



WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

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April 14, 2020

WER 14407.00
Bridger-Teton National Forest
Silver Lake Dam Geotechnical Survey Scoping
Sublette County

Patricia O'Connor
Forest Supervisor
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001,

Dear Ms. O'Connor,

The staff of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Department) has reviewed the proposed Silver Lake Dam Geotechnical Survey Scoping located in Sublette County. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

Silver Lake is located in the East Fork River drainage and has two major tributaries, the North Fork Silver Creek and South Fork Silver Creek. Silver Lake dam is located on the North Fork Silver Creek which flows directly into Lower Silver Lake and eventually enters Silver Creek. Silver Lake is an important and popular recreational lake. Brook Trout were stocked in 1926, and continue to provide a popular fishery. Silver Creek is one of the few streams in the Pinedale Region that supports a population of Flannelmouth Suckers. Juvenile suckers were found in this drainage in 2006. Other native fish species found in Silver Creek include Mottled Sculpin and Mountain Sucker.

Our resource concerns associated with this project include potential impacts to streams, riparian areas, wet meadows, and the lake, along with direct impacts to amphibians, fish and wildlife. Road or trail construction and improvements should be designed and completed in a manner that minimizes soil erosion, prevents silt loading to streams, and avoids destruction of riparian and wetland habitat and function. We recommend avoiding wet meadows and minimizing stream channel crossings and use in riparian areas. Equipment staging areas should avoid perennial and ephemeral drainages and activities in riparian and aquatic areas should be minimized. We recommend holding or hobbling stock in less sensitive areas to minimize concentrated impacts to vegetation and soils. Any supplemental feeding should abide by regulations for weed-free feed. Disturbed areas should be reseeded with native vegetation, and monitored and treated for any weeds and invasive species.

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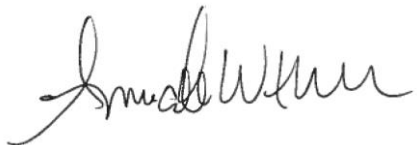
Historic data indicate that the flow regulation from Silver Lake was unpredictable and that occasionally North Fork Silver Creek went dry. If flows can be better regulated as a result of this project, we would like to work with the irrigation district and the Forest Service to maintain a minimum flow in North Fork Silver Creek to benefit the native fish species in the Silver Creek drainage.

The spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) from one body of water to another is a violation of state statute and Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Regulation. To prevent the spread of AIS, the following is required:

1. Equipment that was in contact with a water positive for zebra/quagga mussels (currently none in Wyoming) within the last 30 days, is required to undergo inspection by an authorized inspector prior to contacting a Wyoming water.
2. From March through November, all equipment entering the state by land must be inspected before contacting a water of the state.
3. Equipment used in any Wyoming water that contains AIS, must be Cleaned, Drained and Dried before use in another water. Wyoming waters with AIS can be found at: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Fishing-and-Boating/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Prevention/AIS-Boating-Information>.
4. When equipment that has been in contact with any Wyoming water is moved from one 4th level watershed (8-digit Hydrological Unit Code) to another within Wyoming, they must be Cleaned, Drained and Dried (specific guidance is available at: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Fishing-and-Boating/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Prevention/AIS-Construction-and-Fire>

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Hilda Sexauer, Pinedale Region Fisheries Supervisor, at 307-367-4352.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Withroder', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Withroder
Habitat Protection Supervisor

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AW/mc

cc: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Hilda Sexauer, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Brandon Scurlock, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Chris Wichmann, Wyoming Department of Agriculture