

Fall/Winter 2012 Volume thirteen, no. 2



Cutthroat trout © Matt Ludin

Working to Save Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout

N YELLOWSTONE, MORE THAN 40 SPECIES OF WILDLIFE, INCLUDING BALD EAGLES, OTTERS AND GRIZZLY BEARS, DEPEND ON YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT AS A PRIMARY FOOD SOURCE. FOR CENTURIES, CUTTHROAT TROUT THRIVED IN YELLOWSTONE. AT ONE POINT, IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT MORE THAN FOUR MILLION YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT EXISTED IN THE PARK, THE MAJORITY FOUND IN YELLOWSTONE LAKE, WHICH WAS CONSIDERED THE LARGEST REMAINING CONCENTRATION OF CUTTHROAT TROUT IN THE WEST.

Over time, Yellowstone became a destination for fishermen. To support those enthusiasts, non-native lake trout were

introduced into a few Yellowstone waterways, with little thought to the potential impact on the ecosystem. Decades later, the consequence of that decision has been devastating.

Lake trout populations boomed by preying on the native cutthroat trout. The situation became a crisis in 1994 when a lake trout was discovered in Yellowstone Lake, and shortly thereafter, the Yellowstone cutthroat trout population plummeted. Biologists estimate that each lake trout eats 40–50 cutthroats every year. Yellowstone cutthroats—unique in the entire world—are now in very real danger of extinction.

"Left alone, lake trout would virtually wipe out all the cutthroat trout in Yellowstone Lake."

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

- ALDO LEOPOLD

said Todd Koel, Supervisory Fisheries Biologist at Yellowstone. "A major portion of the diets of several wildlife species in

Yellowstone historically consisted of cutthroat trout during critical times of the year."

Non-native lake trout are not an adequate food substitute for the species who eat cutthroats. The lake trout are too large, and live too deep in the lake, to be a food source.

In 2011, Yellowstone National Park launched the ambitious Native Fish Conservation Plan to decrease the number of predatory, non-native lake trout and restore entire tributary systems to native species only. With funding from the federal government and, as of 2012, the Yellowstone Park Foundation, the program targets lake trout with intensive gillnetting activities each summer. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

The YELLOWSTONE PARK FOUNDATION

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The Yellowstone Park Foundation works in cooperation with the National Park Service to fund projects and programs that protect, preserve, and enhance the natural and cultural resources and the visitor experience of Yellowstone National Park.



PEOPLE ARE
OFTEN SURPRISED BY
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DATION HAS FUNDED IN THE PAST 15 YEARS. One of the undertakings that has remained constant is our support of native fish conservation in Yellowstone.

After a decade of funding cutthroat trout research and restoration projects, in 2006 we created a half-million-dollar Fisheries Fund to ensure sustained support for these critical efforts. In addition, since 2003, we have sponsored the Fly Fishing Volunteers Program, and since 2009 the Stop Aquatic Invaders Program.

Earlier this year, we stepped up our support even further with a \$1 million gift, matched by federal funds, to increase the rate of removal of lake trout from Yellowstone Lake. In this issue, read

"It's not just about the fish: it's about the health of the entire Yellowstone ecosystem."

about why this activity is so essential to the survival of native cutthroat trout. And it's not just about fish: it's about the health of the entire Yellowstone ecosystem.

Also in this issue, meet YPF's newly elected Chairman, and learn about some additional ways you can support the ongoing protection and preservation of Yellowstone National Park. Your contributions, large and small, truly make a difference.

Karen Bates Kress
President

Foundation Welcomes New Chairman

THE YELLOWSTONE PARK FOUNDATION (YPF) IS PLEASED TO INTRODUCE OUR NEW CHAIRMAN, KAY YEAGER, elected this past May to lead our Board of Directors for the next two years.

The all-volunteer Board is responsible for the governance of the Foundation, including strategic planning, financial leadership, and approving grants to Yellowstone.

First elected to YPF's Board in 2008, Yeager has served as Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of the Grants Committee, and Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, which oversaw the development of a fiveyear plan for YPF in 2011 and 2012.

Yeager devotes much of her time to service in the public and private sectors. She serves as Chairman of the Sheppard Air Force Base Military Affairs Committee, and as an Emeritus member and Mentor of the Air Force Chief of Staff Civic Leaders Group—a group comprised of men and women representing the major commands of the Air Force.

She also has leadership roles on the boards of Presbyterian Manor, Perkins School of



Theology at Southern Methodist University, and Texas Methodist Foundation, among several others.

Yeager was formerly Mayor of Wichita Falls, Texas. The city is home to a 6,500-seat arena named after her: the Kay Yeager Coliseum.

She lives in Wichita Falls with her husband, Frank, who is a member of YPF's Advisory Council. They have been involved with YPF since 2003, and have been generous supporters of numerous wildlife and ranger-related projects.

(YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

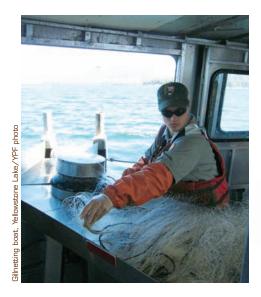


The Yellowstone Park Foundation (YPF) is leading a fundraising effort to implement Yellowstone's Native Fish Conservation Plan, and is partnering with other organizations—including Trout Unlimited, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, and the National Parks Conservation Association—to raise funds and awareness to address the plight of Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

In early 2012, YPF gave a \$1 million grant, matched with federal funds, to increase gillnetting this past summer with more boats and longer hours. The Native Fish Conservation Program has been successful, but it will take at least an additional five years and \$5 million in private funding to supplement federal funds and achieve the goals of the program.

"Through donations from the Yellowstone Park Foundation, we've been able to run better equipment, add more nets, and double our efforts with the assistance of private contractors," said Todd Koel. "We will only be successful by staying one step ahead of the lake trout, and support from donors is vital to do so."

With your help, YPF will continue to support the Park in the important work of restoring Yellowstone cutthroat trout and protecting the greater Yellowstone ecosystem.





Yellowstone Cutthroat in the Food Chain

According to biologists, the following native species in Yellowstone are either known to, or believed to, feed on Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

MAMMALS:

Water shrew Masked shrew Dusky shrew Deer mouse Red squirrel Uinta chipmunk Flying squirrel Muskrat 🚕 Ermine

Longtailed weasel Mink

Marten Striped skunk

Otter Wolverine

Badger Coyote

Bobcat Lynx

Cougar Black bear

Grizzly bear Raccoon

BIRDS:

White pelican Common merganser Blue heron California gull Eared grebe Loon Caspian tern Barrows goldeneye **Bufflehead** Western grebe Redtailed hawk Bald eagle



Double crested cormorant



Stellers jay Crow Raven

1 Learn More at www.ypf.org/trout

Yellowstone Lake Facts

Yellowstone Lake is considered by many to be the heart of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Under the surface, there are thousands of microbial species living off nutrients provided by hydrothermal features. These microbes feed larger aquatic organisms, which feed trout, which in turn feed numerous species of birds and mammals. Here are a few facts about the Lake:

- · Yellowstone Lake is the largest lake above 7,000 feet in North America.
- It measures 20 miles long (north to south) and 14 miles wide (east to west).

- It has 131.7 square miles of surface area and 141 miles of shoreline.
- The average depth is 140 feet, and the maximum depth is around 410 feet.
- The Lake's main basin is part of the Yellowstone Caldera, which was formed 640,000 years ago. West Thumb was formed by a later, smaller eruption.
- There are many geologic features on the floor of Yellowstone Lake, such as large hydrothermal explosion craters, siliceous spires, hundreds of hydrothermal vents and craters, active fissures, and gas pockets.

Donor Profile: Lara & Steve Compton

Planning a Legacy for Yellowstone



HEIR ROUTINE IS THE SAME EACH DAY: they awake before sunrise and drive from the lodge to the trailhead. Along the way, they spot creatures of the night, such as the great gray owl and the pine marten. They spend most of the day hiking, enjoying the solitude that can only be found on a mountain trail. Their afternoon "commute" often involves bison jams, but they don't mind. It sure beats a traffic jam in the city.

Such is a typical day in Yellowstone for Yellowstone Park Foundation supporters Lara and Steve Compton of Illinois. Every time they visit the Park, they make the most of their trip by doing what they like to do best: hiking the Park's 1,000+ miles of trails and viewing its abundant wildlife.

The couple, who have been visiting Yellowstone for around 20 years, have also traveled to many other beautiful places. Yet when they created their wills in 2007, they chose the Yellowstone Park Foundation (YPF) to receive a bequest. Why Yellowstone?

"We have experiences there we can't have anywhere else," explained Lara, "such as walking near Cascade Lake on a fall day, six inches of fresh snow, hearing the cacophony of sounds from a herd of 15-20 elk. Or seeing an oblivious antelope stroll right through a pack of wolves. It's an incredible experience to observe the same wildlife that we would have seen if we had been there 200 years ago."

Steve explained that leaving a legacy for Yellowstone was the logical extension of their Annual Fund support of YPF.

"Yellowstone is a unique, nearly unspoiled ecosystem. We read an article about wolverine research that YPF was funding," remembered Steve. "We have always been intrigued by wolverines and thought about how Yellowstone is one of the few places on earth that can host studies like that. All the research the Foundation funds—from wolverines to bats to bison—is the sort of thing we want to support."

"The legacy donations to YPF are well placed, because tax dollars will only go so far" added Steve. "Private contributions add value to that investment of our tax dollars. They make the dollars go further."

"Supporting YPF seemed like a natural fit for us," agreed Lara. "We can't be there physically every day to help care for the Park—to do the things that YPF can do—so this is how we show our support."

And while they are helping to care for Yellowstone, the Park returns the favor to them.

"In Yellowstone, we get away from hectic schedules, and reconnect with nature and each other. It restores our souls," said Steve.

"We want to be part of the longterm conservation and integrity of Yellowstone. I can't think of leaving a more significant personal legacy on earth after we're gone."

To learn more about planned giving, visit **www.ypf.org/plannedgift** or contact Janay Johnson at 406.586.6303 or jjohnson@ypf.org.

Adopt a Yellowstone Moose!

You can support
wildlife conservation
in Yellowstone
National Park with
the symbolic adoption of a Yellowstone
moose. This huggable
plush moose will
be sent to you, or
your gift recipient,
complete with a
personalized
"adoption certificate"



Learn more at www.ypf.org/adopt



New Guide to Yellowstone

THE YELLOWSTONE
PARK FOUNDATION
AND CORPORATE
PARTNER MICHELIN
NORTH AMERICA
teamed up to publish
a new 106-page

Yellowstone guide earlier this year.

The Yellowstone Park Foundation's Official Guide to Yellowstone National Park captures the magic of a visit to Yellowstone as only a Michelin Travel & Lifestyle publication can. It features carefully curated content that includes time-maximizing itineraries, insider tips from Park experts, reliable recommendations for sightseeing, and a reference section for lodging, dining and shopping.

Proceeds from the guide are benefiting the work of the Yellowstone Park Foundation. The guide is available for purchase for \$9.95 from Yellowstone gift shops and general stores, and online at www.yellowstonegift.com



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