

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date:

08/08/2025

ISSUE:	Should Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) prohibit fishing around the George Creek Fish Barrier?
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DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):

CPW is recommending a fishing closure on George Creek from the confluence with Sheep Creek upstream to the confluence with George Creek and Cornelius Creek to protect the future population of native greenback cutthroat trout (GBCT) from non-native fish introductions and whirling disease (WD).

Greenback cutthroat trout are a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need and are listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. CPW expends considerable resources to restore the species to its native range in the S. Platte Basin, which usually involves the construction of a barrier to isolate the headwater portion of a stream, followed by non-native trout eradication, and finally stocking of GBCT.



Following six years of phased non-native reclamation treatments in 14 miles of George Creek and Cornelius Creek, multiple rounds of intensive eDNA sampling suggest that brook trout and brown trout have been eradicated. George Creek will be stocked with GBCT as soon as possible, once whirling disease can no longer be detected in the system.

The fish barrier (i.e., artificial waterfall; photo above) was constructed in 2019 and is the only line of defense to prevent future invasion of non-native trout and WD. Due to increased interest by anglers in catching a pure GBCT, George Creek is likely to receive elevated fishing pressure once GBCT are stocked into the system. Knowing that anglers could catch non-native trout below the barrier and easily release them above the barrier, whether intentionally or not, it would be prudent to create a fishing closure above and below the barrier to prevent the release of non-native trout upstream of the barrier.

Restricting angling access below the barrier will also reduce the risk of spreading whirling disease back into George Creek, since the disease persists immediately below the barrier and can be transmitted on wading and fishing equipment. CPW intends to install signs informing anglers of the closure and potentially install boot-cleaning stations. Due to both of these concerns, we are recommending a fishing closure on George Creek, extending from the confluence with Sheep Creek upstream to the confluence with George Creek and Cornelius Creek.

STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:

***IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED*.**

[List stakeholder groups and briefly summarize comments received]

U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
CPW Area 4 and Aquatics staff

Public anglers	
CPW discussed the proposed regulation change at the following meetings: April 23 - Partners In The Outdoors Conference May 8 - Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery Team Meeting: This meeting of the Greenback Recovery Team signatory agencies (USFS, USFWS, NPS, and BLM) is open to stakeholders and includes representation from multiple chapters of Trout Unlimited May 22 - Rocky Mountain Flycaster Chapter of Trout Unlimited Meeting June 12 - Virtual meeting open to the public	
All comments received were understanding and supportive of the proposed regulation changes.	
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):	
1. *Preferred Alternative*: George Creek - Larimer County, Colorado. a. Artificial flies and lures only. b. ~~Cutthroat~~ Trout must be returned to the water immediately. c. From the confluence with Cornelius Creek downstream to the confluence with Sheep Creek: 1. Fishing is prohibited. 2. Status Quo - No Change George Creek - Larimer County, Colorado. a. Artificial flies and lures only. b. Cutthroat must be returned to the water immediately.	
Issue Raised by:	Aquatic Biologist Mark Sandersen
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):	
CC:	AWM Jason Surface, Assistant AWM Brandon Muller, DWM Brock McArdle, Kyle Battige
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:	Matt Nicholl
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?	YES
ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	YES
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION	NE Aquatics
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	NO

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date:

08/08/2025

ISSUE:	Should Colorado Parks and Wildlife change fishing regulations at Lake Granby, Grand Lake, and the Colorado River downstream of Shadow Mountain Reservoir to allow for harvest of any size and number of tiger muskie?
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):	
CPW staff is recommending that size and bag limits for tiger muskie (TGM) in Lake Granby, Grand Lake, and the Colorado River between Shadow Mountain Reservoir and Lake Granby be liberalized so that there is no size restriction or bag limit for the species. In 2023, CPW undertook a major change in the management of the fishery of Shadow Mountain Reservoir (SMR) in Grand County. TGM were introduced and the lake is not currently actively managed as a trout fishery. While TGM are expected to have a beneficial impact in SMR and provide a recreational opportunity unique to the area, this management approach is targeted at SMR specifically, and CPW has no intention of managing for a TGM fishery in nearby adjoining waters. No special angling regulations have been placed on SMR, therefore, by default, the statewide TGM harvest regulation (1 fish at least 36" in length) applies. Both Lake Granby below SMR and Grand Lake above SMR are not suitable habitats for TGM, and we are not managing for the species. However, there is connectivity between these lakes and SMR. Therefore, liberalizing bag limits will encourage harvest.	
STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER: *IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED*. CPW held a public meeting at the Grand Lake Community Center in Grand Lake on March 22, 2022 regarding the Shadow Mountain Reservoir tiger muskie project. The meeting was well-attended by public anglers as well as local business owners and fishing guides. There was a mix of support and opposition among attendees, with supporters holding a majority. The fishing guides in attendance were strongly supportive due to the possibility of a new and unique recreational opportunity. CPW also shared a Google form for public feedback and collected 108 responses, of which 67% were in support of the TGM project and 30% were opposed. CPW has repeatedly updated Northern Water Conservancy District and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, who own and operate SMR, as well as the U.S. Forest Service and Grand County. The water entities in particular are strongly supportive of the project due to the possibility of improving water quality and clarity by reducing the White Sucker population. Multiple stories have appeared in the Granby newspaper both advertising the public meeting and describing the stocking events. This proposed regulation change has been an element of the project since its inception. The delay in proposing it is due to the need for CPW to first verify that TGM were going to be viable in SMR, which is now known to be the case. CPW has issued a press release July 2nd, to seek additional public comments on these proposed changes.	
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):	
1. *Preferred Alternative*: Remove size and bag limits for tiger muskie in Lake Granby. Add to CPW Regulations #108(B)(95), (164), and (235) to read: 95. Colorado River, (North Fork) including Shadow Mountain Spillway - Grand County a. From Shadow Mountain Dam spillway to Lake Granby, including Columbine Bay to the Twin Creek inlet: 1. Fishing is prohibited from October 15 through November 30 2. There is no size, bag, or possession limit for tiger muskie.	

164. Grand Lake - Grand County

- a. The bag and possession limit for lake trout is four fish, only one of which may be greater than 36 inches in length. All lake trout between 26 and 36 inches in length must be released immediately upon catch.
- b. There is no size, bag, or possession limit for tiger muskie.
- c. Ice fishing shelters must be portable.
- d. Gaffs and tail snares are prohibited.

235. Lake Granby - Grand County

- a. The bag and possession limit for lake trout is 12 fish, only one of which may be greater than 24 inches.
- b. The bag and possession limit for trout (except lake trout) and kokanee salmon is four fish, singly or in aggregate.
- c. There is no size, bag, or possession limit for tiger muskie.
- d. Gaffs and tail snares are prohibited.
- e. Ice fishing shelters must be portable.
- f. In Columbine Bay from the inlet of Twin Creek upstream:
 - 1. Fishing is prohibited from October 15 through November 30.

Issue Raised by:	Jon Ewert (Area 9 Aquatic Biologist)
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):	
CC:	Clayton McCall, Jeromy Huntington, Ben Felt
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:	Matt Nicholl
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?	YES
ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	YES
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION	Aquatics
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	NO

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date:

08/08/2025

ISSUE:	Should fishing regulations on current native Greenback Cutthroat Trout waters, Herman Gulch and Dry Gulch, be changed to fishing is prohibited upstream of I-70 to protect declining populations?
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):	
Greenback Cutthroat Trout (GBCT) are listed as Threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and as a Tier 1 Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Colorado State Wildlife Action Plan. As a federally Threatened species, take or harvest is prohibited, but angling is allowable when deemed appropriate by the managing agency, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). To avoid the federal uplisting of this species to Endangered, CPW and the USFWS seek to recover this species by establishing self-sustaining populations within their historic range in the South Platte River Basin. Two such populations were established by stocking in Herman Gulch (stocked 2016-2019) and Dry Gulch (stocked 2017-2019). Both streams are relatively small in size, and are tributaries to Clear Creek along the Interstate-70 corridor approximately 50 miles west of Denver. Due to their small size and relatively short length, these streams are naturally limited in the number of trout they can support, but in the years since stocking, both streams have shown 1) growth and survival of stocked fish to adult life stages, 2) spawning by stocked fish that reached adult life stages, and 3) presence of naturally reproduced age-0 and age-1 fish in years after stocking had ceased. These observations collectively demonstrated the capacity of these streams to support self-sustaining populations of GBCT in the absence of continued stocking, and were accordingly left open to allow catch-and-release angling by fly and lure only pursuant to their Threatened status. After stocking ceased in 2019, estimates of density and total population size decreased in both Dry and Herman Gulches, but were relatively stable from 2020-2023. However, population monitoring conducted by CPW in 2024 showed a significant and concerning drop in those estimates for both streams compared to previous years. This species is already at risk of being up-listed to Endangered due to limited distribution and abundance. Angling pressure has increased over the years in both Dry and Herman Gulch as evidenced by hooking injuries in fish observed during CPW sampling efforts, along with increased correspondence with anglers who are planning to fish or have fished these populations. Current regulations prohibit the harvest of GBCT. Although the extent to which angling has contributed to population declines is unknown, CPW considers closing Dry Gulch and Herman Gulch to all angling upstream of Interstate-70 the most prudent management action to protect these populations. The proposed regulation change will remove fishing pressure from these GBCT populations and allow CPW and USFWS time to observe the population response to regulation changes.	
STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:	
IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED.	
[List stakeholder groups and briefly summarize comments received] U.S. Forest Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service CPW Area 1 and Aquatics staff Public anglers CPW discussed the proposed regulation change at the following meetings: March 31 - USFS Clear Creek Ranger District Meeting April 23 - Partners In The Outdoors Conference	

May 8 - Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery Team Meeting: this meeting of the Greenback Recovery Team signatory agencies (USFS, USFWS, NPS, and BLM) is open to stakeholders and included representation from multiple chapters of Trout Unlimited
 May 22 - Rocky Mountain Flycaster Chapter of Trout Unlimited Meeting
 June 12 - Virtual meeting open to the public

All comments received were understanding and supportive of the proposed regulation changes.

ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):

1. *Preferred Alternative*:

128.Dry Gulch – Clear Creek

- a. From the headwaters downstream ~~to the confluence with Clear Creek~~ to I-70:
 - 1. ~~Artificial flies and lures only.~~ Fishing prohibited.
 - 2. ~~Trout must be returned to the water immediately.~~

191.Herman Gulch – Clear Creek

- a. ~~Artificial flies and lures only.~~ From the headwaters downstream to I-70
 - 1. Fishing is prohibited.
- a. ~~Cutthroat must be returned to the water immediately.~~

2. Status quo – No change

129.Dry Gulch – Clear Creek

- a. From the headwaters downstream to the confluence with Clear Creek:
 - 1. Artificial flies and lures only.
 - 2. Trout must be returned to the water immediately.

3. Herman Gulch – Clear Creek

- a. Artificial flies and lures only.
- b. Cutthroat must be returned to the water immediately.

Issue Raised by:	Kira Paik (Aquatic Biologist), Matt Haworth (Aquatic Biologist), Joe Walter (DWM)
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):	
CC:	Mark Leslie, Mark Lamb, Kyle Battige
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:	Matt Nicholl
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?	NO
ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	YES
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION	Aquatics
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	NO

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date:

08/08/2025

ISSUE:	Should the special regulations, artificial flies and lures only and all cutthroat trout must be returned to the water immediately, be removed at Sloan Lake in Hinsdale County?		
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):			
Sloan Lake is a 4.1 acre natural lake located at 12,910 feet in Hinsdale County near Lake City, Colorado. Sloan Lake drains into the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River. The lake is located on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management and sees relatively high visitation due to its proximity to the popular Handies Peak (14,058) trail. Despite the high traffic, most visitors are interested in hiking one of Colorado's easiest 14'ers and not angling. The current regulations were established as part of an effort to conserve cutthroat trout in the upper Lake Fork. Sloan Lake has been periodically stocked with cutthroat trout since 1978. These fish are stocked for recreation and are not part of a conservation population. Although some natural reproduction may occur in the lake, the population is not likely self-sustaining as strong year classes correspond with aerial stocking events. Sloan Lake is currently managed as an optimal-use fishery (put and grow). The vast majority of optimal-use fisheries in the upper Gunnison basin and across the state are not managed with special regulations. The abundance and size of cutthroat trout in Sloan Lake are similar to those in other fisheries in the upper Gunnison basin. This regulation change will align the management of Sloan Lake with other recreational high-mountain lake cutthroat trout fisheries in the upper Gunnison Basin and statewide, simplifying regulations and expanding harvest opportunities for the angling public.			
STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:			
IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED.			
Aquatic Staff met with the Gunnison Chapter of Trout Unlimited on March 11th, 2025. One group member was concerned that this regulation change may lead to increased use and that there may be high mortality among fish released by bait anglers. The group felt that regular sampling after this regulation change is important to demonstrate that the fishery was not adversely affected. Note: None of the 12 Trout Unlimited members present had ever fished Sloan Lake. A press release was sent to the Silverton, Gunnison, and Lake City newspapers. CPW received no comments.			
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):			
1. *Preferred Alternative*: Remove special regulations from Sloan Lake and change to statewide bag and possession limit. SLOAN LAKE — HINSDALE 1. —Artificial flies and lures only. 2. 1. Cutthroat must be returned to water immediately. 2. *Status Quo*: Maintain current special regulations.			
Issue Raised by:		Giulio Del Piccolo (Area Aquatic Biologist) Lucas Martin (District 343 DWM, Lake City)	
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):			
CC:			
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:			Matt Nicholl
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?			NO

ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	YES
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION	Aquatic Branch
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	NO

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date: 08/08/2025

ISSUE:	Should CPW change the fishing closure date on Tenmile Creek and the Blue River upstream of Dillon Reservoir from September 1 to September 15?		
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):			
In 2023 CPW adopted an angling closure regulation from September 1 - December 1 on Tenmile Creek from the confluence of West Tenmile Creek to Dillon Reservoir, and on the upper Blue River from the crossing of Summit County Road 3 (Coyne Valley Road) north of Breckenridge to Dillon Reservoir to protect Brown Trout which migrate out of Dillon Reservoir to spawn. However, CPW has received some comments from the local angling public and fishing guides that the closure was too early, and there is still a lot of summer recreational traffic that occurs through Labor Day weekend. CPW staff view this concern as reasonable and valid. The peak of Brown Trout spawning activity in this area is often around or immediately after October 1. Therefore, CPW staff do not view changing the initiation of the closure date from September 1 to September 15 to be of significant biological consequence and agree that waiting until after Labor Day weekend for the closure to begin will be beneficial from the perspective of recreational opportunity and economic impact.			
STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER: *IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED*.			
The proposed change from September 1 to September 15th is in response to feedback CPW received after implementing the 2023 closure. CPW issued a press release to seek additional public comments on these proposed changes. As of July 9th, three emails were received in favor of the change, and one email was neutral.			
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):			
1.*Preferred Alternative*: 47. Blue River - Grand and Summit Counties a. From Summit Co Rd 3 (Coyne Valley Rd. 3 miles north of Breckenridge) downstream to Dillon Reservoir: 1. Fishing is by artificial flies and lures only. 2. All brown trout over 14 inches in length must be returned to the water immediately upon catch. 3. Fishing is prohibited from September 15~~4~~ – December 1. 426. Tenmile Creek - Summit County a. From the confluence of West Tenmile Creek near Copper Mountain downstream to Dillon Reservoir: 1. All brown trout over 14 inches in length must be returned to the water immediately upon catch 2. Fishing is prohibited from September 15~~4~~ - December 1.			
2. Alternative 2: Status quo			
Issue Raised by:		Jon Ewert (Area 9 Aquatic Biologist)	
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):			
CC:		Alex Strasser, Hannah Grimes, Jeromy Huntington, Ben Felt	
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:			Matt Nicholl
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?			NO
ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?			YES
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION			Aquatic Branch

RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	NO
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