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## Bear Lake Whitefish

### *Prosopium abyssicola*

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Actinopterygii — Salmoniformes — Salmonidae

#### CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Critically imperiled (G1)  
Statewide: Critically imperiled (S1)  
ESA: No status  
USFS: Region 1: No status; Region 4: No status  
BLM: Rangewide/Globally imperiled (Type 2)  
IDFG: Game fish

#### BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Endemic to Bear Lake.

#### TAXONOMY

The Bear Lake whitefish is 1 of 3 sympatric members of the genus *Prosopium*. No subspecies has been proposed.

#### DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

This species is endemic to Bear Lake.

#### POPULATION TREND

Monitoring for >20 years indicates the population is stable (Nielson and Tolentino 2002).

#### HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

The Bear Lake whitefish typically occurs in the benthic zone at water depths greater than 40 m (130 ft). Spawning occurs in mid–February to mid–March in shallow, rocky areas. Ostracods comprise the majority of the diet, but other invertebrates found on the lake bottom may be consumed.

#### ISSUES

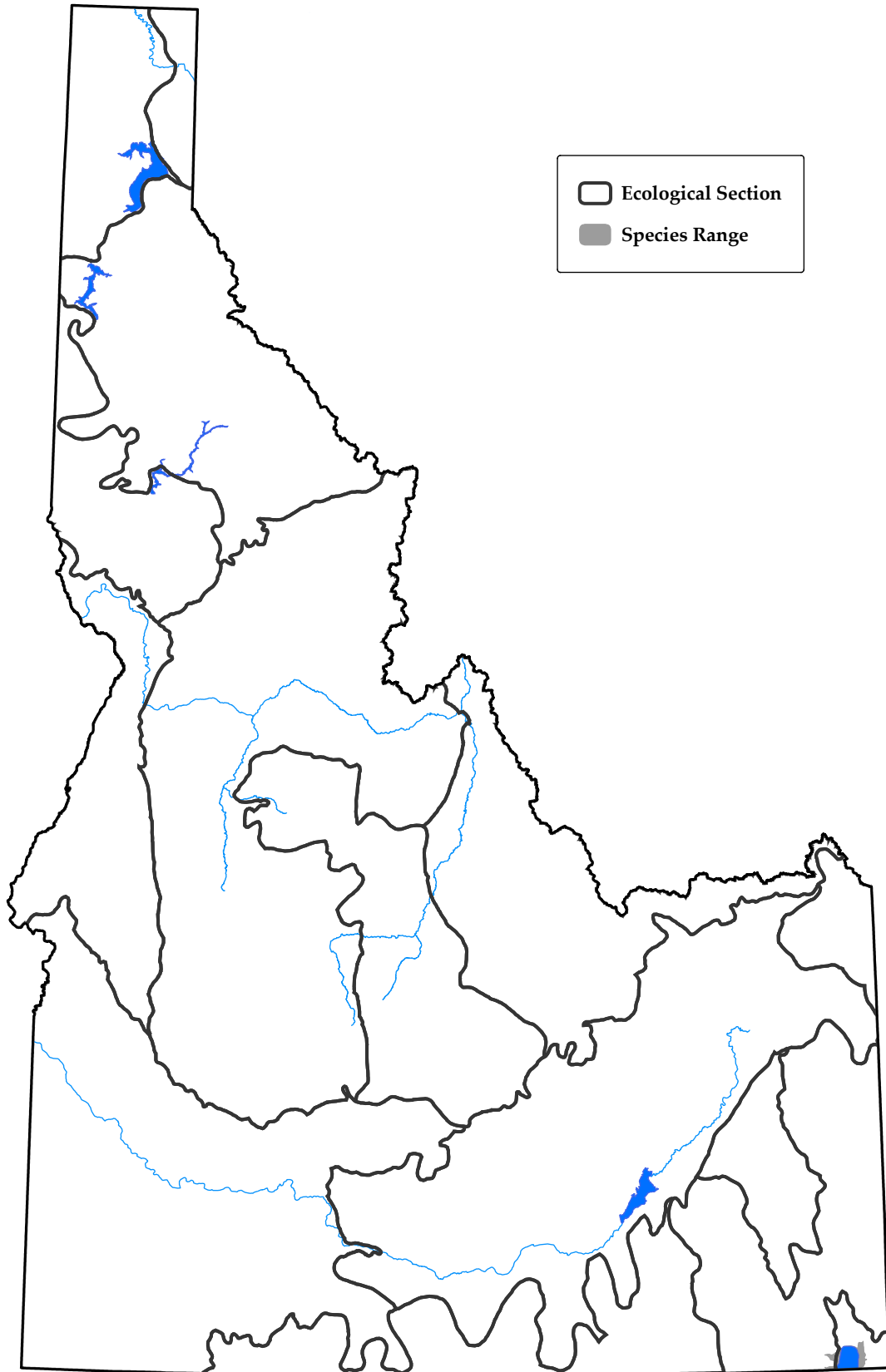
The lowering of lake levels due to natural events and anthropogenic actions could limit spawning and rearing habitat. Increasing human development around the lake could lead to lowering of water quality due to waste water discharges. Legal and illegal introductions of piscivorous fish could affect populations by increased predation rate.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Continue programs that (1) monitor the population status and trend; (2) evaluate the relationship between water quality and level and fish populations; (3) stock sterile triploid lake trout; and (4) removal of illegally introduced non–native fish (e.g., walleye) in conjunction with adjacent states.

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10 August 2005  
Fish information is from Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System, Idaho Department of Fish and Game and displayed at the 6th code hydrologic unit.

