By Roger Wilson
DWR Wildlife Biologist

As many anglers are now aware, new fishing regulations will take effect at Strawberry Reservoir beginning January 1, 2003. The regulations will require that anglers release all cutthroat trout from 15 to 22 inches in length. While anglers will still be allowed to keep a total limit of 4 fish (all species), they may have only 3 cutthroat in their possession including 2 cutthroat under 15 inches and 1 cutthroat over 22 inches. The new regulations do not impose any additional restrictions, and the use of legal baits will still be allowed at Strawberry Reservoir.

The mechanism of regulation change was a long and arduous process which involved many public meetings, inter- and intra-agency coordination, media involvement, and input from organized angler groups and individuals. The Strawberry Anglers Association played a key role in the final proposal. The SAA has become a very effective and influential organization and has made a real difference in the management of this important fishery.

The rationale for the regulation change at Strawberry was widely discussed and well publicized during the public review process. It is based on the observation that current levels of angler harvest are cropping off most cutthroat individuals before they reach the size necessary to become effective predators. Strawberry presently sustains an estimated 1.4 million hours of angling pressure and Utah’s anglers harvested 380,000 trout and salmon during 2001. Long-term creel data suggest that cutthroat harvest has increased every year since the 1990 treatment. Current growth data suggest that cutthroat do not reach 18 inches until the fall of their 4th year, by which time they have faced two to three summers of exploitation. It is clear that the current 18 inch size restriction is not affording adequate protection to the larger, mature cutthroats.

Good populations of large cutthroat are critical to maintaining a productive sport fishery at Strawberry. Utah chub are becoming more prominent in the fishery, and this nuisance species presently comprises about 33 percent of the reservoir’s biomass. Bear Lake cutthroat co-evolved with Utah chubs in their native habitats, and biologists believe they will thrive and effectively utilize chubs for food, once they have grown large enough to prey on them. It will take 3 to 5 years to determine if increased numbers of larger cutthroat will stabilize the chub population at

For the past several months biologist Roger Wilson has been busy getting the word out about Strawberry’s new regulations.

Only one cutthroat trout over 22 inches can now be kept.
Bruce Reynaud - SAA Volunteer of the Year

By Val John Halford

Coordinating hundreds of hours of volunteer work is no easy task, but Bruce Reynaud is capable of the challenge. Acting as the SAA Volunteer Work Director, Bruce acts as a critical liaison between our Association and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Organizing help for gill net surveys, fish plantings, spray marking, and special projects requires a dependable individual who is willing to devote a significant amount of time. For his dedication and invaluable contribution to the success of SAA, Bruce was recently honored as the SAA’s Volunteer of Year For 2002.

Born and raised in Provo, Utah, Bruce began fishing Strawberry Reservoir in 1950 at the age of five. Over the years, he has developed a close relationship with this wonderful resource. On one particular cold morning in December 1985, while fishing near the East Portal, Bruce hooked and landed an enormous 9 lbs. rainbow that measured 28 inches long. He caught this trophy trout from his float tube using an olive-colored wooly bugger. His appreciation of Strawberry spans five decades of plentiful, and sometimes not so plentiful fishing. Outside of periodic forays to Island Park Reservoir and Henry’s Lake in Idaho, and bonefishing in Belize, Central America, Bruce enjoys his recent retirement pursuing Strawberry’s bounty from the deck of his new boat.

Shortly after the organization of the Strawberry Anglers Association in June 1997, Bruce met Jim Carter at an annual fish fry and joined our ranks. Shortly after, Bruce willingly assumed the position of the Association’s Volunteer Work Director. The leadership and members of the SAA gratefully acknowledge this good man and his contribution to the continued health and vitality of Strawberry. According to Bruce, “We are the caretakers of Strawberry Reservoir, not only for our time but, hopefully, for generations to come.” Congratulations, Bruce, on a well deserved award and thank you for your good work.

By Val John Halford

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Your Strawberry Anglers Association (http://www.strawberryanglers.com)

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The “Berry” Good News

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Next SAA Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 7
6:30 p.m.
Work Force Services Building
5735 S. Redwood Road

Speaker
Larry Tullis
Renown angling author and expert fishing guide

Page 2 THE “BERRY” GOOD NEWS
Association Activities in Review - 2002

By Jim Carter

The Strawberry Anglers Association enjoyed another very productive and busy year in 2002. Volunteers members participated in a number of important activities. I would like to express my appreciation to the SAA membership for their time and effort in making the future of Strawberry a bright prospect.

The rechannelization and stream bank restoration of the Strawberry River took place in July and August. Assisting the US Forest Service and the DWR, SAA volunteers helped to reroute the Strawberry River, restore and stabilize its stream banks, and reconstruct approximately 60 yards of boardwalk between the USFS Visitor’s Center and the Strawberry fish traps. The project finished on time and under budget.

Also in August, the SAA held its 5th annual Barbeque and Fish Fry at the Strawberry Bay Marina. The celebration and party marked the 80th birthday of Strawberry Reservoir. We invited the Chloe and Frank Madsen family to attend and presented them with a plaque for all they’ve done to develop the sport fishery at Strawberry.

The Strawberry Anglers Association helped with the 2nd annual Friends of Strawberry “Wildlife Festival” held in September at Daniels Summit Lodge, the USFS Visitor’s Center, and the Strawberry Fish Trap. This year’s attendance marked a substantial increase over last year’s.

Finally, this year the Association worked hand in hand with the DWR and was actively involved in revising Strawberry Reservoir’s fishing regulations for 2003. This change will help protect large cutthroats, control the chub population, and increase the natural spawn to protect the fishery for years to come. In addition to the changes made to fishing regulations that govern specific waters, such as the changes to the bag limit at Strawberry Reservoir, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has made several changes to the General Provisions of the 2003 Fishing Proclamation. These changes include: “License, Permits, And Stamps - A person (resident or nonresident) under 14 years of age may now take a full bag and possession limit.” Prior to this change, a 14 year old angler had the option of taking one half a bag and possession limit when in the company of a licensed adult, or purchasing a fishing license and taking a full bag and possession limit.
By Kayla Willey

Given the new fishing regulations at Strawberry Reservoir, proper catch and release of fish is critical to the health of the fishery. Many conservation-minded anglers take pride in releasing fish unharmed. Anglers are now required to release all cutthroat trout between 15 and 22 inches at Strawberry. Unfortunately, research indicates that many fishermen do not know how to properly catch and release fish. Perhaps you will find the following techniques in releasing fish helpful:

- Use barbless hooks.
- Land the fish as quickly as possible.
- Avoid using a landing net. Nets, especially knotted ones and those made of coarse nylon, can remove the fish’s scales and skin.
- Wet your hands before handling a fish.
- Keep your hand out of the fish’s mouth and NEVER touch its gills.
- Keep the trout in the water while releasing it, especially if the water is over 65 degrees.
- Use forceps or hemostats to remove the hook.
- When removing the fly or hook, try not to remove the fish from the water.
- If the hook is deep in the fish, cut the line as close to the eye as possible. The hook will either dislodge or dissolve over time.
- If you wish to photograph your catch, have the photographer prepare the camera and the shot before you pick up the fish. Take the photo quickly and keep the trout out of the water less than 15 seconds.
- Revive the fish if necessary when releasing it. To revive the fish, hold the fish face-forward to a moderate current, and gently move it forward and back to increase the flow of water into the gills.

The next step after knowledge is practice and the more you concentrate on proper release techniques the better you will get at it. I wish everyone great fishing with lots of opportunities to practice proper fish releasing techniques.

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**STRAWBERRY REGULATION AND CUTTHROAT CATCH AND RELEASE HISTORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF STRAWBERRY RESERVOIR FISHING REGULATIONS - 1991-2001</th>
<th>CUTTHROAT CAUGHT</th>
<th>CUTTHROAT RELEASED</th>
<th>PERCENT RELEASED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>General 8 fish limit. Voluntary catch and release of cutthroat.</td>
<td>86,464</td>
<td>36,315</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>General 8 fish limit. Voluntary catch and release of cutthroat.</td>
<td>96,485</td>
<td>45,348</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>General 8 fish limit, only 1 cutthroat. Required release of all fish under 8 inches. Voluntary catch and release.</td>
<td>189,174</td>
<td>94,587</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>No change.</td>
<td>494,213</td>
<td>301,470</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Limit of 4 fish, any species, only 1 trout over 18 inches. Required release of all fish under 8 inches. Voluntary catch and release.</td>
<td>455,775</td>
<td>237,003</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Limit of 4 fish, any species, only 1 trout over 18 inches. Voluntary catch and release.</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>No change.</td>
<td>755,773</td>
<td>370,329</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2001 Creel Census Report & Regulation Assessment, Presentation by Roger Wilson and Alan Ward
“The Strawberry I Remember”

By A. Gean Snow

Part Two of Three

I am lucky because I have been in the sporting goods and fishing tackle business for many years. I have used the information of many fishing areas from members of hard core fishing staffs, and I can enjoy in a vicarious way my customer’s knowledge and experiences. These information sources, combined with many years of personal fishing, have allowed me to keep learning.

I was introduced to float tube fishing in the late fifties by a fishing friend of mine named Kay, who was very instrumental in establishing this type of fishing in Utah. Our initial experiences with float tubes consisted of a tube covered with canvas and two holes to put your legs and feet through. The result was basically a crude combination of a canvas covered truck inner tube, chest waders that would fit our altered and improvised fins for propulsion, a life preserver of some type, and for me, a small prayer at each launch.

One morning, our favorite time to fish the East Portal, after launching our tubes and quietly finning our way out in the cold waters of the bay, we heard the sound of muffled voices from a small trailer on the shore. As we continued to fish, a lady opened the door to throw out some dishwater and noticed us in our tubes in the slowly dawning light. I heard her speak as clear as a bell as she said, "Dad, come out here and look at this!"

The gentleman of the pair emerged, and for the next several minutes as they prepared to launch

their small boat, they discussed how we were able to be where we were. The man said, “I just know the water is not that shallow where they are fishing!” The man shouted at us, “Are you standing on an island or something?”

We did our best to try to explain the float tubes and how they worked. Despite these explanations, they were so puzzled I finally offered to have them watch as I pumped back to the shoreline, slowly backed into shallow water, and walked onto the shore. With the tube around my middle, bulky waders, flapping fins, net and life preserver dragging from the tube, I am sure I must have looked very strange. They fished only a little while talking in hushed tones, until eventually they rowed to shore, packed up, loaded their boat, and left without another word. I am sure we were the subject of many conversations around a lot of campfires and cabins because of that pair’s experience.

New Trout Book Worth a Look

America’s trout anglers will be delighted to know that a new, authoritative, and handsomely illustrated book on trout and salmon is available. *Trout And Salmon of North America* brings together the world’s foremost authority on salmonids with the finest, most detailed illustrator of these beautiful fish. Dr. Robert J. Behnke has brought his more than 50 years of studying and fishing for salmon and trout to wonderful effect. He provides readers with a masterful compendium of the evolution, biology, ecology, habitats, and behaviors of these prized game fish. More than 100 full color illustrations of trout and salmon by Joseph Tomelleri are showcased, exhibiting a genius for detail, coloration, and proportion. Each portrait is made from field notes, streamside observations, photographs, and specimens collected by the artist. The result is the most scientifically accurate and stunning illustrations of trout and salmon ever created. The book includes fishing lore and notations that describe the best flies, bait, and lures for specific types of fish and locales.
The Fall 2002 gill netting was accomplished over the period of October 9-15. Roger Wilson and I would like to thank all of those who volunteered their services in this effort. The bulk of the data analyses have not been completed to date, however, some preliminary results are provided.

The percent of total biomass (weight) of game fish (cutthroat, rainbow, and kokanee) in the fall gillnets dropped from 70 percent in 2001 to 60 percent in 2002. The Utah chub biomass increased from 24 percent in 2001 to 33 percent of the total catch in 2002. The total game fish catch rate (number caught per gill net hour) was 0.47 fish/hr. which is well below the post-treatment average of 0.94 fish/hr. However, the cutthroat catch rate for 2002 (0.42 fish/hr) stayed very near the long-term average of 0.45 fish/hr. Bottom line, total biomass of game fish caught in the gill-nets is down slightly, and chub biomass is up.

Cutthroat seem to have held steady in their catch rate per hour, however, the total game fish catch rate has dropped. The decrease in total game fish catch is a result of low numbers of rainbow and kokanee in the 2002 gill nets. Low survival of the rainbows stocked in 2001 resulted in the lack of rainbows in the gill nets. The low survival of these fish is most likely the result of predation on these stocks. About 91 percent of the rainbows stocked in 2001 were smaller in size on average than previous years, and many had to be stocked earlier than we would have liked due to hatchery limitations. Hopefully some of these issues can be resolved in the future, so that these stocks will have a higher survival rate. Simply stocking more fish is not the answer if they do not survive. We will have to work with our hatcheries to provide fish of the appropriate size at the best times to promote their survival. We are still trying to evaluate the reasons for the low number of kokanee in 2002.

One of the most positive things we documented from the fall gill nets this year was the apparent increase in predation on chubs by the cutthroat trout. Over 17 percent of the cutthroat sampled had fish in their diet, with 68 percent of them being chubs, 32 percent redside shiners, and none of the fish in the stomachs were trout or salmon. The larger cutthroat were more likely to be predators. Thirty-one percent of the cutthroat over 18 inches were predators, and nearly 43 percent of the cutthroat over 20 inches had fish in their diet. The new regulation protecting these larger cutthroat should help to increase this predatory behavior. The overall condition of the fish that were preying on chubs and shiners was much better. Fat indices and condition factors (weight to length ratio) of cutthroat predators were higher than the average sampled cutthroat. Preliminary predation modeling based on fall...
gill netting data estimates that nearly 22 tons of non-game fish were consumed by cutthroat during the month of October, with about 15 tons of chubs being eaten. The increased predation on chubs may simply be a result of chub populations expanding to a point where it is now advantageous for the cutthroat to change their feeding habits to include chubs in their diet.

Strawberry’s future continues to look bright. We have to face some changes, as with the 2003 regulations, but there does not appear to be anything that would suggest an imminent collapse of the fishery. The Utah chub are not limiting game fish numbers, as the game fish sampled continue to find sufficient food resources to survive and grow. The cutthroat are doing fine, and the increased predation by these fish is very encouraging. As stated earlier, our rainbow stocking program will be modified in attempts to improve survival, with increased numbers and/or pounds scheduled to be stocked during 2003.

**SAA Junior Volunteer of the Year**

The SAA’s Junior Volunteer For 2002 is Everet Evans, an energetic 12 year old member, avid fly fisherman, and resident of Rexburg, Idaho. Everet has helped spray mark young trout, plant fish, participated in the spring gill net survey, and wrote a recent article on his Strawberry fishing experience for The ‘Berry Goods News. As a member of Boy Scout Troop 306, Everet has achieved the rank of Star and was one of the first scouts in the nation to receive the newly authorized Fly Fishing Merit Badge. In addition to fishing Strawberry Reservoir every chance he gets, Everet also frequents the blue ribbon waters of the Henry’s Fork River, Warm River, and Henry’s Lake in Idaho.

**More Rainbows for Strawberry**

This fall, Strawberry Reservoir was the recipient of two groups of extra stocks of rainbow trout. About 40,000 4 to 5 inch rainbows came from the Springville Hatchery and 19,000 seven to eight inch rainbows came from the Kamas Hatchery when the drought conditions in some of the waters in the rest of the state prevented those areas from taking their planned fish. This brought the total number of rainbows stocked in Strawberry in 2002 very close to 500,000.

In 2003, the Division of Wildlife Resources has already planned for a 300,000 (59 percent) increase in the number of rainbows to be stocked in Strawberry, bringing the total expected number of planted rainbows to 800,000. There may even be more rainbow trout available beyond the 800,000 planned for this year. The DWR has made arrangements to sterilize more rainbows that are currently earmarked for other Utah waters, making them candidates for stocking in Strawberry should the state suffer low water conditions again in 2003. Already sterilized rainbows can then be diverted to Strawberry.

DWR biologists feel that stocking policies for the future need to be reevaluated for both rainbow and cutthroat. If the Reservoir has more large cutthroat in it, as is hoped will happen, careful evaluation will determine if a high percentage of planted rainbow or cutthroat are lost to predation. But the good news for the near future is a big increase in the number of rainbow trout destined for Strawberry Reservoir.
The popularity of ice fishing has increased significantly at Strawberry Reservoir. More people than ever before have discovered the enjoyable and rewarding experience of angling for the ‘Berry’s’ big fish through the ice. Ice fishing on many Utah waters, including Strawberry Reservoir, became legal in January 1984 when the Division of Wildlife Resources initiated a year-round angling season. The reasoning behind a year around season was to eliminate the extraordinary pressure of opening day, which traditionally was the Memorial Day weekend in May. The past 19 years have witnessed a steady growth in ice fishing and each passing year seems to draw a larger crowd than the year before.

Still, in comparative terms, ice anglers constitute a small portion of Strawberry’s total fishing pressure, approximately 15.9 percent or about 230,000 total hours in 2001, up from 8.6 percent in 1996. According to the 2001 Creel Census Report compiled by the DWR last year, ice anglers account for 23 percent of all fish caught at Strawberry, which is second only to boat fishermen who hook and land just under 65 percent. Shore and tube anglers combined catch the balance of the fish, approximately 12 percent. However, ice fishermen enjoy an overall catch rate higher than any of the four general angling methods, approximately 0.75 fish per hour. Even better news is the fact that ice fishermen only harvest 16 percent of the fish they catch, compared to 73 percent for boat anglers.

So, if the weather isn’t too much of a deterrent, and the notion to wet a line during the winter months call you forth from angling hibernation, there are few locations in the state that offer better ice fishing opportunities than Strawberry Reservoir. Remember to dress warm, observe common safety rules, and enjoy a great day outdoors with friends and family.

### Ice Fishing Gains in Popularity

**Staying Warm on the Ice**

For those of you who will be venturing out into the cold to ice fish at Strawberry this season, keep in mind the four general rules for staying warm. (1) Reduce perspiration and get moisture away from your skin. (2) Insulate or create dead air space around your body. (3) Block the wind so warm, dead air around your body isn’t blown away. (4) Keep precipitation on the outside of your clothing. To perform these tasks, remember to bundle up using layers of good quality winter clothing. The first layer of clothing should be a wicking fabric, such as merino wool, knitted polyester or one of the new micro-fleeces. The second layer should be an insulation layer of down, wool, or a good synthetic fiber. The more loft, the warmer you stay. The less loft, the easier it is for you to move about. Finally, the third, or outside layer, should be water proof and breathable. Gore-Tex or a low nap polyester like Micro-Suede, will perform this service.
The new regulations help protect large cutthroat trout.

Strawberry Doubles as the Antarctic

A documentary film about the ill-fated 1916 expedition to cross the Antarctic continent features scenes that were shot in Antarctica and at Utah’s Strawberry Reservoir. *Shackleton’s Antarctic Adventure* is a giant-screen IMAX film that tells the extraordinary story of polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton’s Trans-Antarctic Expedition. While never accomplishing its goal of the first crossing of the Antarctic continent, this expedition has become a testament to heroism and human endurance. All 28 men survived nearly two years in the barren, frigid Antarctic when their ship, *Endurance*, was caught in pack ice and crushed.

In October-November 1999 and April 2000, the *Shackleton’s Antarctic Adventure* production team undertook two expeditions to the Antarctic, capturing stunning images as they retraced and re-created the journey of Shackleton and his men, the crew of the *Endurance*. As part of re-creating the experiences of Shackleton and his men, the production features several scenes of historic reenactments filmed at Strawberry Reservoir during the winter of 2000. *Shackleton’s Antarctic Adventure* periodical reappears at the Super Screen Megaplex 17 at Jordan Commons, located in Sandy, Utah.
Strawberry Anglers Association

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Jim Carter, President
(801) 269-0619

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