

Comments:
(See Above)

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? None___ Minor__x__ Major

Comments:
(See Above)

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location? None___ Minor__x__ Major

Comments:
None of the ponds has a substantial and/or perennial water source flowing into it, so spawning would appear highly unlikely.

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked?

Yes.

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

Possibly, there are a considerable number of fishponds in the Bitterroot drainage. While these ponds could have some impact, the cumulative effect of all ponds is unknown.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action).

The proposal to have this private fish pond will require the stocking of fish. The application is for rainbow trout.

Alternatives are to stock other species of trout, which would include Brook, Brown, and Cutthroat trout.

Brook trout - not presently allowed by MFWP policy.

Westslope cutthroat - The westslope cutthroat that are commercially available do not originate from the Bitterroot and have a different genetic makeup than bitterroot fish. Therefore the potential for them to jeopardize the genetics of the native cutthroat is the same as that of rainbow trout.

Brown trout- Present in the East Fork below the mouth of Cameron Creek, but not common. They tend to be highly predacious.

A "no action" alternative would be a legitimate consideration, since the population of westslope cutthroat in the upper reach of the drainage has been found to be genetically pure. But since escapement is highly unlikely, the threat to this population is minimal.

Describe and evaluate mitigation, stipulations, or other control measures enforceable by the agency, if any.

Water for this pond is supplied by run-off and springs. The pond outlet should be screened, and outflows will be minimal, but there is always the possibility of escapement.

Current laws regarding the transfer of live fish from one water body to another govern the legality of movement of fish planted in this pond to other waters. This movement of fish to other waters would be enforceable under this regulation.

List any other agencies or individuals that may be affected by the proposed introduction:

Bitterroot National Forest

List all agencies and individuals who have been notified of this proposed introduction:

Bitterroot National Forest

Based on this evaluation, is an EIS required? Yes/No If no, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

No

The proposed action occurs on private lands but impacts could occur to a public resource. This issue can be handled at the EA level

EA prepared by Larry Javorsky, acting Fisheries Biologist: 06/15/00

Comments will be accepted until July 15, 2000

Comments should be sent to: Larry Javorsky
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