• Plan ahead and prepare
  - Know the local fishing and boating regulations, https://wgfd.wyo.gov/
  - Plan your trip to avoid times of high use.

• Travel and camp on durable surfaces
  - Enter and leave water at places where the banks are low or where there are gravel bars.
  - Concentrate use on existing trails, campsites and boat launches.

• Dispose of waste properly
  - Avoid using lead sinkers.
  - Pack out all monofilament fishing line, leftover live bait, and bait cups.

• Leave what you find
  - Use barbless hooks when practicing catch and release.
  - Do not transfer fish from one watershed to another.

• Minimize campfire impacts
  - Use a lightweight stove for cooking

• Respect wildlife
  - Never feed wildlife. It damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
  - Control pets or leave them at home.

• Be considerate of other visitors
  - If listening to speakers keep the volume low or wear headphones, let nature’s sounds prevail.

Visit Int.org for more information

Contact Us

Forest Supervisors Office
2013 Eastside 2nd St.
Sheridan, WY 82801
307-674-2600
https://www.fs.usda.gov/bighorn
Twitter (@BighornNF)
Facebook (US Forest Service – Bighorn National Forest).

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Bighorn National Forest
Fishing 2023
Trout are the most common type of fish in the Bighorn National Forest. Most lakes and streams are open to year-round fishing. However, access may be affected by seasonal closures, depth of snow or road conditions. Contact the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for current fishing orders and licensing regulations.

Check out the Wyoming Game and Fish Department’s (WGFD) interactive fishing guide for specifics on where species can be found in the Bighorns:

**Rainbow Trout** – are native to waters west of the continental divide, the rainbow has been introduced to the Bighorns. This fish gets its name from the brilliant reddish "rainbow" streak found on its sides. The streak of colors varies according to the season and the water in which the rainbow lives. Rainbow spawn in the spring.

**Brown Trout** - were imported from Europe in 1883, and are now scattered over much of the United States. Brown trout have a higher tolerance to altered stream and lake conditions, such as slightly warmer and muddier waters, than other trout. Fall or winter is the usual spawning time and the eggs hatch in the spring. Browns have light colored spots which are often surrounded by a “halo” and flat tails.

**Brook Trout** - are native to the Northeastern United States, the Great Lakes, and parts of Canada and were introduced to the Bighorns. Depending on water conditions, brook trout spawn from September to December and their eggs hatch in the spring. White edging followed by a black line on the leading edge of the lower fins is a common identifying mark. Black vermiculations, or "wormy" markings on top of the back extending into the tail also distinguish the brook trout. The tail is either flat or very slightly forked (unlike lake trout).

**Lake Trout** - also known as Mackinaw, lake trout are Wyoming’s largest trout. Lake trout preferer deep lakes (30 to 150 feet). Lake trout spawn in the late fall in lake shoal areas. They are a dusky gray color, darker above than below, and have mottled sides with gray spots. Leading edges of the pectoral, ventral, and anal fins are whitish, but have no black borders as do the brook trout. Usually there are spots on the tail and the tail is forked.

**Golden Trout** – are stocked in some high mountain lakes in the Bighorns. Golden trout are an introduced species from California. They are spring spawners and prefer mountain lakes.

**Splake** - are a cross between brook trout and lake trout, splake are used in high mountain lakes to help control over-abundant brook, grayling or sucker populations. Splake grow larger than brook trout and their markings are similar to both brook and lake trout.

**Grayling** - Grayling are best recognized by their large, bright colored dorsal fin. This fin is larger on grayling than on other similar fish.

**Mountain Whitefish** - usually occur in deep swift areas of larger streams. Whitefish spawn in the fall, have longer scales than trout and small mouths. They feed primarily on insects.

Marked Fish: If you catch a fish that is tagged, please send the tag data to Wyoming Game & Fish Department, 5400 Bishop Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82006, stating when and where caught, length, and weight. This will aid in fisheries management.

**Cutthroat Trout** - are Wyoming’s only native trout species and named for the blood-red marking on the lower jaw. Cutthroat are affected by non-native introduced species that out compete them for resources. Current restoration efforts are underway to restore cutthroat populations in the Bighorn National Forest. The Forest is home to two varieties of cutthroat, the Snake River and Yellowstone (Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri). Cutthroat trout spawn in the spring and summer, from April into August, depending on water temperature.

Cutthroat Trout - Courtesy WGFD