

WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

Mike Sullivan, Governor



Francis Petera, Director

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October 6, 1994

Mr. John Keys
Regional Director
Bureau of Reclamation
1150 North Curtis Road
Boise, ID 83706

Dear John:

I wanted to take this opportunity to clarify our agency's recommendations for Jackson Lake water level management objectives for the nonirrigation season.


From a broad perspective, it is important that lake levels remain as constant as possible during the fall and winter to minimize potential negative impacts to lake trout spawning and egg incubation. Minimizing impacts to this resource is important because the lake trout fishery in Jackson Lake is supported almost entirely by natural recruitment.

Although we have conducted some studies of lake trout spawning in Jackson Lake, our knowledge of spawning patterns in the lake is incomplete. Based on what we do know, however, a five foot reduction in the lake level between October and April will not significantly affect the majority of spawning in the lake, under most circumstances. This is especially true in years when the lake is near its normal fall elevation.

We are hopeful that studies can be done in the future to add precision to our ability to predict the impacts of reservoir drawdowns on lake trout spawning; but, have no plans to initiate such studies at the present time. If the situation warrants, this may be an area in which we can conduct a cooperative study with your agency. Until such studies are done, however, we recommend that lake levels be administered to limit drawdowns to five vertical feet or less between October 1 and March 31.

If you have any questions or comments about this recommendation, please don't hesitate to contact either my office or Mr. John Kiefling, Area Fisheries Supervisor in our Jackson regional office.

Best Regards,


Joseph R. White
Deputy Director

cc: Gordon Fassett
John Kiefling