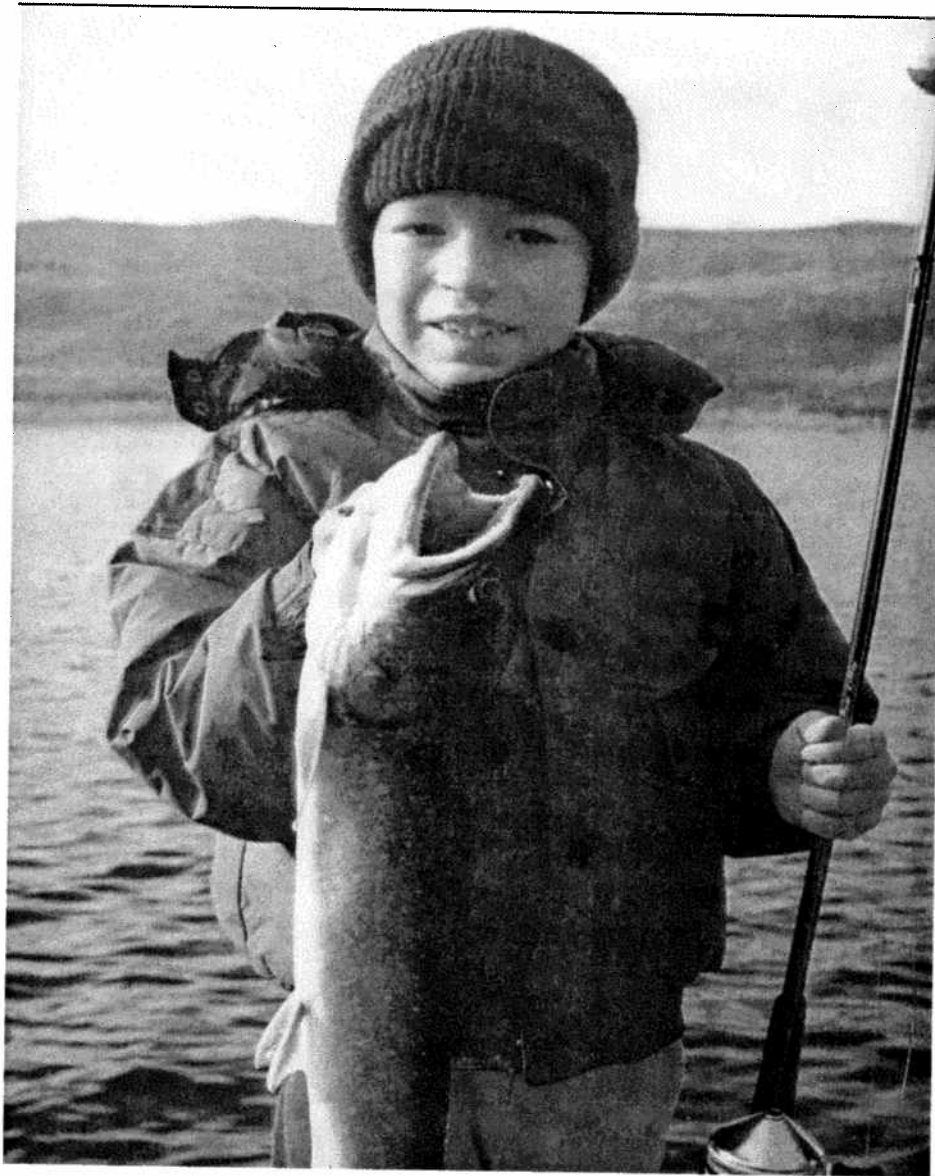


**Angler Survey of Experimental Recreational Bull Trout Fishery in Hungry  
Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River and Lake Koocanusa, Montana.  
2004**



***Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks***

**Angler Survey of Experimental Recreational Bull Trout Fishery  
In Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River  
And Lake Koocanusa, Montana 2004**

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**January 2005**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Many dedicated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employees contributed to various segments of this report. We want to specifically thank Bob McFarland, Deanna Tarum, Reed Simonson and Bob Snyder for their contributions as well as the cooperative bull trout anglers who fished these waters. We also want to thank the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for considering these important fisheries.

## ABSTRACT

In 2004, under special permit, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service authorized limited sport fishing for bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, on Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River and Lake Koocanusa as requested by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. A portion of the permit conditions called for a bull trout permit and catch card system, angler survey and development of educational information pertaining to these new fisheries. Nearly 2,700 anglers secured permits to fish bull trout on these three waters. Of these, only an estimated 37 percent fished for bull trout. Angler survey results estimated a total of 3,483 angler days pressure on Lake Koocanusa, 1,650 days on Hungry Horse Reservoir, and 725 days on South Fork Flathead River. The greatest number of bull trout were estimated caught in Lake Koocanusa (n= 638) of which 99 were harvested. Hungry Horse Reservoir bull trout catch was estimated at 355 with a harvest of 48. Anglers released over 80 percent of the bull trout caught on both reservoirs. Harvested fish from both reservoirs ranged from 14 to 38 inches total length. The South Fork Flathead fishery was catch-and-release only for bull trout and anglers reported catching 173 fish.

## **INTRODUCTION**

We conducted an angler mail survey for the newly created recreational bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) fisheries on Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River and Lake Koocanusa in 2004. These fisheries were granted to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) under special permit by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) due to listing of bull trout as a “threatened species” under the Endangered Species Act in 1998.

## **BACKGROUND**

Bull trout were listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act in 1998. Montana is one of the bull trout strongholds in the United States but some populations are still facing decline in abundance and/or distribution. At the time of listing, sportfishing for bull trout was continued only in Swan Lake because of stable populations.

Other stable populations exist in Montana but long-term population monitoring information was limited. By 2003, data documented the existence of other stable populations and MFWP approached the USFWS to allow bull trout sportfishing and limited harvest on specific waters.

Under special permit, the USFWS authorized sportfishing for bull trout as requested on Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River and Lake Koocanusa (Appendix A). This activity was intended to benefit the species by measuring the effects of restoring recreational fishing and by increasing public support for management of stable bull trout populations in the identified waterbodies, for restoration of bull trout habitat and for other management activities that will increase the distribution and abundance of bull trout populations throughout the state.

## **METHODS**

Conditions of the USFWS special permit (TE-077533) for new bull trout fisheries contained specific items agreed upon by both USFWS and MFWP (Appendix A). Part of the conditions called for the development and use of a harvest catch card. Also required was a formal survey of anglers participating in these experimental bull trout fisheries. Educational materials were also developed to explain catch card use, bull trout identification, seasons, limits, regulations pertinent to each fishery and bull trout conservation measures.

### **Bull Trout Permit Application (Appendix B)**

The first step of developing a catch card harvest authorization involved creating an application for anglers who wanted to fish for bull trout. This form was made available through the Region One MFWP office and over MFWP’s web site. The application required the angler’s name, address, automated licensing system (ALS) number and permit area (waters) that they chose to fish. All applications had to be submitted to the Region 1 FWP office in Kalispell.



### **Bull Trout Catch Card (Appendix C)**

After processing a completed application, a permit and numbered catch card were issued to each individual. The catch cards provided general instructions for anglers fishing for bull trout on Hungry Horse Reservoir (HHR), South Fork Flathead River (SFF) and Lake Koocanusa (LK). The cards required entry of the catch zone, fish length, month and day of catch for each fish harvested in HHR and LK and for each fish caught and released in SFF.

Immediately upon harvesting a bull trout from the permitted water, anglers must record the required information in ballpoint pen and notch out a triangle on the line for each fish.

### **Bull Trout Regulations Pamphlet (Appendix D)**

With each catch card issued, bull trout anglers also received a bull trout regulations and informational pamphlet. Pamphlets specifically outlined seasons, limits, restrictions, catch card use, catch-and-release fishing techniques and bull trout identification for all waters open to bull trout fishing. Special license procedures, regulations and conservation measures for bull trout were also itemized in the 2004 Montana Fishing Regulations booklet.

### **Bull Trout Angler Mail Survey (Appendix E)**

Catch cards alone would provide information on bull trout harvest, catch date, size and location. However, in their present form they do not provide an estimate of pressure. There was also no fee for catch cards or a penalty for failure to return cards as specified. Consequently, we felt we could obtain more thorough and accurate estimates by conducting a survey of catch card holders. The survey asked for additional information including: whether the angler fished for bull trout or not, the number of days fished per validated water, and the intent to continue fishing Lake Koocanusa (the season had not closed at the time of the survey). The survey also requested specific catch card information pertaining to harvested or released fish by date, zone and size of fish.

Surveys were initially mailed to all catch card holders (2,748 total) during the first week of November 2004 with postage-paid return envelopes. Bull trout fishing had closed on HHR and SFF after August 15, but continued to be open on LK until February 28, 2005. Results from LK were extrapolated to include information from the fishery that continued after the survey date. This was necessary to obtain an estimate by early 2005 for reporting purposes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Bull Trout Catch Cards**

Catch card instructions requested anglers to return them after their license expired or when they were done fishing for bull trout. We also reminded anglers through the media to return their cards. By October 2004 we received 102 catch cards from 2,748 cards issued (3.7% return).

## Bull Trout Angler Mail Survey

The extremely low return rate of catch cards, plus the lack of fishing pressure information on the card demonstrated the need for the mail survey. The results of the initial mail survey achieved a 30% return rate (n=824) by the last week of December 2004. On December 28, 2004 we conducted a second survey reminder mailing to non-respondents to increase our level of returns. On January 19, 2005 we had received a total of 1,556 responses (57% return) for both mailings and ended the survey period due to declining returns.

### Angler Preferred Waters

On the bull trout permit application, and subsequently on the catch card, 2,748 anglers declared waters they intended to fish for bull trout. These anglers had seven possible combinations of waters to fish (Table 1).

Table 1. Bull trout waters selected by anglers from bull trout permit applications.

Waters Selected	Number Selected	Percent
All Three (HHR, SFF, LK)	1,192	43
LK Only	942	34
HHR Only	125	5
SFF Only	95	4
HHR and SFF	214	8
LK and SFF	144	5
HHR and LK	36	1
Total Cards Issued	2,748	100
Total Validations for Each Water: LK	2,314	42
HHR	1,675	30
SFF	1,537	28

The majority of anglers (43 percent) selected all three waters to fish. Another 34 percent of anglers selected Lake Koocanusa only, with the remaining five combinations of waters receiving less than 10 percent each. When viewing total selections by water, Lake Koocanusa received 42% (2,314), Hungry Horse Reservoir 30% (1,675) and South Fork Flathead 28% (1,537). We observed that anglers selected a variety of waters on their permit applications. In Table 2 we evaluate waters actually fished. Of the total 1,556 survey respondents, only 37 percent said they fished for bull trout in 2004.

Table 2. Bull trout anglers that actually fished all selected waters indicated on permit application.

Selected Water	Number Validated	Actually Fished All Waters (%)	
All Three (HHR, SFF, LK)	222	6	(3)
LK Only	197	193	(98)
HHR Only	28	28	(100)
SFF Only	33	33	(100)
HHR and SFF	60	39	(65)
LK and SFF	8	2	(25)
HHR and LK	29	21	(72)

### Angler Demographics

The vast majority of permitted bull trout anglers were Montana residents (89%). The non-resident anglers were primarily from the states of Idaho and Washington with less than 1% from 32 other states and Canadian provinces.

### Fishing Pressure Estimates

Only 1,556 of 2,748 bull trout anglers responded to all or a portion of the mail survey. Only 37% of the respondents indicated they did fish for bull trout and the remaining 63% did not fish for bull trout.

Based on survey results, bull trout anglers reported fishing 935 days on HHR, 411 days on SFF and 1,685 days on LK during the period surveyed (Table 3). The survey period for HHR and SFF covered the entire fishing season from May 15 through August 15, 2004. For LK, the survey period was extended from March 2004 until January 19, 2005 when it was ended due to a low response rate. Thirty-five percent (325 of 936 respondents) of the LK bull trout anglers said they intend to fish for bull trout until the end of the season on February 28, 2005. Therefore, we expanded our pressure estimate to cover the entire season assuming an equal pressure rate.

To estimate total bull trout pressure on each respective water, we used the number of anglers and angler days reported by survey respondents who fished for bull trout. For anglers not responding to the survey we assumed the same proportion fished for bull trout (37%) with the same effort. The example below describes the calculations used to estimate total man-days fishing pressure for HHR (same calculation used for SFF and LK): Montana bull trout anglers obtained 2,748 catch cards and all were mailed surveys. Of those, 1,556 anglers responded to the mail survey and 1,192 did not respond. From those responding to the survey, only 577 (37%) declared they fished for bull trout. Those anglers that fished for bull trout reported fishing 935 angler days in HHR, 411 angler days in SFF and 1,685 angler days in LK. We assumed 441 of the 1,192 non-survey responders (37%) fished for bull trout and expended the same rate of pressure.

$$\text{Therefore: } \frac{577 \text{ (Anglers)}}{935 \text{ (Days Fished HHR)}} = \frac{441 \text{ (Non-Survey Respondents)}}{X \text{ (Additional Days Fished)}}$$

On LK we used the same extrapolation plus we factored in the longer season until February 28, 2005.

Table 3. Bull trout 2004-2005 season pressure estimates extrapolated from angler survey results for HHR, SFF and LK.

Number Angler-Days Fishing Pressure			
HHR	SFF	LK	
935	411	1,685	Actual
715	314	1,798	Estimated
1,650	725	3,483	Estimated Total

### Partial Bull Trout Catch and Harvest Estimates from Angler Survey

Bull trout anglers reported their catch and harvest by zone for each water (Tables 4, 5, 6). In Hungry Horse Reservoir the majority of bull trout (42%) were caught and harvested in the southern zone "C", where the South Fork River enters the reservoir (Table 4). We expected a higher catch proportion to occur here due to staging and progressive spawning movements up river. Areas "B" (mid-reservoir) and "A" (north end) respectively accounted for 23 and 35 percent of the catch. Overall, we estimated 201 bull trout were caught, 27 harvested, yielding a release rate of 87%.

In the South Fork Flathead River, only catch and release fishing is allowed for bull trout (Table 5). During May and June, catch was confined to zone "A" which is the lowest portion of the river immediately above the reservoir and outside of designated wilderness area. Zone "A" is also accessible from roads. During July and August, catch progressed up river into more remote areas of wilderness where access is limited. The number of bull trout caught and released appears to relate to ease of access where 65% (n=64) were caught in "A", 33% (n=32) in "B" and 2% (n=2) caught in "C", the area deepest in wilderness. A total of 98 bull trout were reported caught and released in the SFF angler survey.

In Lake Koocanusa, the majority of bull trout were caught in northern zone "C" which is where the Kootenay River enters the reservoir (Table 6). The highest over all bull trout catch also occurred during the Nov-Dec period (n=140) followed next by the Sept-Oct period (n=76). We estimate from the survey data that 309 bull trout were caught in Lake Koocanusa and 48 were harvested, yielding an overall release rate of 85%. One bull trout was illegally harvested based on survey information during the Mar-April period. No illegal bull trout appeared on survey information in SFF or HHR.

Table 4. Hungry Horse Reservoir bull trout reported catch and harvest by zone, from angler survey, 2004.

Period	Zone	No. Bull Trout Caught	No. Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released	(No. Released)
5/15-5/31	A	4	1	75	
	B	9	0	100	
	C	41	8	80	
Subtotal		54	9	83	(45)
6/1-6/30	A	38	1	97	
	B	8	2	75	
	C	21	3	86	
Subtotal		67	6	91	(61)
7/1-7/31	A	25	4	84	
	B	26	3	88	
	C	17	3	82	
Subtotal		68	10	85	(58)
8/1-8/15	A	4	0	100	
	B	3	1	66	
	C	5	1	80	
Subtotal		12	2	83	(10)
(% Total)					
Seasonal Total 5/15-8/15	A	71 (35%)	6	92	
	B	46 (23%)	6	87	
	C	84 (42%)	15	82	
HHR Total		201	27	87	(174)

\*Zones are defined in Bull Trout Pamphlet, Appendix D.

Table 5. South Fork Flathead bull trout reported caught and released by zone, from angler survey, 2004.

Period	Zone	No. Bull Trout Caught & Released
5/15-5/31	A	40
	B	0
	C	0
Subtotal		40
6/1-6/30	A	14
	B	0
	C	0
Subtotal		14
7/1-7/31	A	7
	B	19
	C	0
Subtotal		26
8/1-8/15	A	3
	B	13
	C	2
Subtotal		18
(% Total)		
Season Total 5/15-8/15	A	64 (65%)
	B	32 (33%)
	C	2 (2%)
SFF Total		98

Table 6. Lake Koocanusa bull trout catch and harvest by zone from angler survey, 2004.

Period	Zone	No. Bull Trout Caught	No. Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released	(No. Released)
Mar-April	A	2	0	100	
	B	4	0	100	
	C	9	1	89	
Subtotal		15	1*	93	(14)
May-June	A	13	2	85	
	B	1	0	100	
	C	46	4	91	
Subtotal		60	6	90	(54)
July-Aug	A	4	1	75	
	B	5	0	100	
	C	9	2	78	
Subtotal		18	3	83	(15)
Sept-Oct	A	34	5	85	
	B	4	0	100	
	C	38	6	84	
Subtotal		76	11	85	(65)
Nov-Dec	A	50	17	66	
	B	65	4	94	
	C	25	6	76	
Subtotal		140	27	81	(113)
Total Mar-Dec	A	103	25	76	
	B	79	4	95	
	C	127	19	86	
LK Total		309	48	85	(261)

\*Illegal Harvest

### **Total Bull Trout Catch and Harvest Estimates**

To derive a total catch and harvest estimate for each water, we had to estimate values for anglers who did not respond to the angler survey. We added catch from estimated pressure to catch reported from the angler survey assuming equal catch rates (Table 7). The highest total catch estimate of 638 bull trout occurred in Lake Koocanusa. Anglers harvested an estimated 99 bull trout with 84% of the caught fish released. In Hungry Horse Reservoir, we estimated a total of 355 bull trout were caught, 48 harvested, with 87% released. In the South Fork Flathead, the only river fishery, 173 total bull trout were caught and released.



Table 7. Bull trout catch and harvest estimates for HHR, SFF and LK, 2004-2005 seasons.

	HHR				SFF				LK			
	# Bull Trout Caught	# Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released	# Bull Trout Caught	# Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released	# Bull Trout Caught	# Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released	# Bull Trout Caught	# Bull Trout Harvested	% Bull Trout Released
Bull Trout Catch (Angler Survey)	201	27	87	98	0	100	309	48	85			
Bull Trout Catch (from estimated pressure)	154	21	86	75	0	100	329*	51*	84*			
Total	355	48	87	173	0	100	638	99	84			

\* Includes additional angler catch and harvest beyond the survey period

From the catch and harvest data, anglers recorded lengths of bull trout caught, harvested and released by water. Length frequency histograms for Hungry Horse Reservoir (Figure 1), South Fork Flathead River (Figure 2) and Lake Koocanusa (Figure 3) depict the size of bull trout caught, released or harvested by anglers.

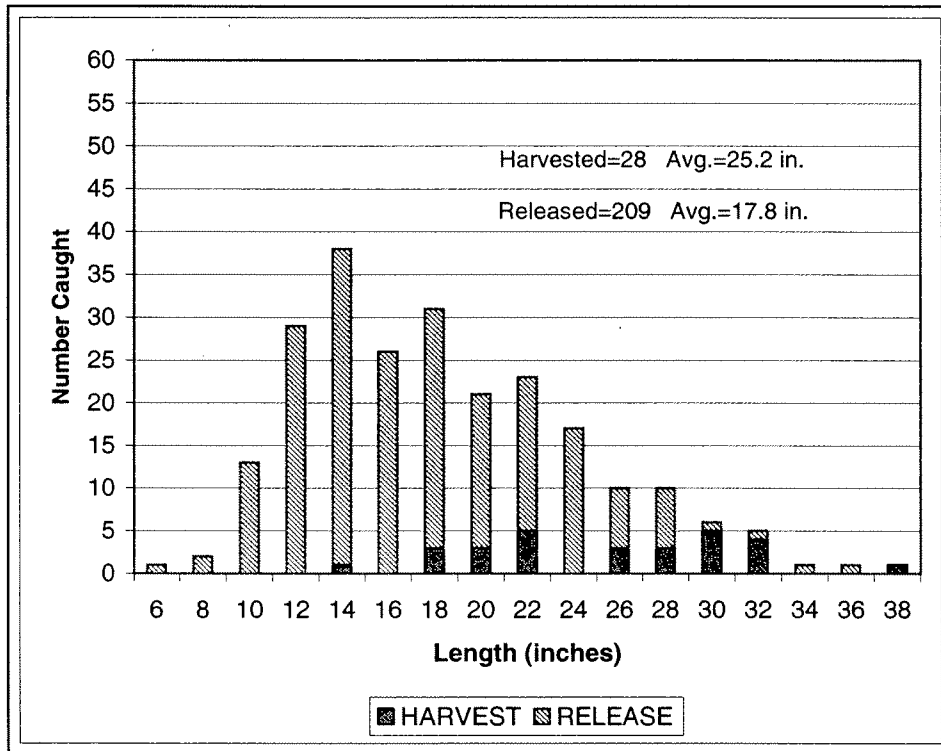


Figure 1 Hungry Horse Reservoir 2004 bull trout angler creel survey and catch card data.

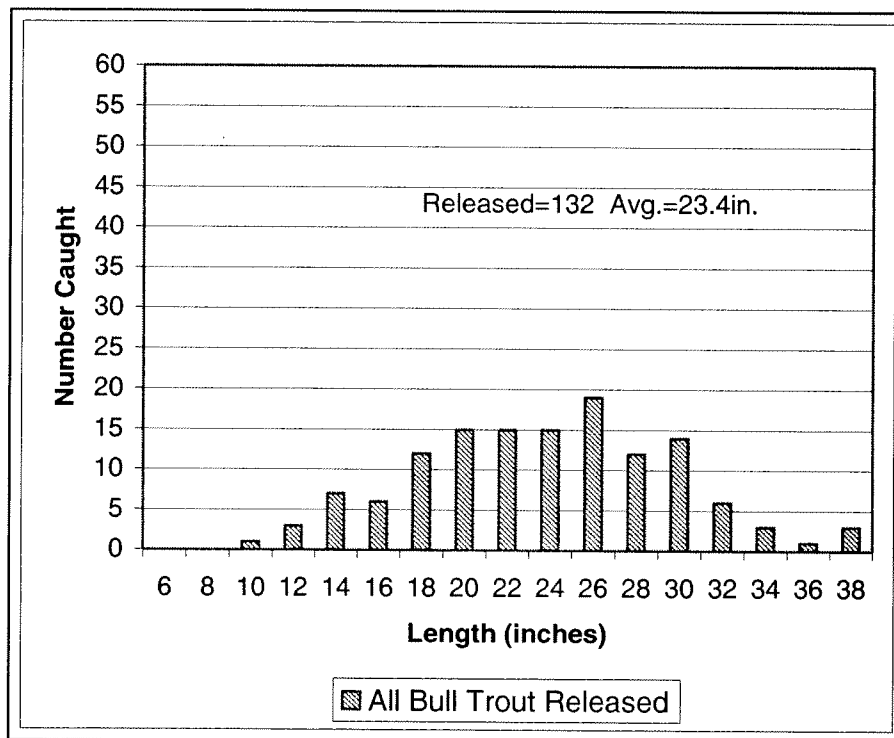


Figure 2. South Fork Flathead River 2004 bull trout angler creel survey and catch card data.

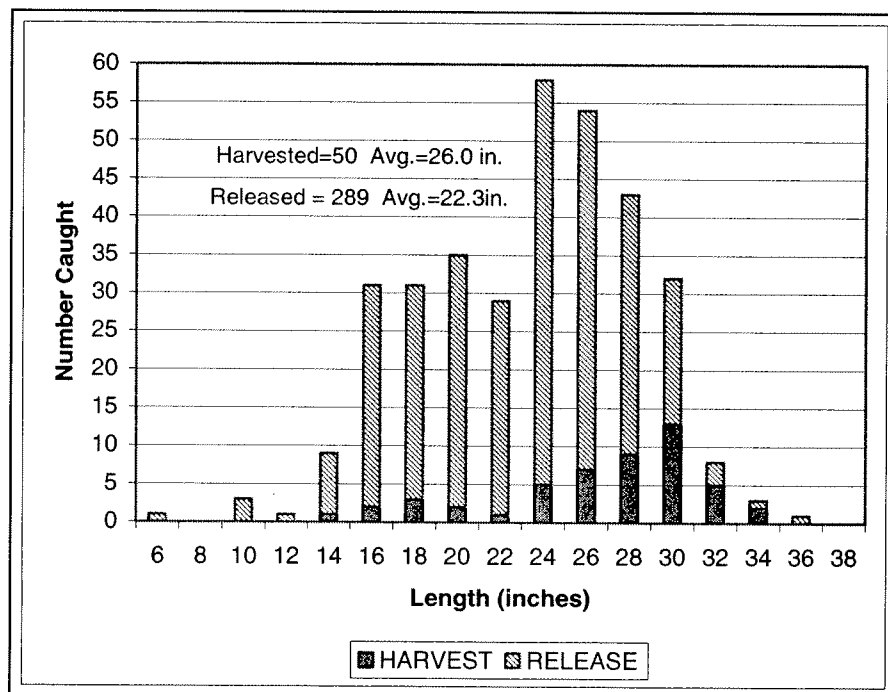


Figure 3. Lake Koocanusa 2004 bull trout angler creel survey and catch card data.

## DISCUSSION

Overall, we observed considerable interest in these renewed bull trout fisheries based on the number of permits issued. We received numerous comments from anglers who appreciated the renewed opportunity to fish for bull trout. The catch rates and size distribution of fish caught appear to reflect healthy fisheries. The high release rates (84% for LK and 87% for HHR) also reflect the conservative harvest rate of anglers. The harvest estimates for LK (n=98) and HHR (n=48) were very low. If this trend continues, and other indices suggest stable populations, then it would be prudent to liberalize regulations in the future.

We experienced problems with the voluntary return of catch cards and the lack of permit fee to cover permit administration and evaluation. The high rate of permit holders that did not fish (63%) increased the cost and efficiency of the survey. A modest fee for the permit would tend to eliminate anglers not serious about the fishery. In 2004, we limited distribution points for permits to control dispensing of information. For 2005, we will consider additional distribution points for angler convenience.

## **APPENDIX A**

**USFWS Subpermit TE-077533**



## United States Department of the Interior

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Mountain-Prairie Region



IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS/R6  
ES/Permits  
TE-077533

MAILING ADDRESS:  
Post Office Box 25486  
Denver Federal Center  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:  
134 Union Blvd.  
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

RECEIVED

November 24, 2003

DEC 11 2003

FISHERIES DIV.  
FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Mr. Jeff Hagener  
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
P.O. Box 200701  
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Mr. Hagener:

Species: **bull trout** (*Salvelinus confluentus*)

This letter authorizes you and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks as subpermittees (subpermit TE-077533) to conduct the following activities in Montana, through February 28, 2006, to enhance recovery, survival and scientific research.

This permitted activity will benefit the species by providing specific information on effects of State regulated harvest on bull trout populations in Hungry Horse Reservoir and Lake Koocanusa to ensure maintenance of viable populations of bull trout in the identified water bodies. This information could be used to identify opportunities for bull trout sport fishing in other locations. The permitted activity will also benefit the species by increasing State interest and public support for management of stable bull trout populations in the identified water bodies, for restoration of bull trout habitat, and for other management activities that will increase the distribution and abundance of bull trout populations throughout the State.

The terms and conditions of this subpermit are based on the following season dates and limits as proposed by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks:

1. Hungry Horse Reservoir - Bull Trout: one daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May through August 15. Maximum two per angler per license year, catch card required. Number of bull trout harvested is estimated to be approximately 200 bull trout.
2. Lake Koocanusa - Bull Trout: one daily and in possession from June 1 through February 28. Maximum two per angler per license year, catch card required. Number of bull trout harvested is estimated to be approximately 760 bull trout.

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3. All bull trout caught at Hungry Horse Reservoir or Lake Koocanusa must be released immediately or killed and counted as the angler's limit. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.
4. South Fork Flathead river (mainstem upstream from Hungry Horse Reservoir) – Bull Trout: catch-and-release only from the third Saturday in May through August 15. All bull trout must be released immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### SPECIFIC PERMIT CONDITIONS

##### A. Catch Card Harvest Authorization

Under the terms of this subpermit, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is authorized to allow individual anglers to intentionally pursue and capture bull trout from Hungry Horse Reservoir, the mainstem South Fork Flathead River upstream of Hungry Horse Reservoir, and Lake Koocanusa, so long as the authorized angler is in possession of a Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks-issued bull trout catch card. In compliance with the legal State of Montana fishing regulations, each authorized angler may catch, kill, and possess up to two bull trout each license year (one daily) from Hungry Horse Reservoir and Lake Koocanusa, and may catch and immediately release bull trout (no possession) from the South Fork Flathead River.

- a. Authorized angler take is 300 fish from Hungry Horse Reservoir and 1,140 fish from Lake Koocanusa. This authorized level of harvest allows a maximum take 50% greater than the estimate provided by the Montana, Fish, Wildlife and Parks.
- b. A catch card issued by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks must include angler name, address and telephone number to allow follow-up survey.
- c. Upon legally killing a bull trout, the authorized angler must validate the catch card for the date, as required under the regulations, by following the instructions on the card.
- d. All anglers presented a catch card must also receive educational material explaining: (a) how to use the catch card; (b) that failure to properly validate the catch card, exceeding the limits specified in the regulations, or possession of a dead bull trout without validation of the catch card will be considered a violation of State fishing regulations and may be prosecuted as a violation of the Endangered Species Act; and (c) information aiding in the proper identification of bull trout.

##### B. Survey and Reporting

1. Upon initiation of the harvest fishery (May 15, 2004 in Hungry Horse Reservoir; June 1, 2004 in Lake Koocanusa) Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will begin regular field compliance checks as delineated in Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' research proposal.

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2. By December 31 annually, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will submit individual reports for Hungry Horse and Koocanusa Reservoirs providing (1) the results of the compliance checks, (2) results of formal surveys of anglers participating in these experimental bull trout fisheries, and (3) a detailed analysis of the catch and harvest survey, relating angling harvest to management-derived redd counts, gill-net surveys and other trend indices. Based on this report, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Service will mutually determine adjustment that may be required in the program.
3. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will submit a formal research proposal to the Service prior to the initiation of the fishery (May 15, 2004) that (1) describes the hypotheses that will be tested by the experimental fishery; (2) describe the study design and methods to be used for data collection and analysis of the results; and (3) discuss standards that will be adopted for accepting or rejecting the hypotheses.
4. The level of take authorized in this subpermit will be reevaluated, and the subpermit may be consequently amended, if any of the following conditions occur:
  - a. **Bull trout abundance indices, as demonstrated by redd counts, fall below levels that the Service considers necessary to ensure local bull trout populations will not be unacceptably impacted.** In making this determination the Service will recognize the range of natural variation and the occasional occurrence of anomalies due to poor counting conditions, unforeseen natural events, etc. The permittee is responsible for conducting the redd counts and furnishing results in a timely fashion to the Field Supervisor (see address above). The following predetermined levels, which are based on redd counts over the past 10 years, will trigger a review:
    - (1) Annual redd counts in the index areas of the four monitored Hungry Horse Reservoir tributaries (Wounded Buck, Wheeler, Sullivan, and Quintonkon Creeks) drop below 50 (cumulatively) or 5 (individually).
    - (2) Biannual redd counts in the index areas of any of the four monitored South Fork Flathead River tributaries (Youngs, Gordon, and Little Salmon Creeks; White River) drop below 50 per tributary.
    - (3) The combined total of biannual redd counts for all eight South Fork tributary index streams, drops below 250.
    - (4) Annual redd counts in the index areas of the Kootenai drop below 667 in the Wigwam River or 67 in Grave Creek. Note: these two streams best represent trends in the Lake Koocanusa core area, based on trapping and radio telemetry studies that indicate the fish in these two local populations are primarily adfluvial. Further, data from the Wigwam River indicate an average of 1.5 adults per redd. Hence, these thresholds represent minimum population levels of 1, 000 adults in the wigwam and 100 adults in the Grave Creek local population, consistent with standards for recovery in the Draft Recovery Plan.



TE-077533

## GENERAL PERMIT CONDITIONS

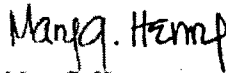
This subpermit is valid for the 2004 and 2005 license years, running from March 1, 2004 through February 28, 2006. If you wish to continue work with threatened or endangered species after expiration of this subpermit, your request for renewal of your subpermit must be received by the Permit Coordinator, Ecological Services, P.O. Box 25486, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225, telephone 303-236-7400, extension 227, on or before January 1, 2006.

2. All activities will be coordinated with the Field Supervisor, Ecological Services, 100 North Park, Suite 320, Helena, Montana 59601, telephone 406-449-5225. You are to inform that office of all activities under this subpermit.
3. A copy of permit TE-704930 is enclosed; the conditions of this permit must be adhered to. This letter and the enclosed copy of permit TE-704930 must be kept in the Helena Office of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks as well as in the Regional Offices in Kalispell and Missoula.
4. Any new activities or changes in activities will require that your subpermit be amended. You are not authorized to conduct any new activities or to change any permitted activities until you have requested and received an amended subpermit.
5. Annual reports of all activities conducted under the authority of this subpermit must be submitted to the Field Supervisor (see address above) by the dates specified in this subpermit.

TE-077533

Please reference subpermit TE-077533 when submitting reports or other correspondence regarding this subpermit. If you have any questions about this authorization or require further information, please contact the Field Supervisor (see address above), or his designated representative, Wade Fredenberg, Creston Fish and Wildlife Center, 780 Creston Hatchery Road, Kalispell, Montana 59901, telephone 406-758-6872.

Sincerely,



Mary G. Henry  
Assistant Regional Director  
Ecological Services

Enclosure

## **APPENDIX B**

### **2004 Bull Trout Permit Application**



## 2004 BULL TROUT PERMIT APPLICATION

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Issued \_\_\_\_\_

Permit # Issued \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

ALS number _____		MM		DD		YYYY		Your ALS # is your date of birth, followed by a one or two digit number and is printed on the top of all of your licenses. If the number does not correspond to your date of birth contact an FWP office. You must have a 2004 Conservation and Fishing License to be eligible for a permit.	
Name	First	MI	Last	JR,SR,ETC	Home Phone	( ) - ( )		Work Phone	( ) - ( )
Mailing Address _____									
City	State			Zip Code		Country			
						<input type="checkbox"/> USA <input type="checkbox"/> Other			

### PERMIT AREAS

(Choose 1, 2, OR all 3 areas)

To change or modify a permit, contact the FWP Kalispell Headquarters listed below.

- ☐ 1. LAKE KOOCANUSA (LK)  
☐ 2. HUNGRY HORSE RESERVOIR (HH)  
☐ 3. SOUTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER (SFF)

NO FEE

☐ RESIDENT

☐ NONRESIDENT

Administrative Rules of Montana prohibit the submittal of more than one application by an individual.

**X**

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT Original Signature Required Do Not Print  
(Faxed or photocopied signature not acceptable)

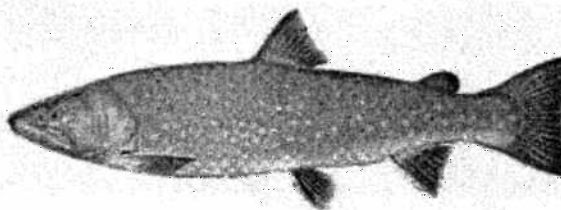
Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Please Remember:

1. This permit is non-transferable
2. The permit is valid through February 28, 2005.
3. Issued permit must be used with your current years Conservation license, Fishing licenses and Catch Card
4. Questions? call 406-752-5501

### Return completed application to:

Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
 ATTN: Bull Trout Permit  
 490 North Meridian Road  
 Kalispell MT 59901



IT MAY TAKE UP TO TWO WEEKS TO PROCESS YOUR APPLICATIONS

## **APPENDIX C**

### **2004 Bull Trout Catch Card**



# Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks

2004 BULL TROUT CATCH CARD #: B04B 000060

This catch card is only valid for the waters permitted on your FWP 2004 ALS Bull Trout Permit and Fishing License.

Lake Koocanusa (LK)		Two Per Season	
Zone	Length to nearest 1/2 inch	Month	Day
1			
2			

Zone A: Libby Dam to Tenmile Creek  
 Zone B: Tenmile Creek to Koocanusa Bridge  
 Zone C: Koocanusa Bridge to U.S./Canada Border

Hungry Horse Reservoir (HH)		Two Per Season	
Zone	Length to nearest 1/2 inch	Month	Day
1			
2			

Zone A: Hungry Horse Dam to Lid Creek Boat Ramp  
 Zone B: Lid Creek Boat Ramp to Graves Bay  
 Zone C: Graves Bay to Crossover Boat Ramp

South Fork Flathead River (SFF)			
Catch/Release Only			
Zone	Length	Month	Day
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Zone A: Crossover Boat Ramp to Meadow Creek Pack Bridge  
 Zone B: Meadow Creek Pack Bridge to Big Salmon Creek  
 Zone C: Big Salmon Creek to the confluence of Youngs and Danaher creeks

**THIS CATCH CARD IS NOT REPLACEABLE**  
See back side for general instructions and for additional information.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

To harvest bull trout in Lake Koocanusa or Hungry Horse Reservoir or when angling for bull trout in the South Fork Flathead River, you must have in possession a valid conservation and fishing license, with your bull trout catch card number, and this catch card.

IMMEDIATELY upon harvesting a bull trout from the permitted water (Lake Koocanusa and Hungry Horse Reservoir), you must record the required information in ballpoint pen (no erasures allowed) and cut out one triangle (notch) for each fish as indicated by the black arrow adjacent to the information required. Required information must be recorded for each bull trout caught and released on the South Fork Flathead River.

In addition to recording bull trout harvested, please keep records of bull trout that you release throughout the season and days fished (a fishing log would help). This information may be critical to maintaining a viable recreational fishery in the future. You may be contacted by phone or by mail throughout the season to assess these fisheries.

Regardless of whether you fish for bull trout, you must keep this catch card until your license expires or you are no longer going to fish for bull trout. At the end of the season (or earlier), you must mail this catch card to:

Montana FWP, 490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901

For seasons, restrictions and additional information, review the pamphlet included with this catch card or refer to the 2004 Montana Fishing Regulations. Pamphlets are available at the Region One Headquarters in Kalispell or at the Libby Area Office.

I certify that the information I provide on this bull trout catch card is true. I acknowledge that the bull trout permit was issued as requested.

Signature

**THIS CATCH CARD IS NOT REPLACEABLE**

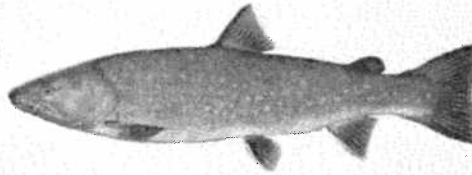
Contact the FWP Kalspell Office if you need a supplemental card for recording catch-and-release information on the South Fork Flathead River (406-752-5501).

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Bull Trout 2004 Regulations**



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**



## **BULL TROUT 2004 REGULATIONS**

Beginning in 2004, bull trout fishing will be permitted in four western district waters of Montana. These include: Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River, Lake Koocanusa and Swan Lake. All other waters in Montana are closed to intentional fishing for bull trout. These fisheries are very restrictive because bull trout are listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. It is hoped that this permitted activity will increase public support for management of stable bull trout populations, restoration of bull trout habitat, and for other management activities that will increase the distribution and abundance of bull trout populations throughout the state.

### **BULL TROUT CATCH CARD**

A FWP catch card is required and must be in the angler's possession while intentionally fishing for bull trout in the main stem South Fork Flathead River upstream of Hungry Horse Reservoir, and when fishing for or harvesting bull trout from Hungry Horse Reservoir and Lake Koocanusa. A catch card is not required for bull trout fishing on Swan Lake. Catch cards will provide FWP with critical management information obtained through follow-up surveys. Whether you fish for bull trout or not, your catch card must be mailed to FWP, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, MT. 59901, at the end of the fishing season, or sooner if you no longer want to fish for bull trout or your license has expired. You may be contacted either by phone or by mail during or after the season to assess these fisheries. You can help us better manage these fisheries by keeping accurate records while fishing for bull trout in these waters.

Catch cards must be individually validated for Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River, and Lake Koocanusa. Applications for catch cards are available through the FWP Region One Office in Kalispell or online at [www.fwp.mt.us](http://www.fwp.mt.us) for no charge. The card and your fishing license must be in possession at all times when on these waters and fishing for bull trout. Duplicate cards will not be issued, so take good care of your bull trout catch card.

Immediately upon harvesting a bull trout from the permitted water, or if releasing a bull trout in the South Fork Flathead River, you must record the following information in ballpoint pen on your catch card:

- Zone
- Length of bull trout to the nearest ½" (estimated length from the S. Fk Flathead River)
- Month of harvest
- Day of harvest
- Cut out one notch for each bull trout harvested from Hungry Horse Reservoir or Lake Koocanusa

Your catch card may not be transferred, borrowed, altered, or loaned to another person.

**Please Note:** Anglers that fail to properly validate their bull trout catch card, exceed the specified limits, violate the season restrictions, or possess a dead bull trout without a properly validated catch card, will be in violation of Montana fishing regulations and may also be prosecuted for violation of the Endangered Species Act.

**Remember: take a ballpoint pen with you when you go fishing for bull trout.**

Visit Our Web Page [fwp.state.mt.us](http://fwp.state.mt.us) 1



## SEASONS, LIMITS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR BULL TROUT

### Hungry Horse Reservoir

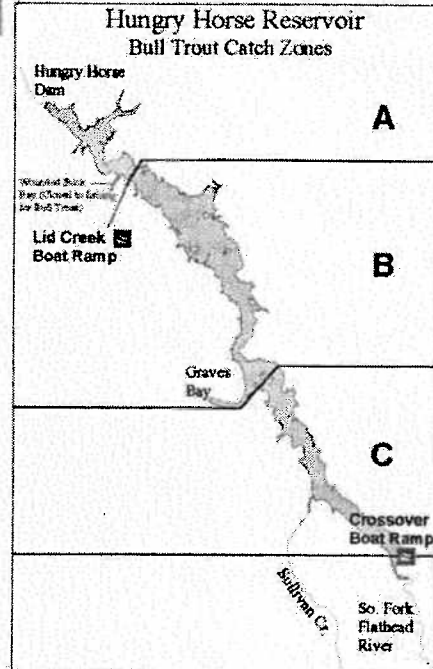
Wounded Buck Bay is closed to fishing for bull trout.

For purposes of this regulation, Hungry Horse Reservoir extends from Hungry Horse Dam south to the Forest Service Crossover boat ramp. The southern most boundary of the reservoir is a line extending due west from the Forest Service Crossover boat ramp. South of this line and upstream shall be considered the South Fork Flathead River.

One bull trout daily and in possession from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May through August 15<sup>th</sup>. A maximum of two per license year per angler may be taken from Hungry Horse Reservoir. Catch and release fishing only for bull trout from August 16<sup>th</sup> through the third Friday in May. A current Hungry Horse Reservoir Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit when harvest is allowed. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on catch card where bull trout was taken.

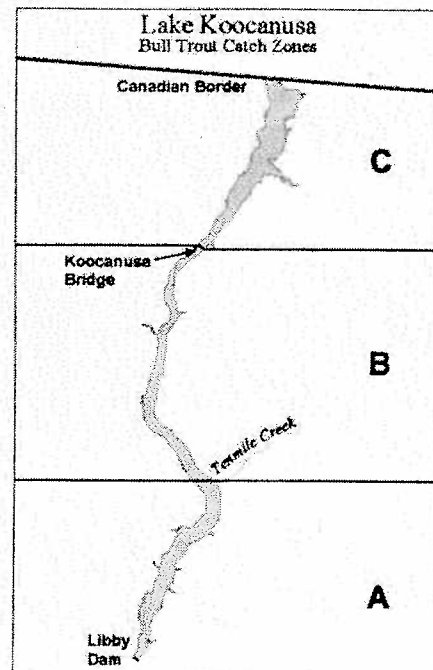


### Lake Koocanusa (Libby Reservoir)

One bull trout daily and in possession from June 1<sup>st</sup> through February 28<sup>th</sup>. A maximum of two per license year per angler may be taken from Lake Koocanusa. Catch and release only from March 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>. A current Lake Koocanusa Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit when harvest is allowed. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on catch card where bull trout was taken.



### South Fork Flathead River

For purposes of this regulation, the South Fork Flathead River extends from Crossover boat ramp south and upstream to the confluence of Youngs' and Danaheer creeks.

Catch and release fishing for bull trout from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May through August 15<sup>th</sup>. Closed to fishing for bull trout from August 16 through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in May. A current South Fork Flathead Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

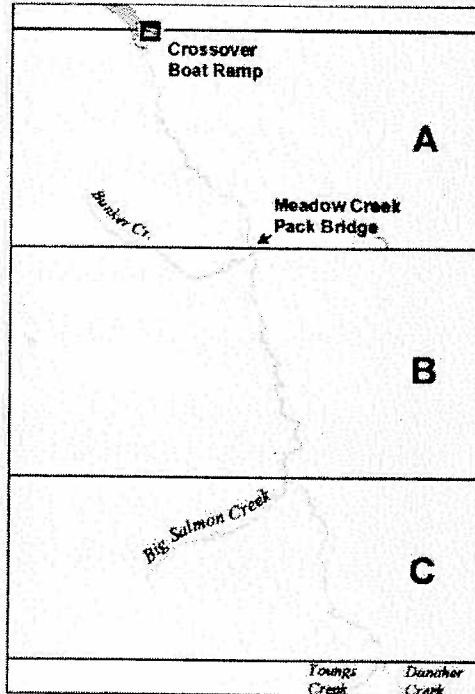
#### Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on catch card where bull trout was taken.

### Swan Lake

One bull trout daily and in possession. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason. Catch card not required.

### South Fork Flathead River Bull Trout Catch Zones



## CATCH-AND-RELEASE FISHING

Use of proper handling techniques will improve the chance of survival for any fish released. A fish that is released may still die from deep hooking injury, internal organ damage from being squeezed, bacterial infections resulting from loss of slime in the handling process, effects of physical stress from being played to long, heat shock, or lack of oxygen from being held in warm or poorly oxygenated water.

Anglers can help fish survival by using the following techniques:

- Fish with artificial flies and lures with single, barbless hooks to reduce fish injury and handling time.
- Play the fish as rapidly as possible to minimize exhaustion.
- Keep the fish in water when handling and removing the hook. Needle nose pliers or forceps are helpful.
- Remove the hook gently and do not squeeze the fish or place fingers in the gills.
- If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line leaving about 1" of leader. Do not pull the hook out, as it will degrade rapidly.
- Release the fish only after it has gained equilibrium. If necessary, hold it in a swimming position facing into the current or water moving it slowly back and forth until it recovers.
- Release the fish in quiet water close to the area where it was caught.

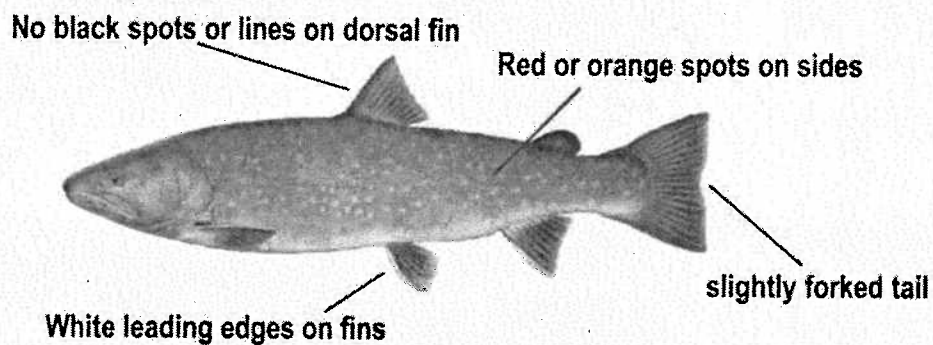
#### Lake / Reservoir Fishing From Boats

Fish caught from deep water may be unable to vent their air bladder and may "bloat". Puncturing the air bladder is not recommended. A simple release tool will facilitate releasing the fish in deep water recompressing it quickly. All you need is a 50-foot cord, a weight and a hook. Dull the hook, flatten the barb and attach the hook inline just above the weight with knots at the hook eye and bend. The hook should be pointing down toward the eye. Place the hook over the lower jaw of the fish and let the weight drop, pulling the fish down to depth rapidly. A tug on the cord will release the fish.

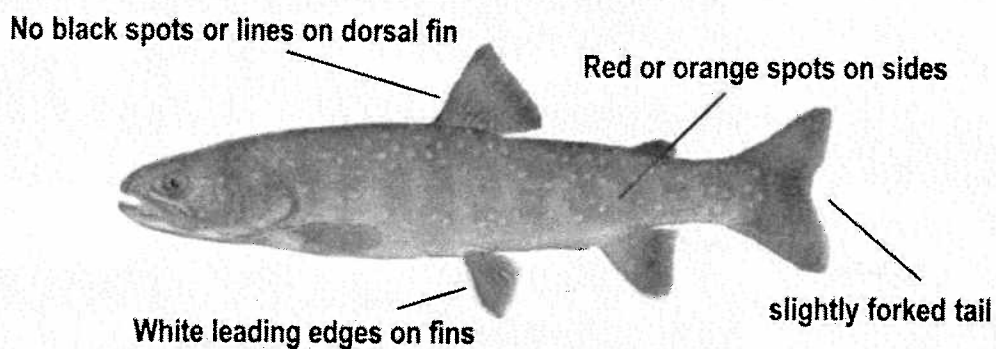
Visit Our Web Page [fwp.state.mt.us](http://fwp.state.mt.us) 3

## Bull Trout Identification Guide

**Adult fish, typically greater than 16"**



**Juvenile fish, typically less than 16"**



4 Turn in Poachers 1-800-847-6668

## **APPENDIX E**

### **2004 Bull Trout Angler Survey**



Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks

## 2004 BULL TROUT ANGLER SURVEY

Angler Our records indicate you were validated for recreational bull trout fishing in 2004 in the following waters:

Angler Name	Waters Validated
Catch Card #	

\_\_\_\_\_ I did not fish for bull trout in 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_ I did fish for bull trout in 2004. Please indicate the number of days you fished for bull trout in each water listed below.

Hungry Horse Reservoir \_\_\_\_\_ days

South Fork Flathead River \_\_\_\_\_ days

Lake Koocanusa \_\_\_\_\_ days

The Lake Koocanusa season is open through February, 2005. If you were validated for Koocanusa, do you intend to fish for bull trout between now and March 1, 2005? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have mailed your catch card to MFWP, please note the days you fished above and return this survey. If you still have your catch card and are through bull trout fishing, you can place it in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope along with this survey and you are done. Or you can enter your catch information below (list more on back if needed). **Please return this survey as soon as possible.**

	Date	Water	Zone Fished	Fish Length	Fish Released/ Harvested
sample →	7/15	Lake Koocanusa	A	21.5"	Released
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

These recreational bull trout fisheries are allowed under a special permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since the bull trout is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Your prompt and accurate reply will ensure the bull trout fisheries is properly managed and Montana anglers can continue to enjoy the unique recreational opportunity. Thank you.

JV126-04  
11/4/04