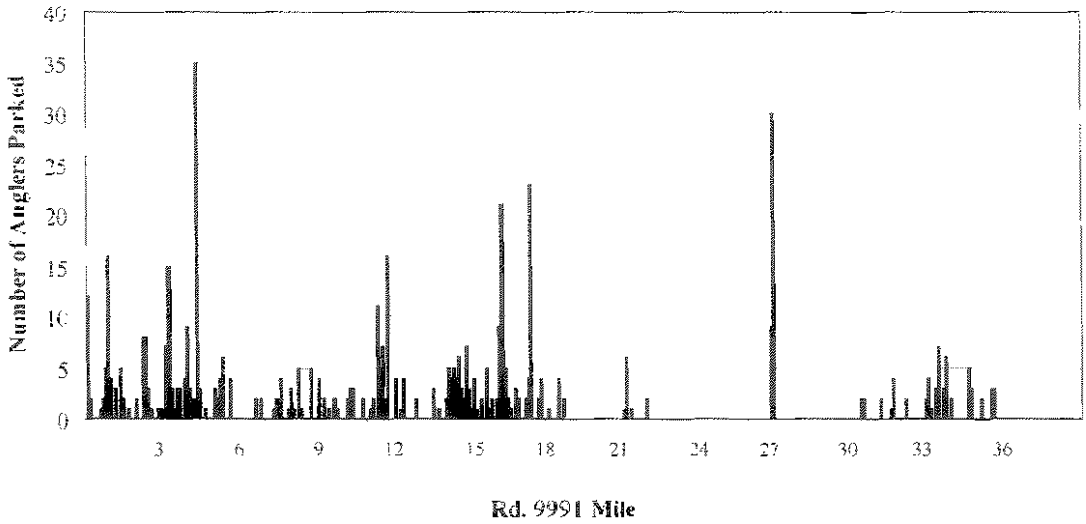


Figure 3. Number of anglers interviewed that parked at each road mile on the Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

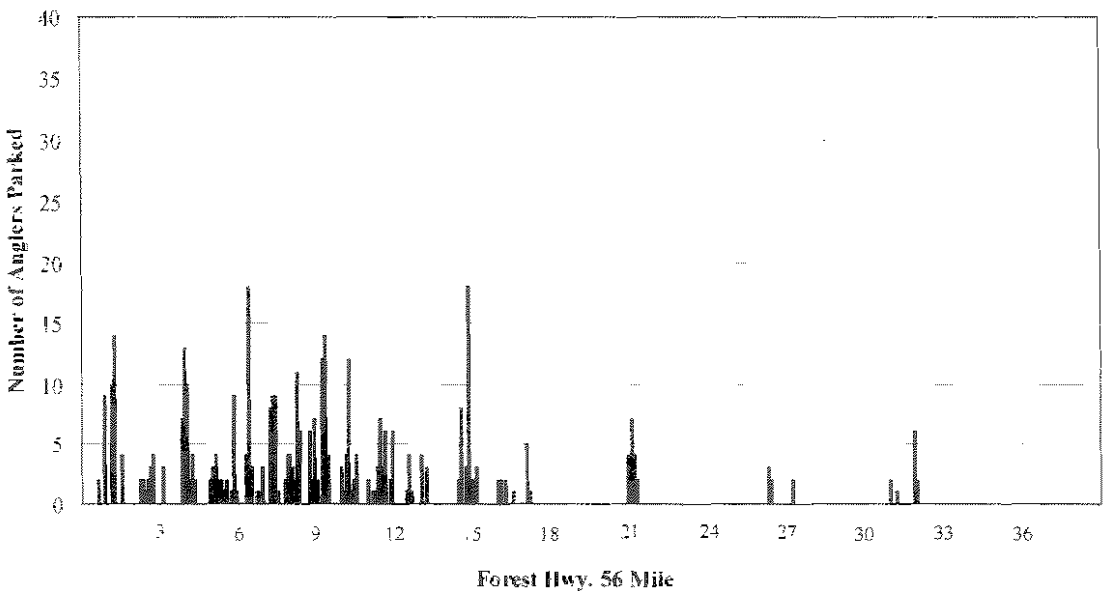


Figure 4. Number of anglers interviewed that parked and fished at each road mile on the Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006

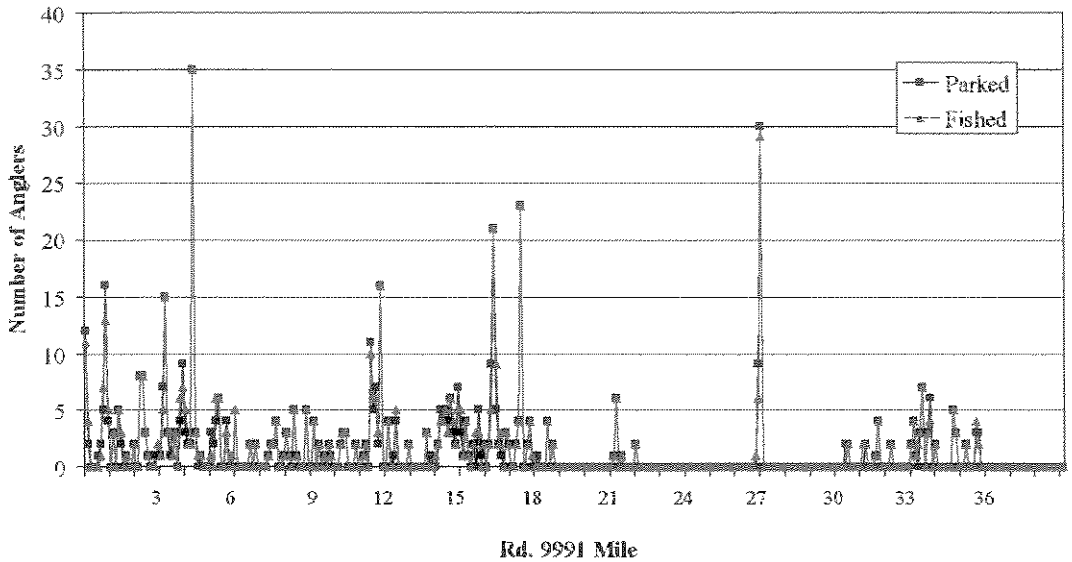


Figure 5. Number of anglers interviewed that parked and fished at each road mile on the Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

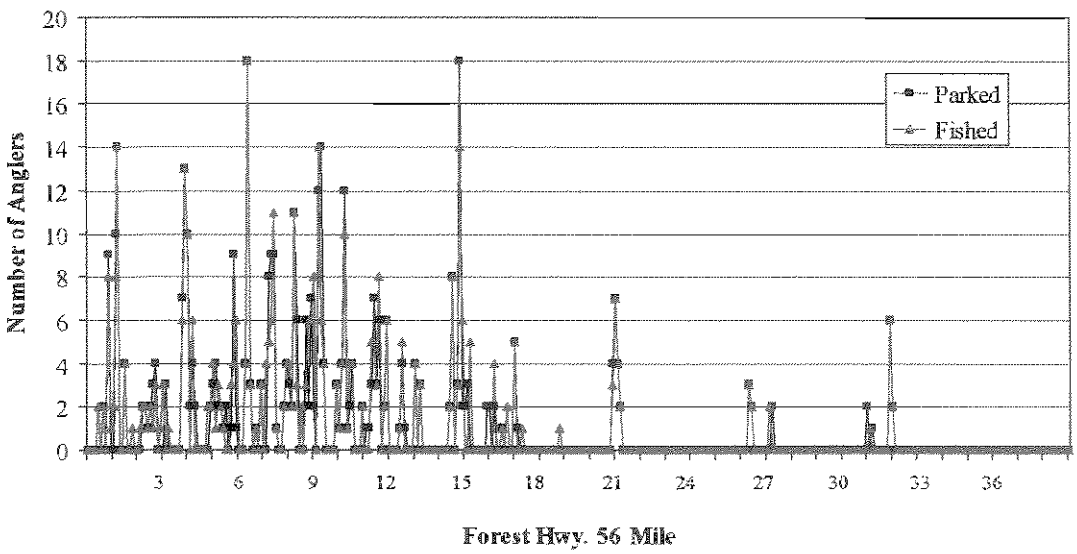


Figure 6. Number of non-anglers interviewed that parked at each road mile on the Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

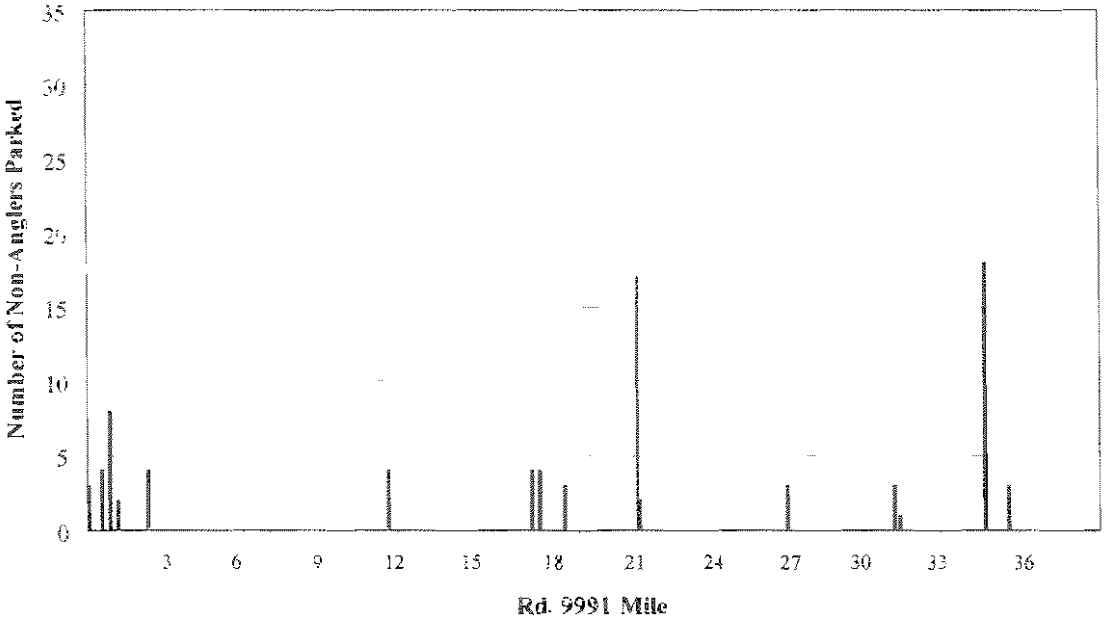


Figure 7. Number of non-anglers interviewed that parked at each road mile on the Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

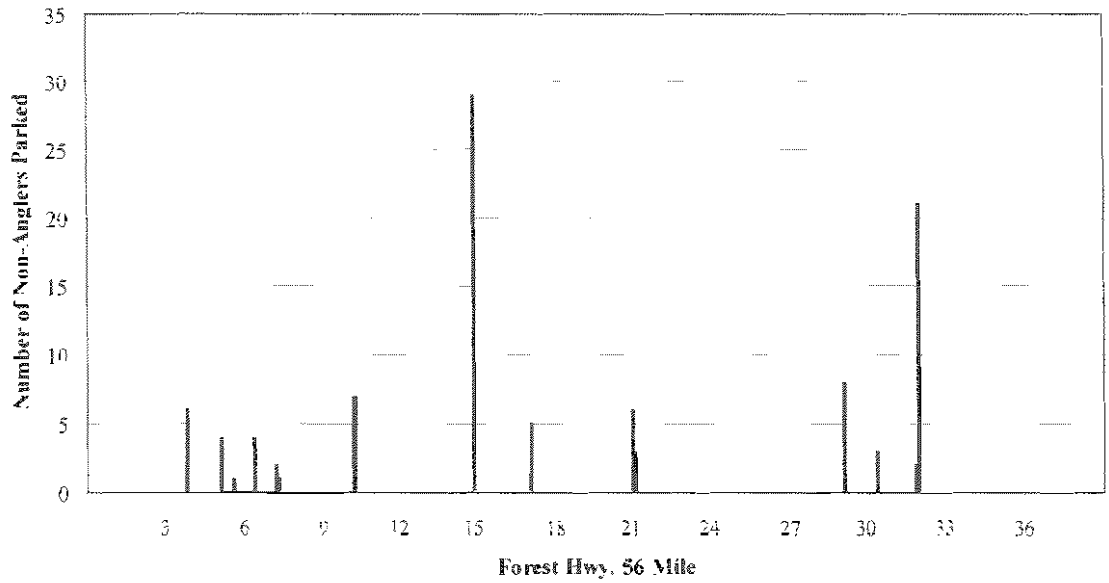


Figure 8. Number of anglers observed during creel survey counts versus number interviewed during creel survey at 3-mile intervals on Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

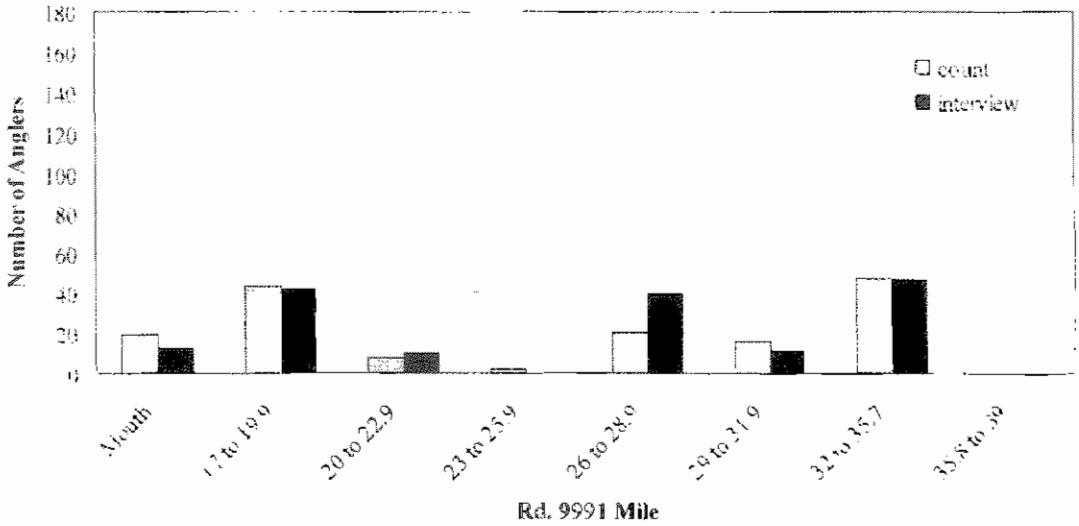


Figure 9. Number of anglers observed during creel survey counts versus number interviewed during creel survey at 3-mile intervals on Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

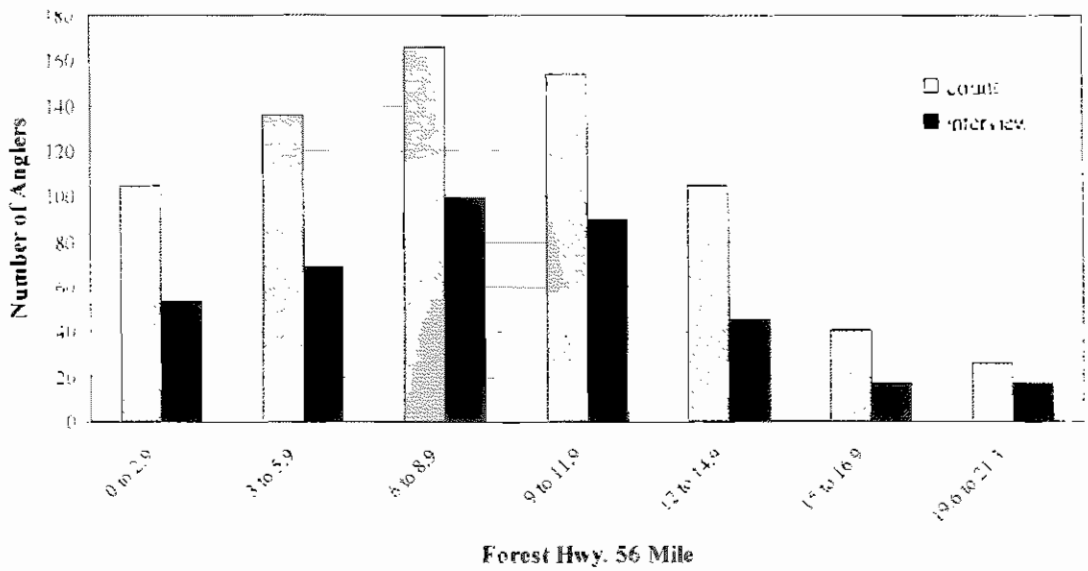


Figure 10. Number of anglers versus number of vehicles observed during creel survey counts at 3-mile intervals on the Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

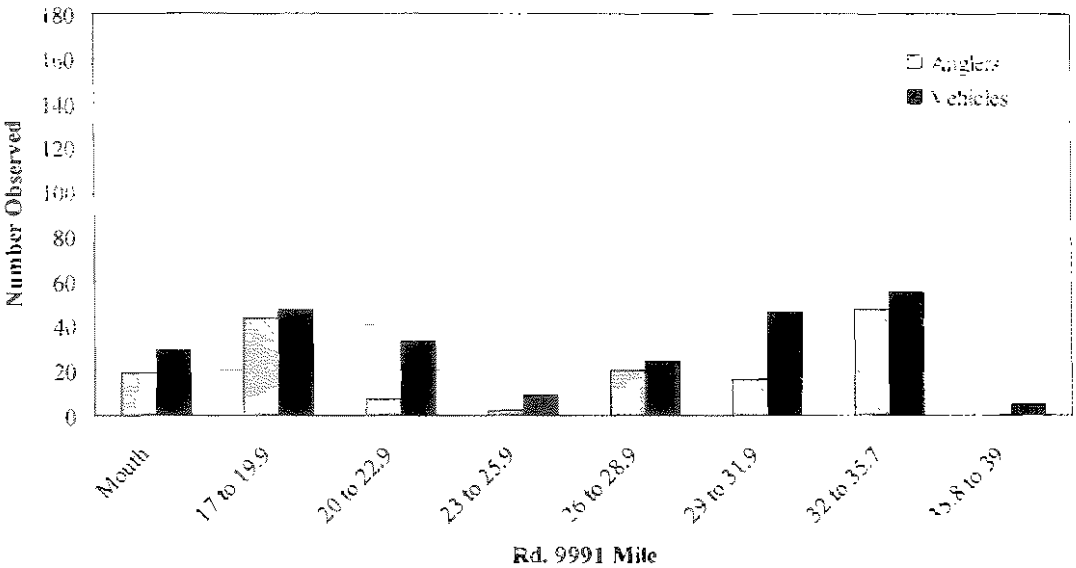


Figure 11. Number of anglers versus number of vehicles observed during creel survey counts at 3-mile intervals on Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

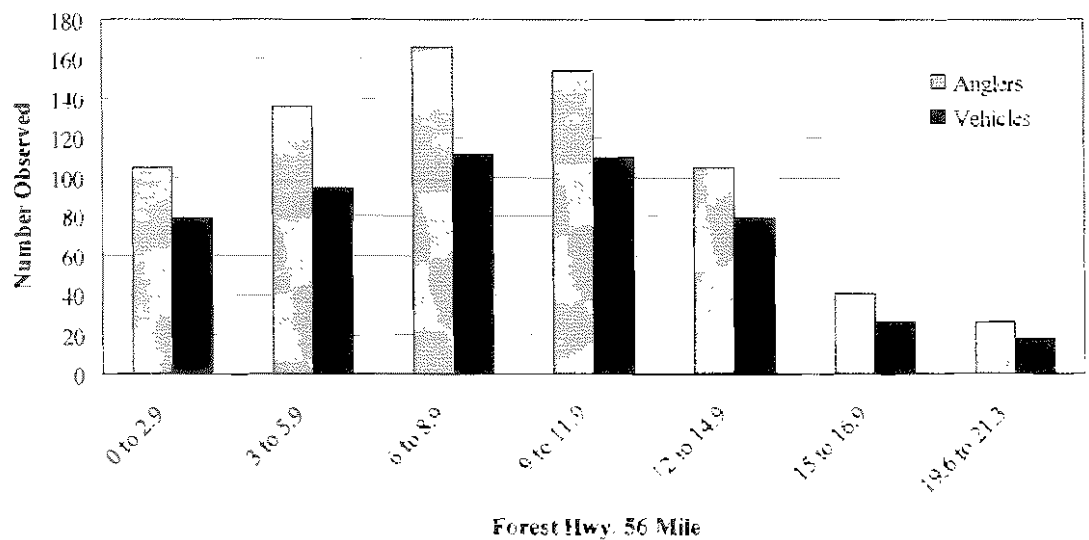


Figure 12. Number of non-angler vehicles versus number of vehicles driven by anglers or unknown entity observed during creel survey counts at 3-mile intervals on Rd. 9991 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

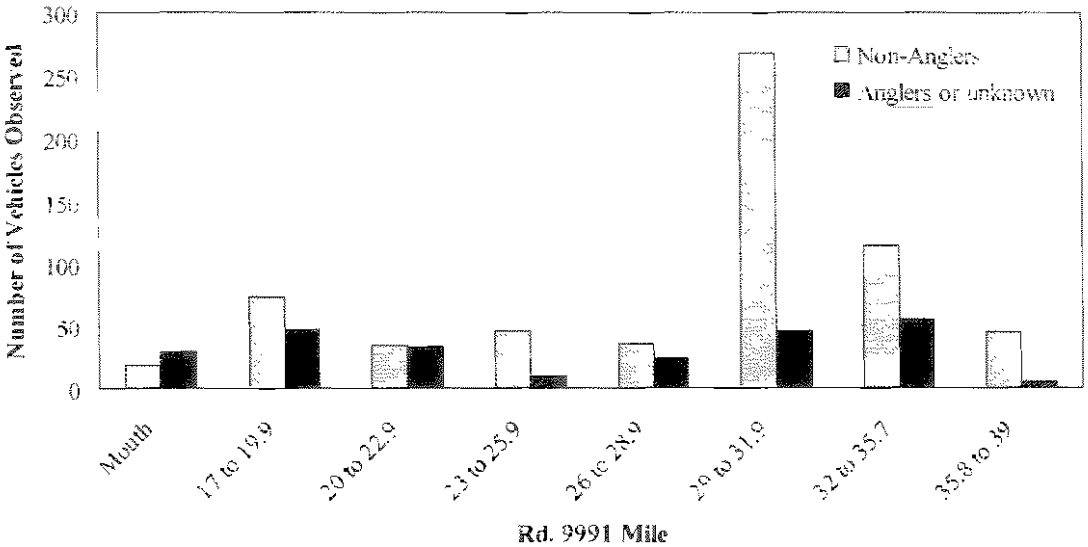
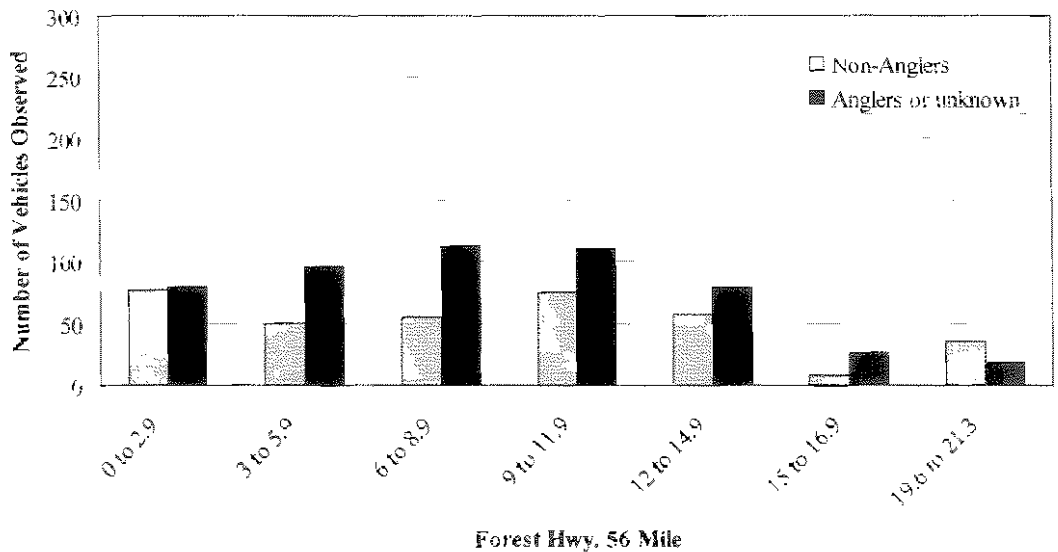


Figure 13. Number of non-angler vehicles versus number of vehicles driven by anglers or unknown entity observed during creel survey counts at 3-mile intervals on Forest Hwy. 56 on the Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.



Mail Survey

A 51% response rate to the survey was achieved as 381 anglers provided information for the mail survey. Most (n = 307) of these anglers had fished the Thompson River and completed the survey (Participants). The remaining 19.4% (n = 74) that had not fished the Thompson River returned incomplete surveys as requested.

Not all questions on the mail survey were completed by all Participants. Therefore the sample size varied from 211 to 304 by question. However, of the 29 portions of questions that were summarized, 21 portions were answered by at least 298 of 307 (97.1%) Participants and of the remaining 9 portions, 5 were answered by at least 280 (91.2%) of the Participants. Sample sizes for the questions are in Appendix H.

Over 82% of Participants had fished the Thompson River in the last 12 months and a majority of the others (76.7%) had fished the Thompson in the last three years. Most had fished the Thompson River many years with the mean number of years fished at 13.6 and the median at 9.0 years. Those that fished the Thompson River fished on average 14.8 days per year (median = 10.0 days per year). The most the Participants fished the Thompson River in any one year was 22.3 days on average (median = 14.0 days).

The majority of the Participants were Montana residents (78.1%), while 21.9% were non-residents. The non-residents were primarily from Washington (7.3%), Idaho (7.0%), and Oregon (2.6%), but participants represented 13 other states (Table 14). Of the Montana residents, 64.4% were from Thompson Falls. The majority of the residents were from Sanders County (71.6%), followed by Flathead (16.9%), Missoula (4.7%), Lake (2.5%), and Lincoln (1.7%) counties. Residents also represented 5 other counties (Table 15).

Table 14. State participants were from that participated in the mail survey for the Thompson River.

State	Number Participants	% Participants
Alabama	1	0.3%
California	1	0.3%
Florida	2	0.7%
Idaho	21	7.0%
Illinois	1	0.3%
Missouri	1	0.3%
Montana	236	78.1%
Nevada	1	0.3%
New York	1	0.3%
Ohio	1	0.3%
Oklahoma	1	0.3%
Oregon	8	2.6%
Pennsylvania	1	0.3%
Tennessee	1	0.3%
Utah	1	0.3%
Washington	22	7.3%
Wisconsin	2	0.7%

Table 15. County participants of Montana were from that participated in the mail survey for the Thompson River.

County	Number Participants	% Participants
Cascade	1	0.4%
Flathead	40	16.9%
Gallatin	2	0.8%
Lake	6	2.5%
Lincoln	4	1.7%
Missoula	11	4.7%
Powell	1	0.4%
Sanders	169	71.6%
Silverbow	1	0.4%
Stillwater	1	0.4%

Participants fished the majority of the time from the bank or waded the Thompson River (97.7%) while very few floated the Thompson River.

The summer season (from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day weekend) was the most common time of year fished and the time of year most often fished by Participants (Table 16). Nearly 90% of Participants fished the Thompson River during the summer season and 80.8% fished this season most often. In addition, 70.7% of Participants preferred to fish the Thompson River during the summer season.

Spring (March 1 to mid-May) and fall seasons (mid-September to November 30) were fished by over 30% of Participants. However, spring was fished more often than fall by Participants. Participants also preferred spring to fall fishing in the Thompson River. Winter (December 1 to February 28) was fished by only 10.5% of Participants.

The majority of Participants fished the lower half of the Thompson River (mouth to the confluence of the Little Thompson River) (over 77%) and fished this stretch the most in the past (84.4%)(Table 17). In addition, many fished between the Little Thompson River confluence and the Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)(46.7%). However, few fished this stretch the most in the past (12.4%). Few Participants fished the uppermost stretch of the Thompson River between the Bend Ranger Station and the intersection of Hwy. 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)(24.7%) and very few fished this stretch the most (3.2%). Most Participants also preferred to fish the lower half of the river (81.5%). However, 81.7% of Participants accessed the Thompson River via Hwy. 200 near Thompson Falls.

Most Participants fished for rainbow trout (92.1%) in the Thompson River (Table 18). Many Participants fished for brown trout (63.6%) and cutthroat trout (62.6%) and some for brook trout (47.4%) and whitefish (22.9%). Most Participants stated they preferred to fish for rainbow trout (59.4%) followed by cutthroat trout (18.7%) and brown trout (15.1%), however the sample size for this question was relatively low (n = 219).

Participants were asked to indicate how important each of a list of factors would be to them if a new single road system was developed along the Thompson River (Appendix H). Most of the Participants thought it was important or very important that access be maintained at river locations most frequently used by anglers (80.2%), that parking be

allowed on the shoulder of the road in places where it was safe to do so (87.1%), and that highway pullouts provide parking in some places along the road (76.2%). It was also quite important to Participants that some places along the river be provided that are not developed (73% thought this was important or very important). Many Participants thought that providing some river access sites that accommodated overnight camping use (65.7%) and day-use picnicking use (61.4%) were important or very important. Some Participants (39.4%) thought that providing some river access sites to accommodate overnight recreational vehicle (RV) camping use was important to very important while others (42.4%) thought this was unimportant or very unimportant. Over half (52.7%) of Participants thought that providing access sites at bridge locations was important or very important. Many also thought that providing some river access sites that offered recreational walking/hiking trails along the river (47.0%) and providing some day-use only river access sites (42.6%) was important or very important. In contrast, most Participants (57.4%) thought that providing river access sites to accommodate boating use was unimportant or very unimportant. Almost half (49.2%) of Participants thought that providing some river access to accommodate swimming use was unimportant or very unimportant.

Participants were also asked what they thought needed to be done to ensure there would be adequate fishing access along the Thompson River if a single road system were constructed and potentially paved. About 69% of the Participants provided responses to this open-ended question. One of the most frequently mentioned comments was to provide adequate pull-outs and parking to ensure safe fishing access. Another was to provide access to both sides of the river such as foot bridges and trails to the water for fishing and hiking. Setting low speed limits for the safety of those getting to the river was also mentioned often as well as maintaining the pristine and/or primitive aspects of the river (see Appendix H for more responses).

About 75.2% of Participants had concerns about recreational access to the Thompson River if a single road system was constructed and potentially paved. Of those with concerns the most frequently mentioned concerns were increased traffic and speeding; overuse, congestion, crowding, and pollution; too much fishing pressure to an all ready overused fishery; and no access to both sides of the river (see Appendix H for more responses).

Table 16. Time of year anglers in mail survey fished in past, fished most often, and preferred to fish in Thompson River.

Time of Year	Fished in Past	Fished Most Often	Prefer to Fish
3rd Saturday in May to Labor Day	89.8%	80.8%	70.7%
After Labor Day to November 30	31.9%	5.2%	9.3%
December 1 to February 29	10.5%	1.0%	1.4%
March 1 to mid-May	30.6%	12.9%	18.6%

Table 17. Location on Thompson River anglers in mail survey fished in past, fished most often, and preferred to fish.

Location	Fished in Past	Fished Most Often	Prefer to Fish
Mile 0 to 6.5	77.6%	45.9%	38.5%
Mile 6.5 to 16.5	78.9%	38.5%	43.0%
Mile 16.5 to 31	46.7%	12.4%	15.2%
Mile 31 to 42.6	24.7%	3.2%	3.3%

Table 18. Fish species anglers in mail survey fished for and most preferred to fish for in Thompson River.

Fish Species	Fished For	Most Preferred
Rainbow trout	92.1%	59.4%
Brown trout	63.6%	15.1%
Cutthroat trout	62.6%	18.7%
Brook trout	47.4%	3.7%
Whitefish	22.9%	1.8%
Other	4.6%	1.4%

Discussion

Creel Survey

A good sample size of angler interviews was obtained in the creel survey in 2005 and 2006. However, an afternoon angling closure was implemented during the peak fishing season between July 22 and September 5, 2005, due to low flows and high water temperatures in the river. The flows in the Thompson River were near or set all time minimum flows in 51 years of record from late July through mid-December 2005 (Figure 14). In addition, water temperatures above the confluence of Fishtrap Creek were near 74°F in late July and early August 2005 (Figure 15). This fishing closure restricted fishing from noon to midnight. The fishing restriction likely lowered the number of anglers interviewed in July, August, and September, which in turn reduced the number of anglers interviewed during the summer season and overall. Nonetheless, most interviews took place in summer in the lower section of the Thompson River as the statewide angler pressure survey indicated would occur.

In order to compare fishing pressure on the Thompson River to that on other rivers, angler days must be compared because fishing pressure was measured in angler days in the statewide angler survey. Data from complete fishing trips are needed to calculate fishing pressure in angler days (B. McFarland, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, personal communication), and unfortunately, little data was able to be collected on complete fishing trips in our creel survey on the Thompson River. However, according to the statewide angler survey angling pressure on the Thompson River is low at this time compared to two other popular fishing rivers in western Montana (Table 19). Angling pressure does appear to be increasing on the Thompson River though (see Appendix A). Angling pressure was likely lower in 2001 and 2003 due to the angling closures imposed during summer when warm water and low flow conditions persisted. The river is also important to anglers regionally, ranking as high as eleventh in Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Region 1 (northwest Montana) in the past in angler use (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 1983-2004).

Angler pressure is especially low in the upper section of the Thompson River. This is likely due to the smaller size of the Thompson River as well as the warmer water temperatures higher in the drainage, which affect the size and species of fish available to anglers. Fish generally can grow to larger sizes in larger bodies of water and the warm water temperatures high in the drainage likely favors the brown trout which are harder to catch by anglers than the popular rainbow trout lower in the drainage. Angler pressure in the upper section is also limited by the presence of more private property and because the river is farther from the road in many areas compared to the lower section.

Figure 14. Flows in the Thompson River at the gaging station in 2005 and mean and minimum flows in 51 years of record

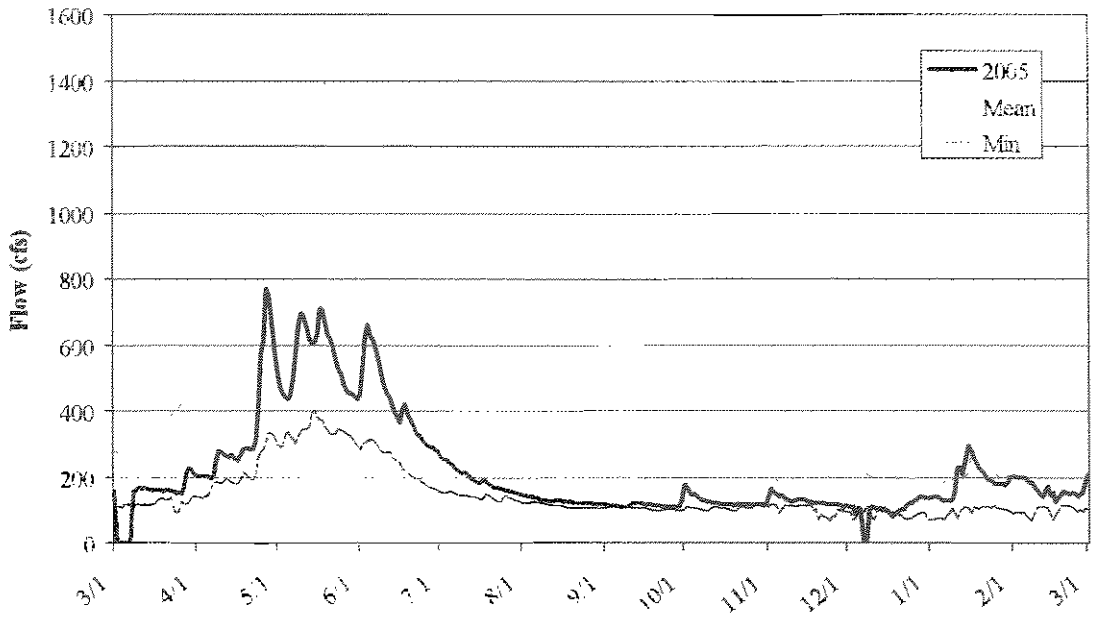


Figure 15. Maximum daily water temperatures in the Thompson River at the gaging station near the mouth and above the confluences of the West Fork Thompson River, Fishtrap Creek, Little Thompson River, Big Rock Creek, and Chippy Creek from June to October 2005

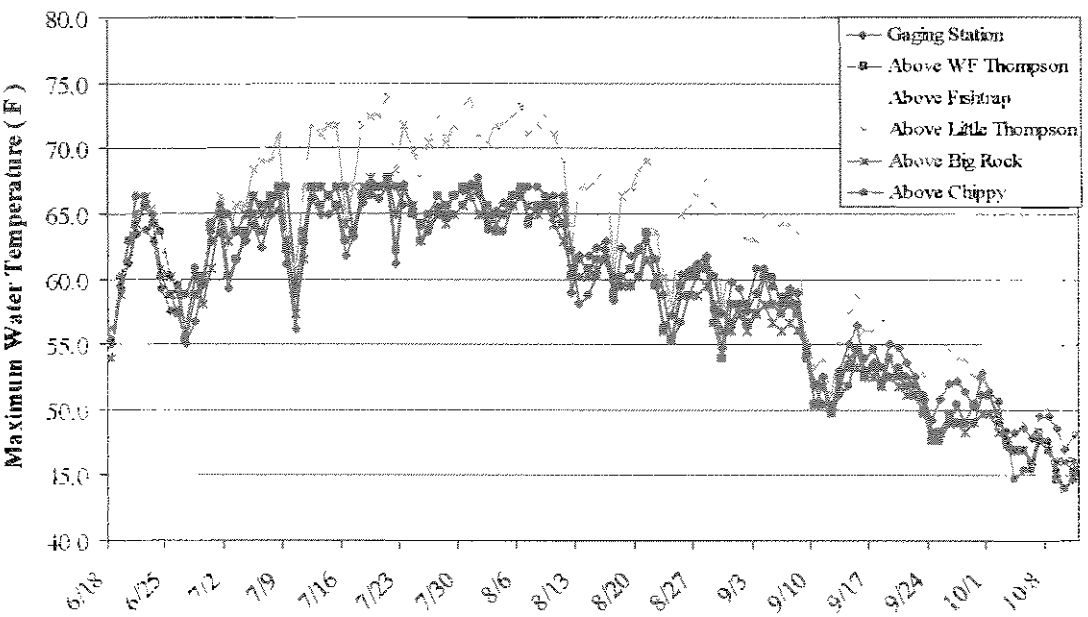


Table 19. Fishing pressure (angler days) (standard deviation) on the Thompson River, Rock Creek near Missoula, and the Clark Fork River from the confluence of the Bitterroot River to the confluence of the Flathead River between March 2003 and February 2004 (Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 2004).

Stream	Total Pressure (SD)	Trips	Resident Pressure (SD)	Trips	Non-resident Pressure (SD)	Trips	State Rank
Thompson R. Sect. 1*	6,979 (1,182)	150	3,806 (900)	81	3,173 (766)	69	87
Thompson R. Sect. 2	835 (307)	21	772 (303)	19	63 (45)	2	294
Rock Cr. Sect. 1**	25,326 (2,186)	580	12,472 (1,683)	286	12,854 (1,395)	294	25
Rock Cr. Sect. 2	11,139 (1,708)	259	5,712 (1,213)	137	5,427 (1,202)	122	56
Clark Fork R.***	64,917 (4,494)	1,344	43,427 (3,984)	876	21,490 (2,079)	468	6

* Thompson R. Section 1 includes mouth to Bend Ranger Station and Section 2 includes the Bend Ranger Station upstream.

** Rock Cr. Section 1 includes the mouth to the confluence of Hogback Creek and section 2 includes the confluence of Hogback Creek upstream.

*** Clark Fork R. includes the section from the confluence of the Flathead River to the confluence of the Bitterroot River.

It was expected that most anglers interviewed would fish from the bank because the Thompson River generally is not large enough to float except during spring. However, the low spring flows in 2005 may have limited the amount of boating time that was available and number of anglers using boats that were observed.

The low flows in spring also extended the time period that water clarity was good on the Thompson River. Due to the good water clarity there and reported poor water clarity elsewhere, the Thompson River may have attracted anglers from elsewhere in the spring of 2005 compared to most years. One experienced angler noted that he observed more pressure on the Thompson River in the spring of 2005 than he had in the past (Sean Moran, Avista Corp., personal communication). There is also a salmonfly hatch in mid-May most years that attracts many anglers.

Catch rates for trout in the Thompson River compare favorably with two other popular fishing rivers in western Montana. Some creel data was obtained on the Clark Fork River and lower portions of tributaries to the Clark Fork River at bull trout spawning and staging areas between the confluences of Tamarack Creek and Rattlesnake Creek between June 5 and October 5, 2004 (L. Knotek, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, personal communication). The trout catch rate for the 284 anglers surveyed was 0.77 per hour for the 513 trout captured during 663.5 angler hours. On the Thompson River between June 5 and October 5, 2005, the trout catch rate for the 499 anglers interviewed was 0.88 per hour for the 910 trout captured during 1030.3 angler-hours. Most of the anglers on both surveys were bank anglers (81.7% on the Clark Fork River and 99.4% on the Thompson River). A large percentage of anglers interviewed were non-residents (48.6%) on the Clark Fork River, whereas 30.5% of those interviewed were non-residents on the Thompson River. Interestingly, most anglers on both rivers used primarily fly

fishing gear. 59.9% on the Thompson River and 72.3% on the Clark Fork River. On both rivers most of the trout were released with 97.5% released on the Clark Fork River and 96.6% released on the Thompson River. Westslope cutthroat trout made up 60.8% of the catch, rainbow trout 35.7%, brown trout 1.6%, brook trout 1.2% and bull trout 0.8% on the Clark Fork River. In contrast, the majority of the trout captured on the Thompson River were rainbow trout (49.6%), followed by brown trout (23.8%), brook trout (16.8%), westslope cutthroat trout (8.7%), and bull trout (1.1%). In addition, 105 mountain whitefish were captured during this time period on the Thompson River.

Some creel data was obtained on lower 30 miles of Rock Creek between April 1 and October 31, 2005 (L. Knotek, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, personal communication). During this time period, 617 anglers were surveyed that fished 1,950.3 hours catching 1,546 trout and 1,873 total fish. Most surveyed were bank anglers (96.9%) and they had a trout catch rate of 0.76 per hour and a total fish catch rate of 0.93 fish per hour. The fish captured by anglers interviewed on Rock Creek were primarily brown trout (41.1%), followed by westslope cutthroat trout (25.3%), mountain whitefish (17.5%), rainbow trout (14.6%), brook trout (0.9%), and bull trout (0.7%). During this same time period on the Thompson River 895 anglers were surveyed that fished 2,168.3 hours catching 1,566 trout and 1,843 total fish. As with Rock Creek, most anglers on the Thompson River were also bank anglers (99.1%). The trout and fish catch rates were very similar to that on Rock Creek at 0.72 per trout hour and 0.85 fish per hour during this time period on the Thompson River. Unlike Rock Creek, the fish captured were primarily rainbow trout (45.0%), followed by brown trout (21.3%), mountain whitefish (15.0%), brook trout (11.2%), westslope cutthroat trout (6.7%), and bull trout (0.7%).

Northern pike and yellow perch were also captured by anglers on the Thompson River. The Thompson Chain of Lakes in the headwaters of the Thompson River contain both of these species (M. Hensler, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, personal communication). The Clark Fork River and Thompson Falls Reservoir at the confluence of the Thompson River also contain both species. The two yellow perch were captured near mile 26.9 on Rd. 9991 so they likely came from the Thompson Chain of Lakes. The northern pike was captured near mile 3.1 on Forest Hwy. 56, so its source was more likely the Clark Fork River or Thompson Falls Reservoir.

Estimated harvest on the Thompson River was quite low as most anglers interviewed released the fish they captured. This is a large change from that estimated by Saffel (2000) for 1997 to 1999. During this time period, it was estimated that an average of 12,551 rainbow trout were harvested annually. Between March 2005 and February 2006, we estimated only 135 rainbow trout were harvested. The estimate for 1997 to 1999 was based on much less data (n = 67 anglers) than the 2005-2006 estimate (n = 958 anglers). The 2005-2006 estimate was also based on a creel survey with an intensive, formal survey design whereas the survey between 1997 and 1999 was informal. This may explain some of the difference between the estimates, but the more restrictive fishing regulations put in place in 2000 also likely made a large difference in fish harvest. It appears that the current fishing regulations adequately protect the fishery from present angler use.

Most interviewed on the Thompson River were from Montana as the statewide angler pressure survey indicated would occur. It was interesting, however, that the majority of

the anglers from Montana were from Flathead County, but the fishing pressure on the upper section closest to their residences was low.

It appears that frequent access points are needed between the mouth and about mile 19 of the Thompson River to maintain current angler use (see Figures 4 and 5). It appears that fewer access points are needed between mile 19 and 39, but some specific locations are well-used by anglers. It appears that angler access at bridges is important to maintain and that there are many well-used camping areas that are important to maintain. In addition, it appears that non-anglers do not necessarily overlap with anglers in their access needs, so additional access points will likely be needed to meet other recreationists access needs on the Thompson River in the future.

Mail Survey

The response rate for the mail survey was fairly high (51%). Of those that responded, about half (49.5%) were from Thompson Falls. This was likely because more surveys were sent to anglers from the Thompson Falls area than elsewhere. This may have biased a couple of questions including how the anglers accessed the Thompson River and the stretch of the Thompson River they fished.

Only a few of the questions had a response rate lower than 91%. These included follow-up questions about where Participants preferred to fish. In general a pattern of less response to follow-up questions was noticed concerning when and where Participants fished the Thompson River. This could be due to Participants thinking they were being asked the same question more than once. Open-ended questions also received a lower rate of response, but this was expected. One other question had a low sample size and that asked the fish species most preferred to fish for in the Thompson River. This is because many Participants checked more than one response to this question and those with multiple responses could not be used in the analysis.

Based on the mail survey Participant response, we would recommend access be maintained at river locations most frequently used by anglers, that parking be allowed on the shoulder of the road in places where it was safe to do so, and that highway pullouts be developed to provide parking in certain locations along the road. We would also recommend that access be maintained on both sides of the river through development of walking trails where portions of the dual road are removed. We would encourage angler safety when accessing the river be considered and that the primitive aspects of the river be maintained. We would also recommend providing some access for overnight camping use and day-use picnicking areas and some sites to accommodate recreational vehicles (RVs). We also recommend maintaining access at bridge locations.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge several individuals and groups for their funding for and work on this project. Thanks to Western Federal Lands Highway Division for funding the project. Special thanks to Courtney Tyree, Jason Fox, Jeffrey Evans, Jay Stuckey, Joseph McKerley, and Brad Liermann for their work on this project. Thanks also to Bob McFarland, Mike Lewis and the Responsive Management Unit of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and Simonson Data Entry for their assistance with the project.

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APPENDIX A

Angler Pressure Data

Table A.1. Annual angling pressure (angler days)(standard deviation) in Thompson River between 1982 and 2004. Each year described began in March and ended in February. Section 1 extends from the mouth to Bend Ranger Station.

Section	Dates	Total pressure (SD)	Total trips	Resident pressure (SD)	Resident trips	Non-resident pressure (SD)	Non-resident trips	Regional Rank
1	Mar 1982 – Feb 1983	7,857 (2,289)	53	5,241 (1,563)	41	2,616 (1672)	12	--
	Mar 1983 – Feb 1984	5,527 (2,345)	44	4,011 (2,276)	19	1,516 (563)	25	--
	Mar 1984 – Feb 1985	6,004 (2,176)	26	4,982 (2,098)	14	1,022 (577)	12	--
	Mar 1985 – Feb 1986	4,766 (1,522)	23	4,189 (1,488)	17	577 (317)	6	--
	Mar 1989 – Feb 1990	6,121 (988)	134	4,401 (876)	89	1,720 (457)	45	--
	Mar 1991 – Feb 1992	3,452 (792)	99	2,772 (761)	76	680 (219)	23	--
	Mar 1993 – Feb 1994	5,770 (980)	173	4,684 (939)	139	1,086 (282)	34	--
	Mar 1995 – Feb 1996	6,699 (1,067)	179	4,623 (890)	121	2,076 (589)	58	12
	Mar 1997 – Feb 1998	7,725 (1,326)	214	5,604 (1,187)	153	2,121 (590)	61	14
	Mar 1999 – Feb 2000	10,068 (1,801)	250	7,625 (1,622)	188	2,443 (783)	62	11
	Mar 2001 – Feb 2002	4,911 (838)	132	3,590 (642)	101	1,321 (539)	31	26
	Mar 2003 – Feb 2004	6,979 (1,182)	150	3,806 (900)	81	3,173 (766)	69	16

Table A.2. Annual angling pressure (angler days) (standard deviation) in Thompson River between 1982 and 2004. Each year described began in March and ended in February. Section 2 from the Bend Ranger Station to the headwaters.

Section	Dates	Total pressure (SD)	Total trips	Resident pressure (SD)	Resident trips	Non-resident pressure (SD)	Non-resident trips	Regional Rank
2	Mar 1982 – Feb 1983	933 (487)	10	933 (487)	10	0	0	--
	Mar 1983 – Feb 1984	4,059 (2,845)	24	3,581 (2,814)	17	478 (415)	7	--
	Mar 1984 – Feb 1985	550 (472)	2	465 (465)	1	85 (85)	1	--
	Mar 1985 – Feb 1986	658 (403)	3	650 (403)	3	0	0	--
	Mar 1989 – Feb 1990	448 (223)	8	448 (223)	8	0	0	--
	Mar 1991 – Feb 1992	593 (189)	17	391 (151)	11	202 (115)	6	--
	Mar 1993 – Feb 1994	1,118 (304)	32	823 (243)	24	295 (182)	8	--
	Mar 1995 – Feb 1996	2,930 (2,491)	42	2,837 (2,489)	39	93 (93)	3	26
	Mar 1997 – Feb 1998	2,356 (1,304)	43	2,289 (1,303)	41	67 (48)	2	33
	Mar 1999 – Feb 2000	1,121 (541)	32	1,121 (541)	32	0	0	61
	Mar 2001 – Feb 2002	1,165 (389)	24	582 (230)	13	583 (314)	11	48
	Mar 2003 – Feb 2004	835 (307)	21	772 (303)	19	63 (45)	2	68

Table 3.3 Summer angling pressure (angler days)(standard deviation) in Thompson River between 1995 and 2003. Summer extended from May to September each year. Section 1 extends from the mouth to Bend Ranger Station and section 2 from the Bend Ranger Station to the headwaters.

Section	Dates	Total pressure (SD)	Total trips	Resident pressure (SD)	Resident trips	Non-resident pressure (SD)	Non-resident trips	Regional Rank
1	May 1995 – Sept 1995	5,985 (1,007)	158	3,930 (817)	101	2,055 (588)	57	11
	May 1997 – Sept 1997	6,684 (1,251)	194	4,563 (1,102)	133	2,121 (590)	61	12
	May 1999 – Sept 1999	9,523 (1,761)	242	7,080 (1,577)	180	2,443 (783)	62	11
	May 2001 – Sept 2001	4,719 (830)	125	3,462 (634)	97	1,257 (535)	28	18
	May 2003 – Sept 2003	5,129 (955)	124	2,691 (659)	67	2,438 (691)	57	14
2	May 1995 – Sept 1995	447 (194)	12	354 (170)	9	93 (93)	3	75
	May 1997 – Sept 1997	854 (392)	31	787 (389)	29	67 (48)	2	55
	May 1999 – Sept 1999	1,121 (541)	32	1,121 (541)	32	0	0	46
	May 2001 – Sept 2001	927 (350)	20	344 (154)	9	583 (314)	11	46
	May 2003 – Sept 2003	760 (297)	19	697 (294)	17	63 (45)	2	62

Table A.4. Winter angling pressure (angler days)(standard deviation) in Thompson River between 1995 and 2004. Winter was considered from March to April and October to February each year described. Section 1 extends from the mouth to Bend Ranger Station and section 2 from the Bend Ranger Station to the headwaters.

Section	Dates	Total pressure (SD)	Total trips	Resident pressure (SD)	Resident trips	Non-resident pressure (SD)	Non-resident trips	Regional Rank
1	Mar 1995 – April 1995; Oct 1995 – Feb 1996	715 (353)	21	694 (353)	20	21 (21)	1	22
	Mar 1997 – April 1997; Oct 1997 – Feb 1998	1,041 (441)	20	1,041 (441)	20	0	0	24
	Mar 1999 – April 1999; Oct 1999 – Feb 2000	546 (379)	8	546 (379)	8	0	0	44
	Mar 2001 – April 2001; Oct 2001 – Feb 2002	192 (120)	7	128 (101)	4	64 (64)	3	62
	Mar 2003 – April 2003; Oct 2003 – Feb 2004	1,851 (697)	26	1,116 (613)	14	735 (331)	12	17
2	Mar 1995 – April 1995; Oct 1995 – Feb 1996	2,483 (2,483)	30	2,483 (2,483)	30	0	0	10
	Mar 1997 – April 1997; Oct 1997 – Feb 1998	1,502 (1,244)	12	1,502 (1,244)	12	0	0	17
	Mar 1999 – April 1999; Oct 1999 – Feb 2000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Mar 2001 – April 2001; Oct 2001 – Feb 2002	237 (171)	4	237 (171)	4	0	0	58
	Mar 2003 – April 2003; Oct 2003 – Feb 2004	75 (75)	2	75 (75)	2	0	0	104

APPENDIX B

Creel Count Data Sheet

FORM # _____

THOMPSON RIVER CREEL SURVEY COUNT DATA

Section: LOWER THOMPSON or UPPER THOMPSON

Date _____ Time _____

Location Began: Road mile _____ Road: County or ACM

Direction began: NORTH or SOUTH

WEEKEND or HOLIDAY or WEEKDAY AM or PM

Weather _____ Water clarity _____

Flow description_____Water temperature/time taken: _____

Number of vehicles (stratify section into 3 mile lengths)

Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____

Number of anglers: (stratify section into 3 mile lengths)

Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____
Mile __ to Mile __: _____

APPENDIX C

Creel Survey Data Sheet

FORM #_____

THOMPSON RIVER ROVING CREEL SURVEY INTERVIEW

Section: LOWER THOMPSON or UPPER THOMPSON

Date _____ Time _____ Road angler parked: County or Commercial

WEEKEND or HOLIDAY or WEEKDAY AM or PM

Parked at: CAMPING AREA or PULLOUT or ROAD SHOULDER

Specific location parked (road mile and description):

_____

Specific location fishing (road mile and description):

_____

Fishing from: BANK or BOAT Number in party:_____Sex non-anglers: M ___F___

Angler name: _____ Sex: M___ F___

Gear Type: Spin___Fly____Combination____Youth w/ bait____

State your name and that you are doing a survey for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Explain the Western Federal Lands Highway Division has proposed to combine the dual road system into a single road and potentially pave the road. Explain the information you are collecting will be used to provide recommendations to minimize impacts of the proposed project to recreational fishing and angler access and ask if angler minds if you ask them a few questions.

What county and state are you from? County _____ State _____

How many people fishing in your party today came in your vehicle? _____

How did you access the river? HWY 200 HWY 2
OTHER:_____

What time did you start fishing today? _____ AM or PM

What time did you or do you expect to finish fishing today? _____AM or PM

How many hours did you fish today? _____ Trip: Complete____ Incomplete____

FORM #_____

What kind of fish are you fishing for today (circle all that apply)? a) rainbow trout b) brown trout c) cutthroat trout d) brook trout e) trout in general f) whitefish Other: _____

How many fish have you caught?_____kept?_____released?_____

Would you mind if I record the number and size of fish you've caught today?

Species	Kept	Released	Total length (in)								Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Would like to participate in a mail survey regarding fishing access in relation to the proposed Thompson River Road paving project? This survey will help us describe current fishing access, future fishing access opportunities, and provide recommendations for future fishing access to the project proponent, the Western Federal Lands Highway Division. YES or NO

If yes, Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

_____

Comments: _____

APPENDIX D

Mail Survey Form

1. Have you ever fished the Thompson River in northwest Montana? **(check only one)**

   [ ] NO....You are done. **Please return this questionnaire using the enclosed postage paid envelope provided.**

   [ ] YES

2. Last year, the Western Federal Lands Highway Division proposed to combine the dual road system existing along the Thompson River into a single road system that would potentially be paved and provide for year-round use. This would involve using the best portions of each of the existing dual roads and removing the unneeded portions to restore the river channel and floodplain in some places. However, the proposal has been put on hold for now, and it is unlikely that it will be implemented in the near future. That said, FWP is still interested in gaining the opinions of anglers concerning this topic.

   Please indicate how important each of the following would be to you if a new single road system were to be developed along the Thompson River at a later time. **Circle only one number for each item below.**

How important would it be to you that a new single road system...	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Continue to provide recreational access at river locations most frequently used by anglers	1	2	3	4	5
Allow parking on the shoulder of the road in some places where it is safe to do so	1	2	3	4	5
Construct highway pullouts to provide parking in some places along the road	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that accommodate boating use	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that accommodate overnight camping use	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that accommodate overnight recreational vehicle (RV) camping use	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that accommodate day-use picnicking use	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that accommodate swimming use	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some day-use only river access sites (e.g., river access sites where overnight camping would be prohibited)	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some river access sites that offer recreational walking/hiking trails along the river	1	2	3	4	5
Provide river access sites at bridge locations	1	2	3	4	5
Provide some places along the river that are not developed	1	2	3	4	5

3. What do you think needs to be done to ensure there will be adequate fishing access along the Thompson River if a single road system is ever constructed and potentially paved? **(please write legibly)**

4. Do you have any concerns about recreational access to the Thompson River if a single road system is ever constructed and potentially paved? **(check only one)**

[ ] NO
[ ] YES.....If yes, what are your concerns? **(please write legibly)**

5. Did you fish the Thompson River in 2005? **(check only one)**

[ ] NO.....If no, have you fished there in the last THREE YEARS? [ ] No [ ] Yes
[ ] YES

6. How do you **typically** access the Thompson River Road when you go there to fish? **(check only one)**

[ ] From Highway 2 (between Libby and Kalispell)
[ ] From Highway 200 (near Thompson Falls)
[ ] Other: _____
(please specify)

7. Which of the following **BEST describes** how you have fished the Thompson River in the past? **(check only one)**

[ ] Bank/wade fishing a majority of the time (not floating the river)
[ ] Float fishing a majority of the time
[ ] About an equal amount of time spent bank/wade fishing and float fishing

8. What time(s) of the year have you fished the Thompson River in the past? **(check all that apply)**

[ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
[ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
[ ] December 1 to February 28
[ ] March 1 to mid-May

9. What time of year have you MOST OFTEN fished the Thompson River in the past? **(check only one)**

[ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
[ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
[ ] December 1 to February 28
[ ] March 1 to mid-May

10. What time of year would you MOST PREFER to fish the Thompson River? **(check only one)**

[ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
[ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
[ ] December 1 to February 28
[ ] March 1 to mid-May

11. What stretches of the Thompson River have you fished in the past? **(check all that apply)**

[ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
[ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
[ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
[ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

12. What stretch of the Thompson River have you fished THE MOST in the past? **(check only one)**

[ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
[ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
[ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
[ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

13. What stretch of the Thompson River do you MOST PREFER to fish? **(check only one)**

[ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
[ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
[ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
[ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

14. What fish species do you fish for in the Thompson River? **(check all that apply)**

[ ] Rainbow trout
[ ] Brown trout
[ ] Cutthroat trout
[ ] Brook trout
[ ] Whitefish
[ ] Other: _____
(please specify)

15. Which of the following do you MOST PREFER to fish for in the Thompson River? **(check only one)**

[ ] Rainbow trout
[ ] Brown trout
[ ] Cutthroat trout
[ ] Brook trout
[ ] Whitefish
[ ] Other: _____
(please specify)

16. In total, about how many **YEARS** have you fished the Thompson River? _____ (years)

17. About how many **DAYS PER YEAR** do you typically fish the Thompson River? _____ (days per year)

18. What is the **MOST** you have ever fished the Thompson River **in any one year**? _____ (number of days)

19. What is your current home zipcode? _____ (5-digit zipcode)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!
Please return your completed questionnaire using postage paid envelop provided.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

APPENDIX E

Fish Captured Length Data

Table E1. Mean and maximum length (inches) of rainbow trout captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Rainbow trout Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	N
Lower	2005	March	16.2	22	26
		April	13.8	22	45
		May	11.1	19	304
		Spring	12.4	22	280
		June	8.7	18	196
		July	7.6	19	154
		August	9.2	17.0	21
		Summer	8.5	19	469
		September	10.0	17.0	43
		October	12.9	16.0	9
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	10.7	17.0	49
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	13.7	14.0	3
		February	11.5	16.0	8
		Winter	12.1	16.0	11
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	9.2	17	20
		June	11.4	16	10
		July	7.1	10	20
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	8.8	17	50
		September	9.4	10.0	8
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	9.4	10.0	8

Table E2. Mean and maximum length (inches) of brown trout captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Brown trout Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	n
Lower	2005	March	13.8	14.0	4
		April	12.3	22	21
		May	10.5	20.0	93
		Spring	12.4	22.0	77
		June	7.9	17.3	88
		July	7.0	12.0	50
		August	12.1	16.0	7
		Summer	7.9	17.3	187
		September	12.5	16.0	3
		October	11.6	17.5	4
		November	15.0	15.0	1
		Fall	11.9	17.5	7
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	na	na	na
		February	15.0	17.0	2
		Winter	15.0	17.0	2
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	9.9	16.0	36
		June	11.0	17.0	37
		July	7.2	17.0	33
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	9.5	17.0	106
		September	9.6	19.0	21
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	9.6	19.0	21

Table E3. Mean and maximum length (inches) of cutthroat trout captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Cutthroat trout Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	n
Lower	2005	March	9.0	9.0	1
		April	13.0	16.0	9
		May	10.4	14.0	19
		Spring	10.8	16.0	17
		June	9.3	14.0	31
		July	8.7	15.0	37
		August	8.3	12.0	3
		Summer	9.3	15.0	83
		September	9.7	11.0	3
		October	15.0	15.0	1
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	11.0	15.0	4
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	na	na	na
		February	na	na	na
		Winter	na	na	na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	9.7	12.0	3
		June	7.1	12.0	16
		July	na	na	na
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	7.5	12.0	19
		September	10.5	10.5	1
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	10.5	10.5	1

Table E4. Mean and maximum length (inches) of brook trout captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Brook trout Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	n
Lower	2005	March	na	na	na
		April	na	na	na
		May	6.6	10.0	8
		Spring	5.0	5.0	1
		June	7.6	10.0	19
		July	6.2	8.0	17
		August	7.5	8.0	4
		Summer	7.1	10.0	50
		September	8.0	8.0	3
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	na	na	na
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	na	na	na
		February	na	na	na
		Winter	na	na	na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	7.1	11.0	37
		June	8.9	13.0	86
		July	6.4	12.0	30
		August	7.0	7.0	1
		Summer	8.0	13.0	154
		September	7.0	7.0	1
		October	11.0	11.0	1
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	9.0	11.0	2

Table E5. Mean and maximum length (inches) of whitefish captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Whitefish Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	n
Lower	2005	March	12.2	16.0	38
		April	11.2	16.0	33
		May	11.6	16.0	102
		Spring	11.7	16.0	127
		June	11.8	16.0	53
		July	12.4	20.0	30
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	11.8	20.0	129
		September	11.0	13.0	3
		October	12.1	14.0	43
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	12.0	14.0	46
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	12.0	12.0	2
		February	12.5	14.4	6
		Winter	12.4	14.4	8
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	10.9	14.0	8
		June	10.8	13.0	4
		July	12.0	12.0	1
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	10.9	14.0	13
		September	na	na	na
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	na	na	na

Table E6. Mean and maximum length (inches) of bull trout captured by anglers in creel survey of Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Seasons are defined as follows: spring includes March 1, 2005 to May 20, 2005; summer includes May 21, 2005 to September 5, 2005; fall includes September 6, 2005 to November 30, 2005; and winter includes December 1, 2005 to February 28, 2006.

Section	Year	Month/Season	Bull trout Mean length caught (inches)	Maximum length caught (inches)	n
Lower	2005	March	na	na	na
		April	na	na	na
		May	8.5	9.0	2
		Spring	9.0	9.0	1
		June	10.8	14.0	4
		July	8.0	12.0	4
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	9.2	14.0	9
		September	16.0	18.0	2
		October	14.0	14.0	1
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	15.3	18.0	3
		December	na	na	na
	2006	January	na	na	na
		February	17.0	17.0	1
		Winter	17.0	17.0	1
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	na	na	na
		June	na	na	na
		July	na	na	na
		August	na	na	na
		Summer	na	na	na
		September	na	na	na
		October	na	na	na
		November	na	na	na
		Fall	na	na	na

APPPENDIX F

Catch and Harvest Data

Table F1. Number of rainbow trout caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0.72	0.37	0.03	0.03	13	14.0	20	0.03	0.03	0		0		18
		April	0.27	0.09	0		0		29	0.20	0.05	0		0		40
		May	0.44	0.08	0		0		93	0.36	0.06	<0.01	<0.01	3	2.9	151
		June	0.34	0.08	0.01	0.01	4	4.6	67	0.73	0.12	0.02	0.01	6	5.2	76
		July	0.71	0.14	0.02	0.02	8	7.9	48	0.38	0.12	0		0		93
		August	0.83	0.15	0.38	0.13	94	40.3	15	0.26	0.16	0		0		16
		September	0.81	0.28	0		0		20	0.27	0.10	0.04	0.02	7	4.6	19
		October	0		0		0		na	0.25	0.10	0		0		15
		November	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	1.00	0.33	0		0		2
		February	0.36	0.22	0		0		10	0.33	0.27	0		0		7
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	0.41	0.24	0		0		9	0.18	0.08	0		0		32
		June	0.12	0.08	0		0		8	0.10	0.05	0		0		29
		July	0.20	0.11	0		0		35	0.16	0.06	0		0		28
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0.30	0.15	0		0		10
		October	0		0		0		na	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

Table 12. Number of whitefish caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0.61	0.31	0.58	0.31	256	150.9	20	0.50	0.21	0.06	0.06	9	10.0	18
		April	0.31	0.17	0		0		29	0.07	0.03	0		0		40
		May	0.22	0.08	0		0		93	0.08	0.02	0		0		151
		June	0.22	0.09	0		0		67	0.10	0.04	0		0		76
		July	0.15	0.14	0		0		48	0.07	0.03	0		0		93
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		16
		September	0.03	0.02	0		0		20	0.04	0.02	0		0		19
		October	0		0		0		na	1.21	0.30	0		0		15
		November	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	0.67	1.11	0		0		3
		February	0.29	0.13	0		0		10	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.25	16	20.0	7
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	0		0		0		na	0.13	0.07	0		0		32
		June	0		0		0		na	0.05	0.04	0		0		29
		July	0.02	0.02	0		0		35	0		0		0		na
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		October	0		0		0		na	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

Table E3 Number of brown trout caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0.12	0.05	0		0		20	0		0		0		na
		April	0.14	0.09	0		0		29	0.08	0.03	0		0		40
		May	0.08	0.02	0		0		93	0.15	0.03	0.02	0.01	19	11.0	131
		June	0.13	0.05	0		0		67	0.34	0.07	0.01	0.01	7	2.3	76
		July	0.08	0.04	0.01	0.01	4	4.0	48	0.18	0.06	0.01	0.01	4	4.3	93
		August	0.32	0.17	0.19	0.13	47	34.5	15	0.07	0.07	0	0	0	0	16
		September	0.03	0.03	0		0		20	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	4	3.6	89
		October	0		0		0		na	0.11	0.10	0		0		18
		November	0		0		0		na	0.67	0.67	0		0		3
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		February	0.14	0.09	0		0		10	0		0		0		na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	0.27	0.09	0		0		9	0.50	0.21	0.03	0.03	14	14.3	32
		June	1.21	0.47	0.06	0.05	7	6.4	8	0.21	0.09	0.01	0.01	6	5.6	29
		July	0.25	0.10	0		0		35	0.36	0.20	0		0		28
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0.79	0.36	0		0		10
		October	0		0		0		na	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

Table F4. Number of brook trout caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		April	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		May	<0.01	<0.01	0		0		93	0.02	0.01	0		0		151
		June	0.04	0.03	0		0		67	0.06	0.04	0		0		76
		July	0		0		0		na	0.07	0.03	0		0		93
		August	0		0		0		na	0.13	0.11	0		0		16
		September	0		0		0		na	0.06	0.07	0		0		19
		October	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		November	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		February	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	1.14	1.19	0		0		9	0.20	0.14	0		0		32
		June	0.97	0.78	0		0		8	0.68	0.13	0.07	0.05	28	21.0	29
		July	0.13	0.05	0.02	0.02	2	2.6	35	0.42	0.15	0.02	0.02	4	4.4	28
		August	0		0		0		na	0.50	0.37	0		0		3
		September	0		0		0		na	0.04	0.04	0		0		10
		October	1.00		0		0		1	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

Table F5 Number of cutthroat trout caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0		0		0		na	0.03	0.03	0		0		18
		April	0.07	0.05	0		0		29	0.03	0.01	0		0		40
		May	0.02	0.01	0		0		93	0.03	0.02	0		0		151
		June	0.08	0.03	0		0		67	0.10	0.03	0		0		76
		July	0.08	0.05	0		0		48	0.13	0.06	0		0		93
		August	0.06	0.06	0		0		15	0.07	0.05	0		0		16
		September	0.05	0.03	0		0		20	0.02	0.02	0		0		19
		October	0.09	0.10	0		0		5	0		0		0		na
		November	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		February	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	0		0		0		na	0.05	0.03	0		0		32
		June	0.61	0.70	0		0		8	0.08	0.07	0		0		29
		July	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0.04	0.03	0		0		10
		October	0		0		0		na	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

Figure F6. Number of bull trout caught and kept per hour, and harvested per month (standard deviation) by section (upper and lower), month, and by weekdays and weekend/holidays for the Thompson River from March 2005 to February 2006. Sample size (N) of anglers is also included.

Section	Year	Month	Weekdays							Weekends/holidays						
			Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N	Caught	SD	Kept	SD	Harvest	SD	N
Lower	2005	March	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		April	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		May	0		0		0		na	<0.01	<0.01	0		0		151
		June	0.01	0.01	0		0		67	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2	2.3	76
		July	0		0		0		na	0.02	0.01	0		0		93
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0.04	0.03	0		0		19
		October	0		0		0		na	0.03	0.03	0		0		15
		November	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		December	na		na		na		na	na		na		na		na
	2006	January	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		February	0.07	0.06	0		0		10	0		0		0		na
Upper	2005	May (May 21 to May 31 only)	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		June	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		July	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		August	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		September	0		0		0		na	0		0		0		na
		October	0		0		0		na	na		na		na		na
		November	na		na		na		na	0		0		0		na

APPENDIX G

Locations Anglers and Non-anglers Parked and Fished

Table G.1. Number of anglers parked and fished by mile on Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy.56 along Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
mouth	12	11	n/a	n/a
0	2	4	0	0
0.1	0	0	0	0
0.2	0	0	0	0
0.3	0	0	0	0
0.4	1	0	0	2
0.5	2	1	0	0
0.6	5	7	2	2
0.7	16	13	0	0
0.8	4	5	9	8
0.9	0	0	0	1
1	3	3	0	2
1.1	0	0	10	8
1.2	5	5	14	14
1.3	2	3	0	0
1.4	0	0	0	0
1.5	1	1	4	4
1.6	0	0	0	0
1.7	0	0	0	0
1.8	2	2	0	1
1.9	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0
2.1	8	8	0	1
2.2	8	8	2	2
2.3	3	3	2	2
2.4	1	1	1	1
2.5	0	0	2	2
2.6	0	0	3	1
2.7	1	0	4	3
2.8	1	2	0	0
2.9	1	1	0	1
3	7	5	0	3
3.1	15	15	3	0
3.2	3	3	0	1
3.3	1	3	0	0
3.4	3	1	0	0
3.5	3	3	0	0
3.6	0	0	0	0
3.7	4	6	0	0
3.8	9	7	7	6
3.9	3	5	13	13

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
4	2	2	10	10
4.1	2	2	2	0
4.2	35	35	4	6
4.3	3	3	2	0
4.4	0	1	0	0
4.5	1	1	0	0
4.6	0	0	0	0
4.7	0	0	0	0
4.8	0	0	0	2
4.9	3	1	2	2
5	2	0	3	4
5.1	4	6	4	1
5.2	6	6	2	3
5.3	0	0	2	2
5.4	0	0	1	1
5.5	4	3	2	0
5.6	0	0	0	0
5.7	0	1	1	3
5.8	0	0	9	4
5.9	0	5	1	6
6	0	0	0	0
6.1	0	0	0	0
6.2	0	0	0	0
6.3	0	0	4	4
6.4	0	0	18	18
6.5	2	2	3	3
6.6	0	0	0	0
6.7	2	2	1	1
6.8	0	0	0	0
6.9	0	0	3	3
7	0	0	0	0
7.1	0	0	0	4
7.2	1	1	8	5
7.3	2	2	9	6
7.4	2	2	9	11
7.5	4	4	1	1
7.6	0	0	0	0
7.7	0	0	0	0
7.8	1	1	2	2
7.9	3	3	4	4
8	1	1	3	4
8.1	0	0	2	2

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
8.2	5	5	11	11
8.3	1	1	6	3
8.4	0	0	0	0
8.5	0	0	0	2
8.6	0	0	0	0
8.7	5	5	6	3
8.8	0	0	2	6
8.9	0	0	7	6
9	4	4	2	8
9.1	0	0	0	0
9.2	2	2	12	14
9.3	0	0	14	6
9.4	1	1	4	4
9.5	0	0	0	0
9.6	2	2	0	0
9.7	1	1	0	0
9.8	0	0	0	0
9.9	0	0	3	3
10	0	0	1	1
10.1	2	2	4	4
10.2	3	3	12	10
10.3	3	3	1	1
10.4	0	0	2	4
10.5	0	0	4	4
10.6	0	0	0	0
10.7	2	2	0	0
10.8	0	0	0	0
10.9	0	0	2	2
11	1	1	0	0
11.1	2	2	1	0
11.2	0	0	1	0
11.3	11	10	3	5
11.4	5	6	7	5
11.5	7	6	3	3
11.6	2	3	6	8
11.7	16	16	0	0
11.8	0	0	2	2
11.9	0	0	6	6
12	4	4	0	0
12.1	0	0	0	0
12.2	1	0	0	0
12.3	4	5	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
12.4	0	0	1	1
12.5	0	0	4	5
12.6	0	0	1	0
12.7	0	0	0	0
12.8	2	2	0	0
12.9	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	4	4
13.1	0	0	0	0
13.2	0	0	3	3
13.3	0	0	0	0
13.4	0	0	0	0
13.5	3	3	0	0
13.6	0	0	0	0
13.7	1	0	0	0
13.8	0	0	0	0
13.9	0	1	0	0
14	2	2	0	0
14.1	5	4	0	0
14.2	4	4	0	0
14.3	5	5	0	0
14.4	4	3	2	2
14.5	6	6	8	8
14.6	3	4	0	0
14.7	2	2	3	3
14.8	7	5	18	14
14.9	3	5	2	6
15	1	1	2	0
15.1	4	4	3	0
15.2	1	1	0	5
15.3	0	0	0	0
15.4	2	2	0	0
15.5	0	3	0	0
15.6	5	3	0	0
15.7	1	0	0	0
15.8	2	2	0	0
15.9	0	0	2	0
16	2	2	2	0
16.1	9	5	0	0
16.2	21	21	2	4
16.3	5	9	0	0
16.4	2	2	0	0
16.5	1	3	1	1

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
16.6	0	0	0	0
16.7	3	3	0	2
16.8	2	2	0	0
16.9	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	5	5
17.1	2	2	1	0
17.2	4	4	0	0
17.3	23	23	0	1
17.4	0	0	0	0
17.5	0	0	0	0
17.6	2	2	0	0
17.7	4	4	0	0
17.8	0	1	0	0
17.9	0	0	0	0
18	1	0	0	0
18.1	0	0	0	0
18.2	0	0	0	0
18.3	0	0	0	0
18.4	4	4	0	0
18.5	0	0	0	0
18.6	2	2	0	0
18.7	0	0	0	0
18.8	0	0	0	1
18.9	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0
19.1	0	0	0	0
19.2	0	0	0	0
19.3	0	0	0	0
19.4	0	0	0	0
19.5	0	0	0	0
19.6	0	0	0	0
19.7	0	0	0	0
19.8	0	0	0	0
19.9	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0
20.1	0	0	0	0
20.2	0	0	0	0
20.3	0	0	0	0
20.4	0	0	0	0
20.5	0	0	0	0
20.6	0	0	0	0
20.7	0	0	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
20.8	0	0	0	0
20.9	0	0	4	3
21	1	1	7	7
21.1	6	6	4	4
21.2	0	0	2	2
21.3	1	1	0	0
21.4	0	0	0	0
21.5	0	0	0	0
21.6	0	0	0	0
21.7	0	0	0	0
21.8	0	0	0	0
21.9	2	2	0	0
22	0	0	0	0
22.1	0	0	0	0
22.2	0	0	0	0
22.3	0	0	0	0
22.4	0	0	0	0
22.5	0	0	0	0
22.6	0	0	0	0
22.7	0	0	0	0
22.8	0	0	0	0
22.9	0	0	0	0
23	0	0	0	0
23.1	0	0	0	0
23.2	0	0	0	0
23.3	0	0	0	0
23.4	0	0	0	0
23.5	0	0	0	0
23.6	0	0	0	0
23.7	0	0	0	0
23.8	0	0	0	0
23.9	0	0	0	0
24	0	0	0	0
24.1	0	0	0	0
24.2	0	0	0	0
24.3	0	0	0	0
24.4	0	0	0	0
24.5	0	0	0	0
24.6	0	0	0	0
24.7	0	0	0	0
24.8	0	0	0	0
24.9	0	0	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
25	0	0	0	0
25.1	0	0	0	0
25.2	0	0	0	0
25.3	0	0	0	0
25.4	0	0	0	0
25.5	0	0	0	0
25.6	0	0	0	0
25.7	0	0	0	0
25.8	0	0	0	0
25.9	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	0	0
26.1	0	0	0	0
26.2	0	0	0	0
26.3	0	0	3	3
26.4	0	0	2	2
26.5	0	0	0	0
26.6	0	0	0	0
26.7	0	1	0	0
26.8	9	6	0	0
26.9	30	29	0	0
27	0	0	0	0
27.1	0	0	0	2
27.2	0	0	2	0
27.3	0	0	0	0
27.4	0	0	0	0
27.5	0	0	0	0
27.6	0	0	0	0
27.7	0	0	0	0
27.8	0	0	0	0
27.9	0	0	0	0
28	0	0	0	0
28.1	0	0	0	0
28.2	0	0	0	0
28.3	0	0	0	0
28.4	0	0	0	0
28.5	0	0	0	9
28.6	0	0	0	0
28.7	0	0	0	0
28.8	0	0	0	0
28.9	0	0	0	0
29	0	0	0	0
29.1	0	0	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
29.2	0	0	0	0
29.3	0	0	0	0
29.4	0	0	0	0
29.5	0	0	0	0
29.6	0	0	0	0
29.7	0	0	0	0
29.8	0	0	0	0
29.9	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	0	0
30.1	0	0	0	0
30.2	0	0	0	0
30.3	2	0	0	0
30.4	2	2	0	0
30.5	0	0	0	0
30.6	0	0	0	0
30.7	0	0	0	0
30.8	0	0	0	0
30.9	0	0	0	0
31	0	2	2	0
31.1	2	2	0	1
31.2	0	0	1	0
31.3	0	0	0	0
31.4	0	0	0	0
31.5	1	1	0	0
31.6	4	4	0	0
31.7	0	0	0	0
31.8	0	0	0	0
31.9	0	0	6	6
32	0	0	2	2
32.1	2	2	0	0
32.2	0	0	0	0
32.3	0	0	0	0
32.4	0	0	0	0
32.5	0	0	0	0
32.6	0	0	0	0
32.7	0	0	0	0
32.8	0	0	0	0
32.9	2	2	0	0
33	4	4	0	0
33.1	1	1	0	0
33.2	0	2	0	0
33.3	3	3	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
33.4	7	7	0	0
33.5	0	0	0	0
33.6	3	3	0	0
33.7	6	4	0	0
33.8	0	0	0	0
33.9	2	2	0	0
34	0	0	0	0
34.1	0	0	0	0
34.2	0	0	0	0
34.3	0	0	0	0
34.4	0	0	0	0
34.5	0	0	0	0
34.6	5	5	0	0
34.7	3	3	0	0
34.8	0	0	0	0
34.9	0	0	0	0
35	0	0	0	0
35.1	2	2	0	0
35.2	0	0	0	0
35.3	0	0	0	0
35.4	0	0	0	0
35.5	3	4	0	0
35.6	3	2	0	0
35.7	0	0	0	0
35.8	0	0	0	0
35.9	0	0	0	0
36	0	0	0	0
36.1	0	0	0	0
36.2	0	0	0	0
36.3	0	0	0	0
36.4	0	0	0	0
36.5	0	0	0	0
36.6	0	0	0	0
36.7	0	0	0	0
36.8	0	0	0	0
36.9	0	0	0	0
37	0	0	0	0
37.1	0	0	0	0
37.2	0	0	0	0
37.3	0	0	0	0
37.4	0	0	0	0
37.5	0	0	0	0

Table G.1. Continued.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991		Forest Hwy. 56	
	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished	# Anglers Parked	# Anglers Fished
37.6	0	0	0	0
37.7	0	0	0	0
37.8	0	0	0	0
37.9	0	0	0	0
38	0	0	0	0
38.1	0	0	0	0
38.2	0	0	0	0
38.3	0	0	0	0
38.4	0	0	0	0
38.5	0	0	0	0
38.6	0	0	0	0
38.7	0	0	0	0
38.8	0	0	0	0
38.9	0	0	0	0
39	0	0	0	0

Table G.2. Number of non-anglers that parked by mile on Rd. 9991 and Forest Hwy. 56 along Thompson River in 2005 and 2006.

Road Mile	Rd. 9991	
mouth		3
0.4		4
0.7		8
1		2
2.2		4
11.5		4
17		4
17.3		4
18.3		3
21.1		17
21.2		2
26.9		3
31.1		3
31.3		1
34.6		18
35.5		3
	Forest Hwy. 56	
3.8		6
5.1		4
5.6		1
6.4		4
7.2		2
7.3		1
10.2		7
14.8		29
17		5
20.9		6
21		3
29		8
30.3		3
31.8		2
31.9		21

APPENDIX H

Mail Survey Sample Sizes and Responses

1. Response to "Have you ever fished the Thompson River in northwest Montana?" (N=381 respondents)

19.4% | | NO
80.6% | | YES

2. Response to "Please indicate how important each of the following would be to you if a new single road system were to be developed along the Thompson River at a later time."

How important would it be to you that a new single road system...	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Continue to provide recreational access at river locations most frequently used by anglers (N=303 respondents)	7.9%	4.3%	7.6%	25.4%	54.8%
Allow parking on the shoulder of the road in some places where it is safe to do so (N=301 respondents)	6.6%	4.6%	2.3%	32.8%	54.3%
Construct highway pullouts to provide parking in some places along the road (N=295 respondents)	8.7%	6.7%	8.7%	31.8%	44.4%
Provide some river access sites that accommodate boating use (N=298 respondents)	38.6%	18.8%	20.1%	12.4%	10.1%
Provide some river access sites that accommodate overnight camping use (N=303 respondents)	14.5%	5.6%	14.2%	38.6%	27.1%
Provide some river access sites that accommodate overnight recreational vehicle (RV) camping use (N=302 respondents)	27.8%	14.6%	18.2%	23.5%	15.9%
Provide some river access sites that accommodate day-use picnicking use (N=301 respondents)	10.7%	8.7%	19.3%	36.7%	24.7%
Provide some river access sites that accommodate swimming use (N=301 respondents)	30.6%	18.6%	30.6%	12.3%	8.0%
Provide some day-use only river access sites (e.g., river access sites where overnight camping would be prohibited) (N=298 respondents)	16.4%	9.7%	31.2%	25.2%	17.4%
Provide some river access sites that offer recreational walking/hiking trails along the river (N=300 respondents)	17.3%	10.7%	25.0%	27.0%	20.0%
Provide river access sites at bridge locations (N=300 respondents)	10.3%	6.7%	30.3%	29.7%	23.0%
Provide some places along the river that are not developed (N=301 respondents)	11.3%	4.7%	10.6%	18.9%	54.1%

3. Response to "What do you think needs to be done to ensure there will be adequate fishing access along the Thompson River if a single road system is ever constructed and potentially paved?"

There were a total of 211 open-ended comments to this question (see Appendix A). The most frequently mentioned comments were as follows:

- Provide adequate pullouts and parking to ensure safe fishing access
- Provide access to both sides of the river such as via bridges and trails in the water for fishing and hiking
- Limit speed limits to the safety of those getting to the river
- Maintain the pristine and/or primitive aspects of the river

4. Response to "Do you have any concerns about recreational access to the Thompson River if a single road system is ever constructed and potentially paved?" (N=298 respondents)

24.8% [ ] NO
75.2% [ ] YES. .....If yes, what are your concerns?

There were a total of 193 open-ended comments to this question (see Appendix B). The most frequently mentioned comments were as follows:

- Increased traffic and speeding
- Overuse, congestion, crowding, pollution
- Too much fishing pressure to an already overused fishery
- No access to both sides of the river

5. Response to: "Have you fished the Thompson River in the <u>last 12 months</u>?" (N=299 respondents)

17.7% [ ] NO.....If no, have you fished there in the <u>last THREE YEARS</u>?..... **23.3%** [ ] No
82.3% [ ] YES **76.7%** [ ] Yes

6. Response to: "How do you **<u>typically</u>** access the Thompson River Road when you go there to fish?" (N=301 respondents)

15.3% [ ] From Highway 2 (between Libby and Kalispell)
81.7% [ ] From Highway 200 (near Thompson Falls)
3.0% [ ] Other

7. Response to: "Which of the following **BEST describes** how you have fished the Thompson River in the past?" (N=302 respondents)

97.7% [ ] Bank/wade fishing a majority of the time (not floating the river)
0.7% [ ] Float fishing a majority of the time
1.7% [ ] About an equal amount of time spent bank/wade fishing and float fishing

8. Response to: "What time(s) of the year have you fished the Thompson River in the past?" (N=304 respondents)

89.8% [ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
31.9% [ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
10.5% [ ] December 1 to February 28
30.6% [ ] March 1 to mid-May

(Percentages add up to greater than 100% because respondents could provide more than one response)

9. Response to: "What time of year have you MOST OFTEN fished the Thompson River in the past?" (N=297 respondents)

80.8% [ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
5.2% [ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
1.0% [ ] December 1 to February 28
12.9% [ ] March 1 to mid-May

10. Response to: "What time of year would you MOST PREFER to fish the Thompson River?" (N=286 respondents)

70.7% [ ] General fishing opener (3rd Saturday in May) to early-September (thru Labor Day weekend)
9.3% [ ] mid-September (after Labor Day weekend) to November 30
1.4% [ ] December 1 to February 28
18.6% [ ] March 1 to mid-May

11. Response to: "What stretches of the Thompson River have you fished in the past?" (N=304 respondents)

77.6% [ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
78.9% [ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
46.7% [ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
24.7% [ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

(Percentages add up to greater than 100% because respondents could provide more than one response)

12. Response to: "What stretch of the Thompson River have you fished THE MOST in the past?" (N=283 respondents)

45.9% [ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
38.5% [ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
12.4% [ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
3.2% [ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

13. Response to: "What stretch of the Thompson River do you MOST PREFER to fish?" (N=279 respondents)

38.5% [ ] Mouth of the river to West Fork Thompson River confluence (mile 0 to 6.5)
43.0% [ ] West Fork Thompson River confluence to Little Thompson River confluence (mile 6.5 to 16.5)
15.2% [ ] Little Thompson River confluence to Bend Ranger Station (mile 16.5 to 31)
3.3% [ ] Bend Ranger Station to intersection of Highway 2 (mile 31 to 42.6)

14. Response to: "What fish species do you fish for in the Thompson River?" (N=303 respondents)

92.1% [ ] Rainbow trout
63.6% [ ] Brown trout
62.6% [ ] Cutthroat trout
47.4% [ ] Brook trout
22.9% [ ] Whitefish
4.6% [ ] Other

(Percentages add up to greater than 100% because respondents could provide more than one response)

15. Response to: "Which of the following do you MOST PREFER to fish for in the Thompson River?" (N=219 respondents)

59.4% [ ] Rainbow trout
15.1% [ ] Brown trout
18.7% [ ] Cutthroat trout
3.7% [ ] Brook trout
1.8% [ ] Whitefish
1.4% [ ] Other

16. Response to "In total, about how many **YEARS** have you fished the Thompson River?" (N=299 respondents)

Mean (e.g., the average) = 13.6 years
Median = 9.0

17. Response to: "About how many **DAYS PER YEAR** do you typically fish the Thompson River?" (N=292 respondents)

Mean (e.g., the average) = 14.8 days per year
Median = 10.0

18. Response to: "What is the **MOST** you have ever fished the Thompson River **in any one year**?" (N=288 respondents)

Mean (e.g., the average) = 22.3 days
Median = 14.0

19. Response to: "What is your current home zipcode?" (N=342 respondents)

78.1% Montana residents
21.9% Nonresidents

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3

1. I live off Blue Slide Road and already see too much trash and speeding cars. A paved additional road would not help?
2. Opposed to the idea of one road up this drainage. Paved road=speed of vehicles. My main concern is Bighorn sheep, moose, elk, bear, deer fatalities. Fishing access is fine as it is. More traffic will destroy this beautiful area
3. Allow no boating and no ATV's clean area of weeds and old junk.
4. Not affect the river area, have a 100 ft from the river not be affected. Put man-made objects near, but not too close.
5. My main concern is hunting access on both sides of the canyon
6. Don't want to see it paved.
7. Hope the road up the east side of the river is used due to the easy access to the river. It is too hard to climb down the steep banks on the west side for older fisherman.
8. The issue isn't access, but contamination. Runoff should be the issue, my concern, if the road is paved, is magnesium chloride which is not natural.
9. To be able to get to the drainages on the other side for hunting.
10. Nothing, money could be better used to improve roads with homes on them.
11. Occasionally provide for pull-offs which will allow for some control of people access. Or, make it difficult for rivers access. Right now there are dozens of social trails. A major road will bring in huge numbers of people which could contaminate the river if there is unlimited access.
12. Frequent parking sites are needed. Given that, those anglers will find a way to the water.
13. Do not pave the road
14. Adequate pull-out sites for cars. Paving the road should reduce pollution into the river that it currently receives from the dirt.
15. Make some provision for non-boating anglers to access the non-road side. Pedestrian bridges and a trail system on the non-road side for example.
16. Construct a trail system along the river.
17. Two roads offer better river access for anglers than one. However, given population increases, fishing pressure could become a real problem.
18. If road is paved, there might as well be a Walmart there.
19. Plenty of spots to pull out and walk, wade, fish. NO BOATS ALLOWED. River is too small
20. It should never be paved.
21. Insure that all existing access sites remain open , insure that all existing dispersed camping sites remain undeveloped as they are except for specifically identified very high use sites that need toilet facility.
22. Need to have pullouts along the road and paths so you could walk upstream. Don't pave the road.
23. There already is plenty of access sites to the river. Paving this road will increase fishing pressure. Paving is a bad idea.
24. Keep some places where the fish and wildlife will not be disturbed, then it would be a good idea.
25. There is already adequate fishing access along the river.
26. Have adequate pull outs
27. Not as concerned with access as we are over erosion and pollution.
28. Insure parking and pull-outs.
29. Lots of access to river for fishing and parking.
30. It is not true that most of the road passes through state and/or national forest land, thus barring a few private inholds, one should be able to access the river along much of its length already.
31. Need a decent trail that leads to a small shallow dock from the future paved road.
32. Program a reasonable number of access sites into the project as part of the total funding.
33. FWP and DOT must agree and specify each fishing access and FWP needs to monitor closely.
34. Maintain it!
35. Legal access is the most important.
36. Whether a single lane is ever developed or if any changes are made to the Z road system, ensure the same amount of accessible forest land, riverside access can be reached by road or hiking, by limiting the privatization of the riverside property. Additionally maintain the current riverfront footage accessed through timber company lands.
37. Campgrounds need to be developed and pull-outs for parking.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3 (continued)

38. Leave it as it is now.
39. Do Not make access too easy, rivers are over fished if access is too easy.
40. Why a single road system? Pave the road on the east side and leave the west side gravel and open to travel.
41. Leave it alone.
42. There should be access to the river by trail or in some cases by road. If this access is too easy, river could be abused by a high population of people.
43. NO PAVING. With improvement, more people would be attracted to the area and fishing would be affected. It's over fished now. Go to catch and release stream. Look at what happened to the Swan River.
44. Leave the road as it is now. The fishing is very good and a road would be very detrimental to fishing and native fish recovery.
45. Do not want the road to be paved.
46. Do not pave.
47. Frequent pullouts to provide safe passage for traffic.
48. Should be several pull-outs so there's a lot of fishing access.
49. Rock Creek Road is an excellent example of a single road system along a well used fishery.
50. Leave it as it is.
51. Pave one side and leave the other.
52. There is too much access along the river today.
53. Less access might provide greater protection for the fishing resource.
54. Make sure it remains multiple use area so that all forest users have access.
55. Limit the amount of non-recreational travel through slower speed limits or speed zones. Don't turn it into a short-cut between highway 2 & 200.
56. Don't pave and make it less user friendly.
57. Provide more access to the river in different spots.
58. Access to sites across the river that would be not accessible because of road closer. Better access along river for camping.
59. There is adequate fishing access. Do not pave, make a single road, but don't pave it. It will keep the riff-raff down.
60. Provide pull-outs areas for river access.
61. Paved roads will likely mean increased speeds and amount of traffic, making road side parking more dangerous. Thus making parking areas and hiking trails to the river should be done.
62. Do not improved roads. It is the rough road and other difficulties that keep this area from being overused. Leave it be.
63. Adding extra turn-off areas along the new road for parking access to river. Where new bridges may be added, utilizing small portions of the unused roadway for parking. Adding in additional riverside campgrounds that would have some parking areas for day use.
64. Construct food bridges, provide a bicycle lane on the road.
65. Needs to be turn outs.
66. If the single paved road follows the ACM road from 200 to the Little Thompson Bridge. There should be a trail on the west side with several foot bridges to provide access.
67. Pull-outs, stocking of native trout, parks where access is provided.
68. Leave many sections of the old road system open to fishing and camping.
69. Provide foot bridges for anglers to access the other side during high water. (4 or 5 throughout the river area from 2 to 200.)
70. Allow shoulder parking where safe and create pullouts where appropriate.
71. I think a fish hatchery about 20 mile would help. We could manage the river as needed. The more sites you provide, more use.
72. Have turn outs to allow for access.
73. Pullouts for parking to fish.
74. Don't think the road should be paved. It is a beautiful area with terrific wildlife viewing opportunities. Paving the road would increase traffic and speeds, causing concern for wildlife. I don't believe we need a cut through from 2 to 200.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3 (continued)

75. Leave it alone, it is nice just like it is. If you regulate this river any more than it is now, you will ruin it just like every place else.
76. Speed would be my main concern.
77. Do not construct any road.
78. Update what is already in place.
79. Construct turnouts every mile or so.
80. Keep a slow speed, narrow, curving road. Do not make a wide, high speed road. Retain as a land and one and a half with turnouts. This could be a slow paved or good gravel surface road. No mag chloride.
81. This is a fragile fishery and a paved road will put too much pressure on the system. It is already over fished and paved roads will make it worse.
82. Provide thought to safe crossing to avoid wading accidents.
83. Where is the handicap access to the river. Bait fishing should be allowed for all handicapped. A paved road wouldn't hurt the fishing at all.
84. I am for the single road and opposed to paving the road. Gravel roads keep speeds down. Paving would increase accidents.
85. Parking areas and pulloffs
86. Create safe pullouts for parking.
87. More restrictive fish limits may need to be imposed.
88. Parking on shoulder.
89. Use data about the most popular fishing sites and plan access points, but too many like the St. Joe. This only encourages more traffic which will diminish the fishery.
90. Do not combine these roads. Do not pave. Multiple road access spreads traffic and pressure. Single road systems concentrate traffic and pressure.
91. Opposed to paving. Do not agree with a single road project, but there would need to be access points.
92. To ensure adequate access the road needs to be left unpaved. If paved there must be pull outs for parking.
93. Keep road away from the river, use trails to fish the river.
94. A good road and some handicap access to the river.
95. Where the other road that is not used, make the right of way into a trail system that allows continued access to foot and bike traffic.
96. Pullouts, trails, parking so anglers can access the river to wade fish.
97. Parking areas with short trails. Anglers harvest trout year-round with no warden enforcement.
98. Don't think there should be one road. The roads should be improved. More camping for RV's and tents and access for fishing.
99. Monitor speed at these locations or have turn lanes at access sites or leave secondary gravel roads to access rural areas.
100. Leave the roads on both sides. Do not pave, this will keep traffic slow.
101. Present road system provide over-use access. Dust is hurting the fishery. A single road system would help the fishing by making access more challenging. Pullouts every 3-4 miles would be necessary.
102. Leave other road for rec use.
103. Provide pull-outs and manage bank erosion and overgrowth.
104. Leave it alone
105. Don't pave
106. Both sides of river need to be accessible to sport fishing, maybe by a foot bridge.
107. Just do a good job on the construction.
108. Catch/Release only, strictly enforced by FWP. Limit development along river edge, consider permit fishing. Keep road intrusion to minimum (small 2 lane, low speed, minimal turnouts, parking lot with no camping). Consider fishermens trails along the river.
109. Pullouts
110. Catch and release only
111. Some section should be catch and release only
112. Keep either roadway intact with access to old routes. More important is river quality and fish numbers.
113. Do not pave. Do not provide additional access sites. Wild nature of the river drainage must be preserved.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3 (continued)

114. No paved road, it would cut the existing fishing access in half and faster traffic would endanger the wildlife
115. Access sites should be small and few in number
116. Need access to both sides of the river. What happens to access for hunting.
117. Keep the communication open
118. Safe parking areas.
119. Leave parts of the old road open
120. Plenty of access sites, pullouts. A couple of small developed campground like those on the lower river would be good
121. Highway is unnecessary.
122. Leave some of existing road on the opposite of the new paved road to enhance fishing.
123. Still maintain the beauty without it getting over used
124. Good parking sites
125. Leave some places undeveloped. People already drive too fast. If paved log trucks speeding, kids and pets in the road
126. Turn outs
127. Season should be reduced and keep limit decreased
128. Provide parking pullouts.
129. Paving the road would promote more use. More use creates more problems
130. Regular pullouts is a good idea, but there should be stretches where anglers have to work to get to. A single unpaved road is the best option. No boaters.
131. Don't build it.
132. Keep roadway as far from the water as possible. Keep the speed limit low for safety reasons
133. Paving is not necessary. Road is used on both sides now. Provide more pull outs to keep it safe and for slow moving vehicles. Just grade the road more often, take care of what's there
134. Preserve stream access law as is. Each time property changes hands FWP gets access site. No lawns or additional grazing areas. No cutting of brush and trees in 10ft zone from high water mark.
135. Lots of planting and keep the artificial lure in force.
136. Do not pave.
137. Increase number of pullouts
138. A paved road is a mistake. A single road is fine but not a highway
139. Leave the way it is
140. More access on the lower 14 miles.
141. Pullouts and parking.
142. Don't want a single road system, period
143. Make access to river safe and lots of auto parking. Be able to get to the river for recreation. Get rid of heavy brush and make the river catch and release only.
144. Put in bridges so there is access to both sides
145. Boat launch
146. Provide parking with trail head access
147. Access is already established at an acceptable level. Maybe too much access would be detrimental to the river that is already overused.
148. If one road system is developed there needs to be the same access to the adjacent forest lands and the river. A paved road would keep the dust down.
149. The fishing and hunting will have to stay the same or be improved.
150. Paved road will bring over use too much fishing from out of staters.
151. NO road.
152. Pullouts
153. Don't let the fern-feelers and tree-huggers have more than 50% say in what happens.
154. Improve the road, period. Don't create an amusement park environment. Keep it pristine and keep the number of people down.
155. Access to lakes is important.
156. Provide more parking.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3 (continued)

157. Don't want a major highway to Kalispell.
158. Maintain the natural beauty.
159. No need to change the current road system.
160. Provide parking in places where it is safe to walk and wade. No boats.
161. Provide parking for pullouts.
162. Maintain access for general public by using dead-ends of the old road bed. Put in pullouts, camping and day use areas.
163. Keep it the way it is. Paving is not necessary. People already speed on the gravel and there is already too much garbage.
164. Leave the roads alone and improve the fishing.
165. There would need to be day float access. Should be some small campsites. Let area landholders know that fishermen don't damage their property.
166. Paved road is a bad idea. The river is already overfished.
167. Guardrails if possible. Keep speed limit below 45. Maintain the area's natural appeal. Clean out non-game junk fish.
168. Proper pull out sites and camping will be great. No home site development. It should be open to all not just landowners.
169. Access to both sides is needed.
170. Pull outs are important. A single road system will take some pressure off of some areas.
171. Parking
172. Quality fishery. Easier access means more fishermen.
173. Foot access to the river in many locations.
174. Need a plan that shows where fishing access would be.
175. Road set-backs from the river. Pay attention to runoff. Day and overnight camping access.
176. Don't pave
177. Leave it alone
178. Pullouts and parking
179. Pave the road all the way to Hwy 2. Campsites would be great and provide more easy access.
180. Single lane road would create too much traffic and speed.
181. Make handicap access and increase slot limit to 12.
182. Should be wide enough for people walking along river.
183. Single road system is ideal! But no paving.
184. Do not pave
185. Access
186. No paving, gravel is fine.
187. Should remain the same.
188. No paving, easier access will ruin the river and fish population.
189. Ensure that improved access does not result in decreased fish catches and increased pollution and trash.
190. Make sure the melting chemicals don't end up in the river.
191. Be sure we can get campers in the pulloffs. The wardens have been very nice.
192. Being able to cross the river.
193. Camp sites
194. Do not pave
195. Leave sections of the old road
196. Opposed to spending tax dollars on a paved road for this areas.
197. More pullouts. Paving will cut down on pollution.
198. Don't pave
199. Already have adequate access, leave it primitive.
200. Pull offs
201. Don't change the current road system.
202. Limit access, do not pave
203. More pullouts
204. Low speed limit

Open-Ended, Verbatim Responses to Question #3 (continued)

205. Wider parking areas
206. Handicap access
207. Too fast of driving which endangers fishermen
208. Parking
209. Minimize development, provide safe pullouts, low speed limit
210. Too much access leads to over fishing. Should be catch and release.
211. Do not pave

Open-Ended, Verbatim Comments to Question #4

1. Increase in traffic, speed by vehicles on a paved road, access to both sides of the river.
2. Contaminating the river and over use of a road.
3. Development=more people. Like it the way it is now
4. Don't like the idea of changing the current system. It will increase traffic and increase noise.
5. Increased traffic changes environment.
6. Better hunting.
7. Fishing and litter.
8. Road won't be away from the river because of the steep valley. Too much litter and overuse. The present fishery is not strong enough to handle the increase.
9. I am opposed to a paved road as it will result in increased traffic and use of the river. The result will be overuse similar to other streams and rivers in MT.
10. If it is paved Thompson River will be destroyed.
11. Lack of access to the non-road side
12. Access will diminish and be limited.
13. Some of my favorite fishing spots could be more difficult to get to with only one road
14. It will attract too many people, garbage and high speed traffic and it will be a huge RV area.
15. Over fishing! Limit fishing to artificial and a slot limit or no fish kill at all. That river could be one of the best in the state if managed better.
16. Make the whole river catch and release.
17. That river access and parking areas are provided for fishermen.
18. I have a high concern that a lot of the little access sites and campsites will be lost. This will then put competition on the remaining sites and create overuse
19. If that road is paved it will prevent dust but it will become a secondary highway and will e too crowded as well an a danger to fishermen and wildlife.
20. Pollution of the pristine Thompson River. Too much pressure on fish. Recreational fishing will suffer because of added use of Thompson River Road.
21. More pressure on the fishery
22. Increased traffic could result in the river being overused and over-fished.
23. Road is fine as is. Construction of a paved road would make the road more dangerous for wildlife and humans. And may cause the river to be over fished.
24. Paved road would have negative impact on the area. Land will be over-used but also hunting and other activities will increase and will impact wildlife. Leave it alone.
25. River could be over fished.
26. Will be too busy.
27. I want both roads.
28. Catch and release during spawning or no fishing at all during spawning
29. Doesn't need paved.
30. Insure parking and pull-outs off highway
31. A paved road would result in less sediment washing into the river compared to a gravel/dirt road. Need something with the least impact on the river.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Comments to Question #4 (continued)

32. Increased higher speed traffic safety. Improved access, more people and impact on the wild fish population. More activity=lower quality experience.
33. Pollutants leeching into the river, over fishing and potential road kills increased on the road, traffic increase, speed. needs to be designated as wild and scenic.
34. Traffic will increase and speeds will increase. Accidents will increase and it will be dangerous without proper consideration to access.
35. Maintain as a fly fishing only river.
36. Much of the river bank is private land.
37. Limit use of RV's.
38. Paving a road means more traffic and speeding thereby increasing the fishing pressure on a sensitive ecosystem.
39. Overuse and litter.
40. Which side of the river? Make the side without a road into hiking, horseback and trails, etc.
41. Access to the west side of the river would be restricted. Why not pave one side and leave the other side gravel.
42. Leave the road alone.
43. No improvements. No boating. This is one of few rivers where you can fly fish from the bank.
44. Please do not construct a road system.
45. Over usage due to easy access.
46. Area may be over used.
47. Too much traffic.
48. Still have access for fishing throughout the drainage.
49. Access DVT and historical use areas. Lack of bridges is only on one side.
50. Structure road to limit use at high speeds.
51. Access and traffic
52. Keep access limited, there is already too much access in the USA. We need more pristine, undeveloped areas.
53. Would not have enough access to the river.
54. Losing places to camp. When making places to camp please make spots big enough to get larger campers and larger groups in for family outings.
55. Pollution from a more traveled road. Litter, and probably RV's with full hook-ups.
56. If these roads become paved, it could encourage more recreational vehicle (RV) use (camping) taking away from the rustic, secluded camping and fishing that should be found in our national forests.
57. Overuse
58. Why ruin a nice natural area?
59. Once the road is paved, there will be an increase in traffic and noise. Vehicle speed will increase on the road. The minimalist outdoorsman will be replaced by the RV crowd due to easy access. An increase in pollutant potential from a paved road will occur, particularly where road is near the river.
60. Hunting access on opposite side of river from where the road is located.
61. Too much pressure on the Thompson River.
62. The river from 200 to mile 16.5 fishes best from the county road, while engineering concerns probably favor the ACM road.
63. It will get over fished and lose some of its beauty.
64. Certain sections will become accessible only to floaters.
65. Too many people being attracted to the river. Truck traffic. Physical access to the other side.
66. Over use. Effect on winter range.
67. Paving would help reduce silt. However, the increased speeds after the road is paved also concerns me. No bait, no barbed hooks and only catch and release.
68. More traffic.
69. Getting to the other side for fishing access.
70. The state worked hard to make the Thompson area what it is and preserve access to fish.
71. Concern for pollution due to increased traffic as well as poaching from easier access.
72. Do not pave it, leave it as it is. It is nice to pull into campsites and not have lots of people around.
73. Speed

Open-Ended, Verbatim Comments to Question #4 (continued)

74. High amount of traffic, increased development, letter, exhaust, stresses on wildlife. Fragmentation of wildlife corridor and loss of wild lands
75. Increase in traffic.
76. Retain, undeveloped, primitive, camp and picnic sites. Retain sites where you can get off the road with some privacy.
77. Too much pressure on fishery.
78. Wildlife and human life. Cost to patrol the area and overuse, letter speed.
79. Parking, over fishing, catch and release and fly fishing only access.
80. Too much traffic and litter increase with more use and endanger fishing.
81. Overuse
82. Access on both sides of river.
83. Favor a paved road because of the reduced dust. But there will be additional traffic and therefore fishermen.
84. More traffic and fishing pressure. There is nothing in the book that says fisherman should not have to do some hiking to get in.
85. Controlled access leads to changing fees for access. Must every natural place become a money making opportunity for the state.
86 River would become over crowded because there would be fewer access points. Do not want this to become like Rock Creek with fishermen stacked up because of limited access points.
87 Access will be drastically reduced, and river will become over used.
88. Increased traffic impacts environment.
89. It will difficult to get to some good fishing holes.
90. Increased traffic.
91. Not enough areas to allow river access.
92. There will be a lot of the river that's not accessible.
93. Keep it as natural as possible, if one wants an outdoors experience don't expect pavement and sidewalks. No boats, only canoes.
94. RV pullouts for fishing and camping with pay stations. Access for fishing, hiking and watching wildlife.
95. The speed of travel that accompanies a paved road system will make it too dangerous for recreational traffic.
96. Give the fish a chance, don't over access the river. A paved road would help the fishery, but bring more fishermen.
97. Rec access
98. Will there be access to both sides for hunting and other sports.
99. Preserving an already marginalized fishery. Turning the road into a shortcut. High speeds and more traffic.
100. Too busy of a road. Pollution from increased traffic and decrease of natural habitat.
101. Too much fishing traffic and pollution.
102. Currently there are different access areas depending on which side of the river. If a single road, will access be more limited?
103. RV access
104. Increase traffic, high speeds and increasing fishing pressure.
105. A paved single road system will cause a negative impact upon wildlife and cleanliness of the area due to higher usage by those commuting who have no concern for the well being of this area.
106. Some areas will become inaccessible and accessible areas will become crowded and overused.
107. This would become a highway shortcut to Kalispell.
108. Construction and log trucks will create a negative impact on the river. Why spend the money, it's fine the way it is.
109. Too much fishing, traffic, cabins and developers.
110. Single road system would limit access to only one side of the river. If a road is put in, put a bridge in and campgrounds on the other side.
111. If paved it will become another Couerd A'lene River
112. Increased traffic to and from Kalispell, but it would be good for the economy.
113. It needs to be preserved so over use and abuse does not take place.
114. Highway 200 is too narrow for cars to be parked along the road.
115. Limited ability to pull off. Long term maintenance may not receive priority.
116. Increased traffic and more people.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Comments to Question #4 (continued)

117. Adequate access
118. Over use of precious resource, speed limits, turn offs, road maintenance, collisions.
119. Will be too much access for the fishing to accommodate.
120. If paved, forget about seclusion and an outdoor experience.
121. Entire river should be catch and release
122. Too much pressure
123. Too much fishing and hunting pressure.
124. Paving is not good. It creates sprawl and development. One road however does seem like a good idea.
125. Road would increase traffic.
126. River is getting crowded already and this will exacerbate the problem Speeding on a paved road will make the road more dangerous.
127. People like the option of use either side for fishing , hunting , firewood. Access would be limited too much.
128. Will increase use (Spokane, Missoula and Cd'A outfitters) and will be u"200" during hatch. No boats.
129. Don't pave. Maintain a better gravel road. Pavement causes to much traffic.
130. Paving brings too many people.
131. Paving would add vehicles and that puts too much pressure on fishery.
132. Overuse, degrading of river and ecosystem
133. Would ruin quality and uniqueness of this area.
134. Don't maintain the road that we have and the county will not be able to maintain this one either. A gravel road can be graded. Thompson River is heavily hunted and not patrolled, it does not a main highway thru it. Spend the money on dust control and grading.
135. It will become a main highway to Rte2 and dangerous. Wilderness would be diminished.
136. Safety! Enough passing areas, parking areas
137. No access to both sides of river, need access to have ability to get to forest roads.
138. Over use oil from road getting into system, accidents from high speeds.
139. More garbage, worse fishing, danger from more traffic, and less peace and quiet.
140. A paved road will bring more traffic and possibly development in this scenic area. Huge impact.
141. It would be hard to get to certain sites.
142. Heavy traffic
143. If accessibility is improved to allow more types of vehicles (RV's) we risk the potential of detrimental activities such as overfishing, pollution and littering.
144. Leave as it is.
145. Too much traffic and congestion on the road and it will force more fishermen in fewer spots.
146. Keep natural beauty.
147. Paved road will be detrimental to the fishery and the whole fishing experience.
148. Campsites, better access to campsites.
149. Speed
150. Speed and lack of parking.
151. Maintain public access
152. A single road system would prevent access to many fishing sites.
153. There wouldn't be access to favorite fishing spots.
154. Leave the river as it is and provide more fishing opportunities.
155. Can't fish the east side at all and that's the best fishing.
156. Negative impact.
157. Improvement will cause overpopulation.
158. More traffic and overuse
159. Would still need areas that you would have to walk to.
160. Access to both sides.
161. Fishing is the only reason I come
162. It will be over fished.
163. Paving brings population. It would become a private river because there is too much private property and there would be no access.

Open-Ended, Verbatim Comments to Question #4 (continued)

164. Fishing access.
165. It would be like the "Bull River" not enough access for the public and not enough pull outs.
166. We already have good access and change requires us to give up something. Volume of traffic may degrade the overall experience.
167. Quality of hunting would decrease. As a cabin owner vandalism would be a concern and more increased traffic.
168. Leave it alone
169. There is a lot of river to be used and that would increase fishing possibilities.
170. Over use
171. More trash and pollution and would cut off the access road.
172. Traffic and overuse.
173. Keep it as natural as possible. High traffic would be a problem.
174. Traffic
175. Too many people, overdevelopment and restricted access.
176. Decreased outdoor experience and more traffic, noise, pollution and less fish.
177. Overuse
178. I want the freedom to pull over and fish, camp, and hike wherever and whenever.
179. Increased traffic
180. Decreased fishing
181. River may become a garbage dump from too many people
182. Not enough access
183. No boats
184. The serene area will be disturbed
185. More litter and over fishing
186. Run-off
187. Over use
188. Traffic
189. Increased traffic
190. Heavy traffic, too many people
191. Over fishing and too much traffic
192. Increased traffic and pollution
193. Damage to fishery, Loss of streamside vegetation, increased sedimentation and overuse