

Contact information:					Please comment on the 2023-26 Fish Removal Projects.
Name:	Company:	City/Town:	State/Province:	position	Open-Ended Response
Dillon Martini		Plains	MT	support with implementation suggestions	I am not familiar with all of the proposed waterbodies. I understand these projects are based on recommendations of biologists, as they should be, and as such, I am overall in favor of these projects, however, I believe that each project should be scrutinized from the standpoints of: what is the chance of a single successful treatment? What is the cost to the taxpayer? How high is the likelihood that invasive species will come back into the stream section or lake? Will this project make a measurable difference to native species restoration? I believe we commonly implement projects strictly from the standpoint of "native species are better for the environment." While this is commonly true, sometimes I think after 100 years of the invasive species being present, it has become endemic, food webs have shifted to accommodate the species, and we are only upsetting the environment again by changing it all over again. Sometimes we need to accept the loss and let the system recover on its own. In regards to the high mountain lakes slated for brook trout removal, I think many of these lakes provide very valuable sporting opportunities, and I think poison should only be utilized in situations where it is absolutely necessary to protect downstream native populations, and we know for a fact that the invasive fish species have not already moved downstream to the native populations. Basically, in summary, I believe we should scrutinize each project and not blindly implement projects in an attempt to restore native fish populations in environments that have already reached an equilibrium. I support native fish restoration in water bodies where the chance of success is high.
Beth Gardner		Kalispell	MT	Supprt	I reviewed each project and I support them all. I am pleased to see FWP take bold steps to conserve native fish and recreational fishing opportunities.
Stephen J Christian		Colstrip	MT	Support	I support the FWP's fish removal projects.
Hugh Zackheim		Helena	MT	Support	I support the fish removal projects proposed for 2023 - 2026 and request that the Commission authorize these projects to move forward. These projects represent some of our best remaining opportunities to secure the future of Montana's native trout in headwater streams.
LaVerne Sultz		Kalispell	MT	Support	The Flathead Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited would like to express support for the 2023 Fish Removal Projects. We have reviewed the projects proposed for Region 1 and the Flathead River Basin and we support moving forward aggressively with those projects in particular. It is the responsibility of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to "restore habitats and spawning areas and reduce species competition in rivers, lakes and streams for Montana's native fish species". Our chapter is concerned that we are seeing an increase in both legal and illegal introductions of invasive fish species and it becomes harder to remove or mitigate for these nonnative populations and in some cases their survival is aided by the changing climate. Flathead waters in particular provide incubators for invasive fish that are moving downstream into Idaho and the upper Columbia River. We must do all we can to disrupt and remove populations of illegal fish. These projects are small individually, but they provide an opportunity to disrupt and in some cases remove direct threats to our native fish populations. Thank you for your work and we fully support the work of the Department in protecting and restoring our native fish. Lucky Sultz Conservation Chair Flathead Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited
CURTIS PICKERING		PLAINS	MT	Support	I approve the fish removal projects proposed for 2023 to 2026
J. W. Andes		Lincoln	MT	Support	I strongly support the fish removal proposal. By creating strong, genetically pure populations in upper watersheds, we can help ensure Montana's special fish are here for generations to come

Dan Crockett	Missoula	MT	Support	Dear Commissioners, Please consider this a strong vote of support for all the Proposed Fish Removal Projects up for consideration for 2023-2026. I love fishing for Montana's wild brown, rainbow and brook trout as much as anyone, and have done more than my share of it over the past 34 years. But there is a bit of magic in catching the native cutthroat, bull trout and grayling that were here when Lewis and Clark came upriver—and for thousands of years before. As stream temperatures continue to rise and non-native species penetrate farther upstream, protecting genetically pure populations of Montana's original trout and grayling will become an increasingly valuable investment in the future of both those native fish and the waters that sustain them. Preserving our heritage through these projects is a small but meaningful way to ensure the fish and wildlife treasures of Montana remain the greatest in the Lower 48. I'm in favor of every one of these projects but want to put in a specific plug for Falls Creek. As a longtime staff member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, I was lucky enough to be part of securing a strategic parcel that permanently protected upper Falls Creek and its forks as national forest and opened it—along with 27,000 acres of wild country—to the public. I've fished that water a good bit and caught some gorgeous rainbows and brook trout. But it will be even finer when those are instead big westslope cutthroats. With a 60-foot vertical waterfall providing a natural barrier to non-native fish, this is an ideal spot for restoring the original natives. Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment.
Fred Lowenfels	New York	NY	Support	I strongly support the fish removal projects proposed by the Commission. These are science based projects that make a lot of sense. I don't live in Montana, but I visit at least once a year to fish in the many beautiful rivers in the state. I support the guide and hospitality industry while visiting. So these projects are important to me as they are for other visiting sports people. Please approve the projects- all of them!
Bridgar Hill	Livingston	MT	Support	I SUPPORT all Fish Removal projects. Westslope cutthroat trout, Yellowstone Cutthroat trout, Arctic grayling, and Bull trout need to be in higher numbers for everyone to be able to catch one of these beauties. They make for an incredibly unique experience in Montana.
Kathy L Knudsen	MISSOULA	MT	Support	As a former fish geneticist, I know how important it is to maintain the genetic purity of our native trout species. I support the removal of non native trout.
Jerry McGuire	Thompson Falls	MT	Oppose?	Big Rock Creek and Murr Creek, I would think this will not work because of the FWP planting Brown Trout in the main Thompson, that will always be moving I to these drainages. FWP would have to deal with this non-native population first then worry about tributaries to the main Thompson.
Byron McBride	Billings	MT	Support	This is always a difficult decision to kill fish. However, what we are really doing here is correcting the unintended consequences of our previous generations intentions to create a better fishing experience for Montanans and visitors to our state. These actions have nearly destroyed our native fisheries. I am a fifth generation Montanan and do not take these proposed projects lightly. I do believe they are necessary and we do now have data on the successful outcomes of previous projects. These projects will greatly benefit our future generations in my opinion.
Sharon Sweeney Fee Rochelle Gravance	Livingston Columbus	MT MT	Support	I am in full support of these evidence based scientific plans.
David C Duffy	Butte	MT	Support	In favor of fish removal projects with the tools of use being predominantly angling regulations and electrofishing. Removable and temporary fish barrier development should be considered a priority. I am not in favor of using chemicals as the first tool.
Gina Deem	Clancy	MT	Support	I am in favor of these projects
Loren Graham	Helena	MT	Support	Approve
			Support	I support removing non-native species from Montana streams in order to reestablish native cutthroats. I am a long-time fly fisherman and member of Trout Unlimited. Non-native species have been introduced in the past for reasons that well-meaning people thought were good. But no one realized that our native fish would be out-competed and destroyed by the newcomers. I want cutthroats to have a chance to continue as our native fish, and that's why I support removing other species in selected streams—to give the cutts a chance! LG

Connor Parrish	Livingston	MT	Support	Hello Commissioners, I am reaching out to express my support of all the 26 fish removal projects and the various methods used to remove undesirable species. Reestablishing and protecting existing native cutthroat trout populations should be a priority for FWP. I love catching rainbow and brown trout but there is something extremely special about catching a native fish. When fishing the Yellowstone I prize catching a big cutthroat trout over any other fish. Knowing that these fish were encountered by Lewis and Clark and have been here for thousands of years just means more than catching a fish that was introduced. When I take people who are new to fishing out on my boat and we catch a cutthroat it provides a great opportunity to teach them about the importance of native fish and all the successful conservation efforts that have enabled these fish to persist in spite of all the challenges they have encountered. Having native fish demonstrates that Montana cares about their fish, rivers, and a future where anglers can experience the excitement of landing a beautiful cutthroat trout. Thanks for taking the time to read my comment and for all the work you do for the people of Montana.
John Applegate	Bozeman	MT	Support	I fully support the named fish removal projects and methods as a necessary means of aiding the health of individual species as well as the rivers and lakes supporting those fisheries. Thank you. John Applegate
Doug Baranek	Helena	MT	Other	Please provide the analysis completed for prior projects. I would like to see how success or failure is measured for these projects.
Paul Burns	Bozeman	MT	Support	Removing nonnative fish will help our native cutthroats.
Thomas Sabol	Missoula	MT	Support	Please vote to support these proposed actions to support native Montana trout species. Creating protected pockets in higher portions of watersheds helps to ensure longterm viability of native salmonid populations.
Jeff Harrison	Dillon	MT	Oppose	I fish several of the streams mentioned in the Big Hole drainage. This provides food for my family. In my experience some of the streams that have been poisoned in the Reservoir creek area have little no fish to be caught and fish cannot be eaten when caught due to protection. It seems a shame to get rid of fishing for two years at a minimum (likely much longer). Nothing seems less "natural" than poisoning a stream.
Paul Stantus	Libby	MT	Oppose	I strongly object to poisoning the Upper Vermilion River. I camp in the upper Vermilion and fish it. There are many tributaries that feed into it, all of which have brook trout. They cannot possibly poison all the tributaries and eliminate brook trout. What good can possibly come out of it? This project is not thought out and is a failure before even starting. The FWP wants all brook trout exterminated. It is all for their plan of the way things should be, with no concern for Montana sportsmen that pay their salaries.
Sam Larson	Gillette	MT	Support	I support removal of exciting, non-native trout species to protect native fish species. I personally love catching, looking at, and eating brook trout. My issue is when all you can catch is the natives and you aren't allowed to keep them. My hope is that once these fish are doing better and non-natives are under control, that you can keep a limit of the native trout. I don't see why hybrid cutthroat trout in the flathead are an issue. I trust the judgement of fwp. In your fish control or removal methods table, under disadvantages of piscicides/chemicals, you need to include the potential temporary loss of fishing opportunity.
Jared West	Stevensville	MT	Oppose	Please do not use chemicals to get ride of a certain fish. All it does is kill off non targeted species. Besides, every angler I know loves catching brown, brook and rainbow trout. Instead raise the harvest limit for the brook trout. Thank you
Connor McHugh	BELGRADE	MT	Support	I support these projects and am in support of the departments goals to return native WCT populations. In addition to being the native species, WCT provide one of the best sport fishing opportunities out there. I also like the idea to improve conditions for bull trout by reducing competing or interbreeding species. These restrictions will cause minimal direct impact to me however I would sacrifice years of fishing to meet these objectives.
Troy Heiser	Belgrade	MT	Oppose	To whom it may concern, it is hard for me to fathom that we are bringing 2023-2026 fish removal projects up for comment again. I do not agree with having separate limits on Canyon ferry Lake and the Missouri River to Toston. The slot limit that was proposed should stay The same on the Missouri river as it is on Canyon ferry lake. Once again common sense logic and reasoning has escaped the The personnel at Montana fish wildlife and parks we as tax paying citizens of the great state of Montana would appreciate if you would stop wasting our hard earned tax dollars. so in conclusion if you could direct our hard earned tax dollars to a project worthy of our money and time that would be greatly appreciated. Troy Heiser sixth generation Montanan
Matthew Kilsdonk	Butte	MT	Support	I support the removal of fish species to make room for natives. funding should be toward public land use primarily then if budget allows on private.

chuck hazlett	butte	MT	Oppose	you guys are ruining many opportunities for kids fishing. Quit spending money to kill fish it is mind blowing to me. You have already ruined all fishing in the millcreek watershed. These creeks with brooke trout are where many kids learn to fish. PLEASE DONT DO THIS!
Paul Stantus	Libby	MT	Oppose	There should be some feedback on the success or failure of these fisheries removal projects to the commission. A great failure that was covered up was the rehabilitation of Handkerchief Lake in Flathead County. Rehabilitation was done 4 or 5 years ago ruining a world class grayling fishery of 16-18 inch grayling. The department misled the public on how they were going to reintroduce the grayling. There is no report on on how the other backcountry lakes in the Flathead basin have fared following the poisoning and restocking efforts. It is evident the FWP fisheries has no concern for sportsmen catching fish. They are only concerned about purifying our lakes and streams with fish that they think we should have.