

Adaptation in the fly fishing outfitting/guiding industry



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Hoot-owl restrictions begin Thursday on Bitterroot River

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About 55 miles of the Bitterroot River will be under hoot-owl restrictions as of Thursday. (Martin Kidston/Missoula Current)

Warm water temperatures have triggered “hoot-owl” fishing restrictions, beginning Thursday, Aug. 3, on the Bitterroot River from Veterans Bridge on Highway 93 just north of Hamilton downstream to the confluence with the Clark Fork in Missoula (approximately 55 miles).

Hoot-owl restrictions close fishing from 2 p.m. to midnight.



Montana Water
Summit

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The screenshot shows the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks website. The browser address bar displays 'fwp.mt.gov'. The page header includes 'MONTANA.GOV OFFICIAL STATE WEBSITE' and navigation links for 'SERVICES' and 'AGENCIES'. The main title is 'Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks'. A navigation menu contains links for Home, Hunting, Fishing, Recreation, Fish & Wildlife, Education, Enforcement, Regions, Doing Business, News, and MyFWP. A breadcrumb trail reads: 'You are here: Home » News » News Releases » Headlines » Yellowstone River Closed In Response To Ongoing Fish Kill'. The article title is 'Yellowstone River Closed In Response To Ongoing Fish Kill'. The date is 'Friday, August 19, 2016'. The text states that Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is implementing an immediate closure of all water-based recreation on the Yellowstone River and its tributaries from Yellowstone National Park's northern boundary at Gardiner to the Highway 212 bridge in Laurel. This action is necessary to protect the fishery and the economy it sustains. The closure will also help limit the spread of the parasite to adjacent rivers through boats, tubes, waders and other human contact and minimize further mortality in all fish species. In the past week, FWP has documented over 2,000 dead Mountain Whitefish on some affected stretches of the Yellowstone. With that, FWP estimates the total impact to Mountain Whitefish in the Yellowstone to be in the tens of thousands. FWP has also recently received reports of the kill beginning to affect some Rainbow and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout. Test results from samples sent to the U.S. and Wildlife Service Fish Health Center in Bozeman show the catalyst for this fish kill to be Proliferative Kidney Disease – one of the most serious diseases to impact whitefish and trout. The disease, caused by a microscopic parasite, is known to occur in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. It has been documented previously in only two isolated locations in Montana over the past 20 years. Recent outbreaks have occurred in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. In trout, research has shown this disease to have the potential to cause 20 to 100 percent mortality. The parasite does not pose a risk to humans. The effect of the disease on Yellowstone's fish populations is exacerbated by other stressors like near record low flows, consistent high temperatures, and the disturbance caused by recreational activities. FWP Director Jeff Hagener says in coming to the decision, the Department had to weigh the totality of the circumstances and risk to the fishery.



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PROHIBITED

**ALL WATER BASED RECREATION USES OF THE
YELLOWSTONE RIVER UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE**

**PER AUTHORITY OF MONTANA FISH &
WILDLIFE COMMISSION**



*Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks*



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Challenges and Changes include

- Earlier runoff
- Lower peak runoff
- Higher water temperatures by ^{Sea} mid-season
- Sharing resources with other water users
- Impacts from invasive/nuisance species



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Current adaptation strategies include

- Changes in scheduling (both seasonal and daily)
- Improved and timely communication with clients
- Closely monitoring flows, ^{Sea}temperatures to anticipate restrictions, closures
- Diversifying client experiences
- “Guides for Conservation” training program



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