

Fish Farm and Stocking Permit Requirements

Habitat Extension Bulletin

No. 44



Brook trout.

Angling is one of the most popular outdoor pursuits in the state of Wyoming. Over 100,000 residents fish Wyoming's waters each year. With proper management and care of our water resource, quality fishing will remain a part of our heritage for many years to come.

This bulletin provides residents with information on planting fish in private waters. Also included is permit and fee information for fish hatchery and fish preserve operation.

Fish Planting

Landowners may purchase fish from private

hatcheries to stock privately-owned waters they own. A list of disease-free private hatcheries within Wyoming is available from the Game and Fish Department.

Individuals wishing to stock private ponds or a section of stream flowing through private property may do so with proper authorization from Game and Fish Department headquarters in Cheyenne. The request form titled, "Application for Private Fish Plant" is available from Game and Fish district offices or department headquarters in Cheyenne.

Applicants must include the legal location of

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the pond or stream to be planted (range, township, section), desired species and size (catchable, sub-catchable, fingerling) of fish, and the name of the hatchery supplying stock material. Upon approval, written authorization will be issued by the department's chief of fisheries.

Fish Hatcheries and Fishing Preserves

Many residents may desire to carry their fishing interests one step further by raising fish for commercial purposes. Fish raising in Wyoming can take two forms: operating a fish hatchery, or managing a fishing "preserve."

Fish Hatcheries

A commercial fish hatchery is defined by Wyoming state statutes as an operation whereby fish are acquired, possessed, and raised for resale. Persons desiring to operate a commercial fish hatchery must obtain a fish hatchery operator's license from the Game and Fish Department for an annual fee of \$75. In addition, the operator must post a one-time \$500 surety bond.

Hatchery operators must secure approval from the department's chief of fisheries *each time* fish or fish eggs are imported or transferred within the state. Once approval is secured, an importation letter (available from the department) must accompany each shipment of fish or fish eggs into the state. Fish and/or eggs acquired from a source other than the department or the federal government must be inspected by an authorized agent to confirm healthy stock before permits to ship across state lines will be approved.

A letter of authorization must accompany each transported load of live fish, and/or game tags must be attached to shipments of dead fish. Game tags are available from the department,

and strict tag records must be maintained by the hatchery owner. A certificate of sale (provided by the department) must be issued to each purchaser of fish and/or fish eggs upon delivery. Monthly reports listing the sales and exchanges of fish from the hatchery may be required by the Game and Fish Department.

In conjunction with hatchery operations, the owner can operate one (1) catch-out pond, not to exceed 10 acres in size. A fee may be charged to those persons desiring to fish the pond. Fishermen are not required to possess a state fishing license when angling on catch-out ponds, but anglers removing fish from the property must obtain a receipt to verify the source of the fish in possession.

When applying for a commercial hatchery license, request the form titled: "Application for Commercial Hatchery License."

Fishing Preserves

A fishing preserve is similar to a fish hatchery as fish are acquired, possessed, and reared at the site. However, the primary reason for a fishing preserve is to provide angling opportunities for fishermen. The yearly preserve license fee is \$50, and unlike a fish hatchery, operation of a fishing preserve requires no surety bond.

To qualify for fishing preserve designation, the water body must be *man-made*, less than 101 acres in size, and lie entirely within privately-owned property. Two or more ponds under one ownership, supplied by a common water source, and located on one continuous parcel of land are considered one body of water and require only one license. Ponds not meeting this criteria require additional licenses. It is unlawful to establish fishing preserves by damming and impounding natural streams, natural ponds, or





One of the most important parts of hatchery management is control of disease. State hatchery stock is regularly tested for diseases that might threaten fisheries. Permits for sale and transport of fish are also intended to protect Wyoming from fish diseases and unwanted species. Walleye (previous page) and rainbow trout (above) are routinely raised and stocked in Wyoming.

waters without proper permits from state and federal agencies.

When applying for a preserve license, the applicant must list the species of fish to be stocked and their source. Like fish hatcheries, permission must be secured from the Game and Fish Department *each time* fish are transferred within the state or imported from out-of-state.

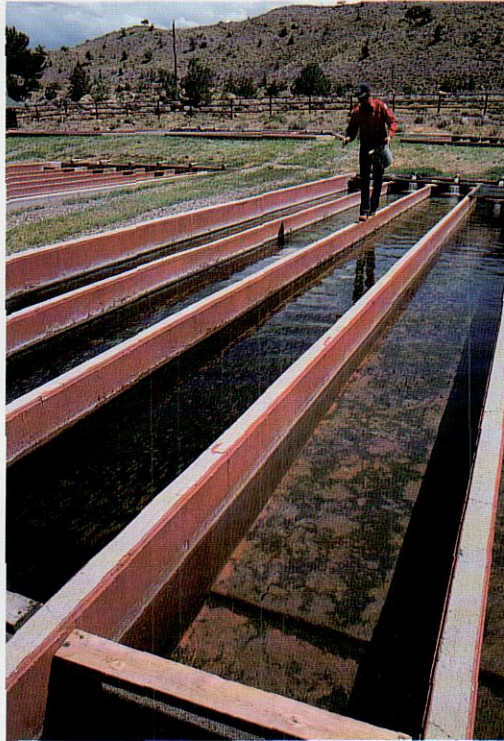
The licensee may charge a fee for angling at the preserve, or, if operated as a club, dues may be charged. A state fishing license is not required for persons angling on a preserve. However, a receipt for fish removed from the pond must be issued to verify catch location.

When applying for a fishing preserve license, request the form titled, "Application for Fishing Preserve License." Request forms are available from Game and Fish district offices, or department headquarters in Cheyenne.

Other Restrictions

Anyone raising or stocking fish should be aware of some additional restrictions imposed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

1. No person shall plant or release any fish or fish eggs in any public waters of Wyoming without the consent and under the supervision of the Game and Fish Department or its authorized personnel.
2. The importation of the following species is prohibited:
 - Lampreys (Petromyzontidae)
 - Freshwater Stingray (Polamotrygonidae)
 - Freshwater Shark (Carcharhinidae); Genus *Carcharhinus*
 - Bowfin (*Amia calva*)
 - Gars (Legisosteidae)



Feeding trout in outdoor raceways.

- European Whitefish (Cyprinidae) Genus (*Leudiscus*)
- Banded Tetra (Characidae) (*Astyanax fasciatus*)
- Piranha Subfamily; Serrasalminae, Genera *Serrasalmus*, *Serrasalmo*, *Pygocentrus*, *Teddyella*, *Rosseveltiella* and *Pygopristus*
- Candiru or Carnero (Cetopsidae and Trichomycteridae)
- White Perch (Percichthyidae) Species *Morone americanus*
- Freshwater Drum (*Aolcadinotus grunniens*)
- Grass Carp (fertile) (*Ctenopharyngodon idellus*)
- Pike Top Minnow (*Belonesox belizanus*)
- Snakehead (Ophichthidae) Genus *Ophiocephalus* and *Channa*
- Walking Catfish (Clariidae) Genus *Clarias*, *Heterophneustes*, and *Dinotopterus*
- Tiger Fish (*Hoplias malabaricus*)

Other Information

Send your requests for information and applications to:

Chief of Fisheries
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
State of Wyoming
Cheyenne, WY 82006

Persons desiring specific information regarding Wyoming fishing rules should consult the fishing regulations available from any Wyoming Game and Fish Department office.

Written by Evin Oneale, through the Wyoming Cooperative Fishery and Wildlife Research Unit.

This publication is one in a series of habitat extension bulletins produced by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Call 1-800-842-1934 for additional information or assistance.

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