

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your plans to poison several Montana lakes in order to reestablish purebred cutthroat trout.

I am currently President of the Arnold fish and Game Preserve (AFGP), a private hunting and fishing club that operates near Woburn, Quebec, Canada. We have some experience with attempts to improve fishing by poisoning a lake that may be useful to you.

Most of our fishing is for brook trout on a small (150-acre) pond. About thirty years ago the members grew concerned that the perch and suckers in the pond were putting up too much competition to the native brookies. A plan was developed after consulting with some “experts”. The plan involved using rotenone to poison the lake, clear out the fall fish and reestablish the desirable native trout. The plan was duly executed.

The immediate results were as follows—

The trout were indeed killed.

The perch and suckers somehow escaped.

In addition to killing the trout we also killed the populations of hexagenia and caddis flies.

The longer range results were—

The perch and suckers thrived as in the past.

The native trout slowly began a comeback but in nowhere near the quantity to provide decent recreational fishing. So, stocking became necessary which only put severe pressure on the attempted comeback of the natives. Thirty years later we are still stocking.

It took more than twenty years for the insect life to return to anything like pre-poisoning quantities.

So, we would ask that you carefully consider the impact on insect life as well as taking an honest look at how long recreational fishing will need to be curtailed to allow reestablishment of a sustainable population of native fish.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present these comments.

Richard F Ulak