

# BLACK HILLS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN

## WHY IS A FISHERIES PLAN NEEDED?

The purpose of this plan is to guide fisheries management based on the missions of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP). This plan is a dynamic tool addressing the issues, challenges and opportunities in managing the Black Hills Fisheries Management Area (BHFMA). The Issues section lists the current issues involving fisheries for this management area. The Objectives sections lists measurable and time-bound objectives, along with specific strategies. Progress towards meeting these objectives will be evaluated prior to developing subsequent plans.

## MAJOR ISSUES IDENTIFIED FOR BLACK HILLS FISHERIES

- » Shore fishing opportunities on small reservoirs are limited due to siltation and vegetation.
- » Many small reservoirs are over 80 years old, degraded, and unable to provide quality fisheries.
- » The effectiveness of stocking larger rainbow trout to reduce mortality due to northern pike predation has not been evaluated.
- » Existing information on the lake trout population is insufficient to evaluate stocking success, reproduction, and regulation effectiveness.
- » High use during summer by various user groups at reservoirs leads to conflict, impaired access, and the potential for lower overall angler satisfaction.
- » Sedimentation from land use practices negatively impacts habitat quality and fish populations in Black Hills streams.
- » Adult trout habitat may be limited in some streams, limiting fish population quality.
- » Extremely high and low water releases from Pactola and Deerfield Dams negatively impact downstream trout populations.

## OBJECTIVES ADDRESSING SOME OF THESE ISSUES

- » Improve shore fishing access on a minimum of two small reservoirs.
- » Estimate angler use and satisfaction on a minimum of five small reservoirs.
- » Determine effects of stocking larger (15 inch) rainbow trout in Pactola and Deerfield Reservoirs.
- » Determine return rates to anglers of hatchery-reared rainbow trout on a minimum of five small impoundments by 2023.
- » Complete a fish habitat renovation of Stockade Lake.
- » Complete at least one in-stream habitat project on a secondary watershed (i.e. non-Rapid and Spearfish Creek watersheds).
- » Improve instream habitat and flow conditions in at least two sections of Rapid or Castle Creeks.

## STRATEGIES TO ACCOMPLISH THESE OBJECTIVES INCLUDE:

- » Use vegetation removal and dredging and add fishing piers to small reservoirs to improve shore access, focusing on Iron Creek Lake, Strawberry Hill Pond and Reausaw Lake.
- » Complete angler surveys at Sunday Gulch Pond, Grace Coolidge Ponds, Reausaw Lake, Silver City walk-in fishery, Kinney Canyon walk-in fishery and Sturgis Reservoirs.
- » Conduct a study of effects of stocking large (15 inch) rainbow trout on return rate to anglers, angler satisfaction and fish communities in Pactola and Deerfield Reservoirs.
- » Evaluate stocking strategies for put-and-take trout stockings in small reservoirs including, but not limited to: Bismarck Lake, Horsetheif Lake, Iron Creek Lake, and Dalton Lake.
- » Develop and implement an aquatic habitat renovation plan for Stockade Lake including increasing in-lake structure (e.g. gravel bars, woody debris), dredging, draw downs and aeration, etc. based on cost and available resources.
- » Engage Rapid Creek water users and managers about maintaining adequate winter flows for trout below Pactola Reservoir.
- » Develop and submit two stream habitat proposals for prioritized sites in Rapid and Castle Creeks.

## YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Go to [gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions/](https://gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions/)

Enter your information, select Black Hills Fisheries Management Plan and enter your comments.

