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## THE ORIGIN OF FISHES IN THE SINKS DRAINAGES OF SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO: A SUMMARY

Bart L. Garnett

Salmon-Challis National Forest, P.O. Box 507, Mackay, ID 83251

Historical records, distribution patterns, and geomorphic history suggest that only a few fish species are native to the Sinks Drainages. There is strong evidence that shorthead sculpin (*Cottus confusus*), Paiute sculpin (*C. beldingi*), mottled sculpin (*C. bairdi*), mountain whitefish (*Prosopium williamsoni*), and cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki*) are native to at least some of the Sinks Drainages. Rainbow (*O. mykiss*) and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) are apparently not native to the Big Lost, Birch, Medicine Lodge, and Beaver-Camas watersheds, but it is unclear whether these species are native to the Little Lost. If so, they likely entered this watershed within the last 10,000 years via headwater transfer from the Salmon drainage. Shorthead sculpin, which appear to be native to all five of the Sinks Drainages, likely entered one or more of the Sinks streams at least 10,000 years ago from the Salmon River drainage and subsequently dispersed to the remaining streams through glacial Lake Terreton. It is unclear how or when Paiute sculpin, which are known only from the Big Lost River drainage, entered this system. Mottled sculpin and cutthroat trout appear to be native only to the Medicine Lodge and Camas-Beaver drainages and appear to have entered

these streams from the Henrys Fork drainage within the last 10,000 years. Thus, the cutthroat is the Yellowstone subspecies *O. c. bouvieri*. Mountain whitefish, which are known only from the Big Lost River drainage, appear to have migrated from the Snake River at least 10,000 years ago and may represent an endemic subspecies.

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