

LAKE TROUT RECOVERY IN MOBERLY LAKE (PEACE REGION)

Moberly Lake is a large, deep lake located between the communities of Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope. Historically, lake trout in Moberly Lake have formed an important fishery for both First Nations and recreational anglers. These large-bodied fish routinely exceeded 20 lbs with at least one record of a fish approaching 60 lbs. However, anecdotal observations suggest that lake trout catch rates have declined significantly over the past 20-30 years.

Since 2002, the Ministry of Environment has been working in partnership with the Saulneau and West Moberly First Nations to address the declining catch rate. Our findings indicate that the Moberly lake trout have been overfished and are now at critically low levels, despite nearly ideal habitat conditions.



32 lb. lake trout about to be radio-tagged and released back into Moberly Lake

Tom Hale

The elimination of the lake trout harvest in 2005 was a key step towards the successful recovery of these fish in Moberly Lake. To further ensure this objective, the Ministry of Environment has implemented further restrictions in 2008 for recreational anglers, and will continue to engage First Nations and appreciate their support. To protect spawning lake trout, the lake will be closed to all fishing from September 15th through October 31st. Ministry biologists will be monitoring the population response and evaluating whether or not further action is required.

If you would like more information on the status of lake trout in Moberly Lake or the recovery efforts, please contact the Fish & Wildlife Regional Office in Fort St. John at (250) 787-3411.

PROPOSED PROVINCIAL LAKE TROUT REGULATIONS An Update

In the 2007/08 edition of the synopsis, the Ministry of Environment invited anglers to provide feedback on proposed provincial lake trout regulation changes. Thank you to everyone who submitted comments.

In order to allow time for further data analysis, assessment of management options, and feedback, the Ministry is postponing a decision on this matter. Please visit our website for more information about the proposed provincial lake trout regulations, including additional opportunities for public input.

Feature Articles from Past Editions of the Synopsis

These have been posted on our website for on-going reference.

Please go to: www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/regulations/archive.html

- **Fish from the Past Given a Future** (1999) – white sturgeon studies and recovery programs
- **Provincial Stocking Programs Provide Recreational Opportunities for Anglers** (1999)
- **Regulations Can Improve the Quality of Fishing Experiences** (1999)
- **Fishing Opportunities in the East Kootenay** (2000) – highlights various fisheries in all 4 seasons
- **Age Restricted Waters** (2001) – names the 21 waters set aside for anglers under 16, 65 or older, or disabled
- **Fraser River White Sturgeon by Rick Hansen** (2001) – describes the recovery effort
- **Kokanee Increasing in Size and Numbers** (2001) – the fertilization program in the Arrow Lakes reservoir
- **Wild Fish Culture Program** (2003) – an important component of the province's integrated approach to fisheries management
- **Pygmy Whitefish Research in the Williston Watershed** (2004) – learn about a lesser-known fish species
- **Reservoir Restoration** (2004) – aquatic restoration programs in two of the Lower Mainland's reservoirs have benefited fish populations
- **Single Barbless Hooks Mandatory in All B.C. Streams** (2004)
- **2005 – The Centennial Year of the Conservation Officer Service** (2005) – celebrate the history of B.C.'s Conservation Officer Service
- **Caring for your Lake** – what lakeshore property owners should know about conserving fish habitat during land development (2005)
- **Ice Fishing** – how to get the most out of winter fishing (2005)
- **Stickleback Species Pairs** – Part of B.C.'s Unique Aquatic Biodiversity – two co-existing species live in 6 B.C. lakes (2005)
- **How to Find Fish in Small Lakes** (2006)
- **British Columbia's Lampreys** – learn more about these strange eel-like fish (2006)
- **Proposed Provincial Lake Trout Regulations to Ensure Sustainable Fisheries** (2007)