

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are the same fish species regulated differently in different areas of the park?

Park fishing regulations are designed to protect native fish and aquatic ecosystems, provide recreational opportunities, and also preserve the tradition of angling in Yellowstone.

Cutthroat trout, Arctic grayling, mountain whitefish, and other native fishes are important to the ecology of Yellowstone. Because cutthroat trout and Arctic grayling inhabit relatively shallow waters, many animals depend on them as a food source, especially during spring when the fish spawn in small lake inlets and tributary streams.

Angling is an important part of the park's cultural history. Nonnative trout are important to the angler experience in Yellowstone, but they contribute to the decline in the park's native cutthroat trout and Arctic grayling by competing for food and habitat, preying on native fish, and degrading the genetic integrity of native fish by hybridizing with them.

Yellowstone is making a substantial, on-the-ground effort to conserve native fish in several areas. These actions, which are currently focused



in the Lamar and Grayling Creek drainages and Yellowstone Lake, are described in the park's native fish conservation plan. Goals are to reduce the risk of extinction, restore and maintain the ecological role, and create sustainable angling and viewing opportunities for native fish.

Why can't we fish from Fishing Bridge?

Fishing Bridge, situated over a cutthroat trout spawning area, was once a popular place to fish. Declining numbers of cutthroat trout caused park officials to close the bridge to fishing to protect the spawning fish.

Why are barbless hooks required?

Barbless hooks reduce injuries and the time needed to handle fish, and improve the overall condition of trout in heavily-fished waters of the park.

Why is fishing lead-free in Yellowstone?

Lead is a toxic environmental contaminant. Wildlife such as waterfowl, cranes, and shorebirds, are vulnerable to lead poisoning. Of particular concern in Yellowstone are the alarmingly low populations of trumpeter swans and loons.

