

Duck Creek/ Henry's Lake — Idaho

Henry's Lake covers approximately 6,500 acres along the continental divide in eastern Idaho.

livestock manure and urine into the shallow, naturally nutrient-rich lake, accelerating the natural aging process. The Idaho Department of

12



The lake and immediately adjacent grazing lands are at about 6,500 feet elevation. Annual precipitation averages about thirty inches and comes mainly as snow. Peak runoff in tributary streams generally occurs in mid June. Lake-side pastures have been grazed since the late 1800s from about mid May until early October.

Henry's Lake is fed by numerous large springs. Several small tributary streams provide spawning habitat for cutthroat and brook trout. Juvenile fish migrate to the lake, grow to large size and attract anglers from around the U.S.

The once world-renowned fishery in the lake declined precipitously over the past two decades. Livestock grazing of tributary riparian areas was identified as a significant contributing factor.

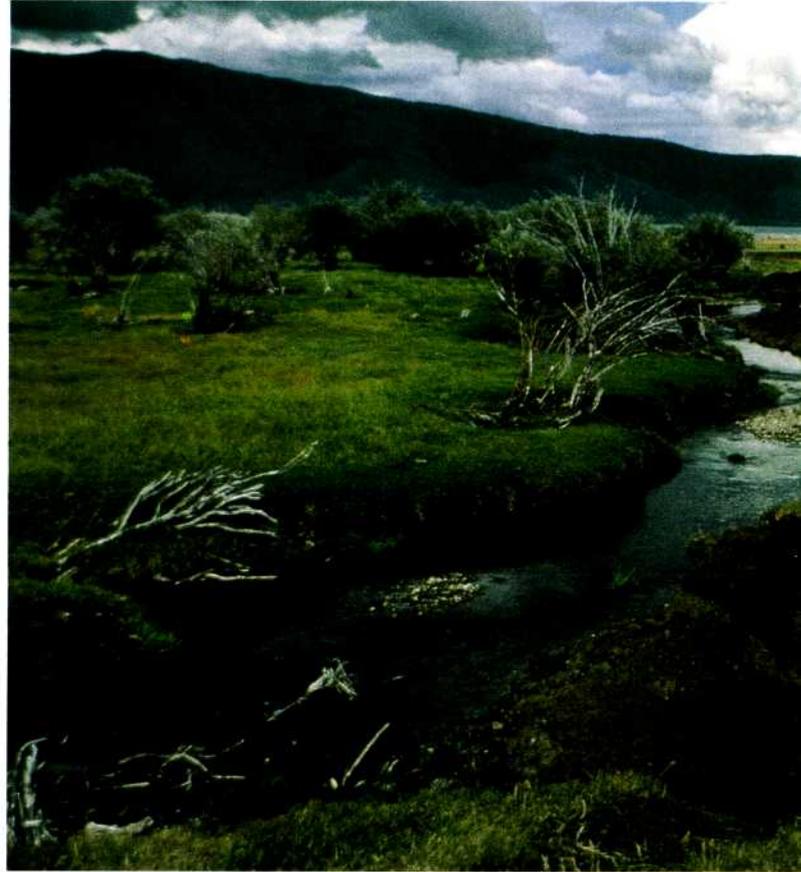
Livestock had depleted streamside vegetation and trampled streambanks. Summer water temperatures had increased; streambanks were eroding, and trout spawning gravels were smothered with sediment. Streams carried small but cumulatively significant amounts of

Fish and Game developed a plan to rehabilitate the lake fishery. Concerned fishermen, summer home owners, local ranchers and business owners formed the Henry's Lake Foundation to raise money and manpower to help revitalize the lake fishery and dependent local economy.

The foundation's most important role was to get fishermen, recreational property owners, business operators and lakeside ranchers working together toward common, mutually beneficial objectives for tributary riparian areas.

The first tributary riparian restoration demonstration project was constructed in the fall of 1985 on private land bordering Duck Creek, an important trout spawning and rearing stream.

Riparian vegetation was severely deteriorated. Willows were drastically reduced in abundance and there was little regeneration due to constant grazing during their summer growth period. Streambanks were eroding. The stream channel was wide, shallow and full of sediment from trampled and eroded streambanks.



The foundation raised money from its members to permanently exclude livestock from the riparian area along a half-mile reach of stream. Foundation members took time off from jobs and vacations to build the fence to the rancher's specifications. The foundation paid the rancher a modest fee to cover the cost of maintaining the fence.

Even after decades of impact from livestock grazing, loafing and trailing, the area fenced from livestock responded dramatically the first growing season.

Vegetation rapidly re-established on eroded streambanks and began

the natural process of trapping sediments and narrowing and deepening the stream channel. The small amount of livestock forage forgone within the enclosure is thought to have been offset by denying livestock their preferred loafing area so they would spend more time eating the abundant irrigated forage outside the fence.

This small pilot project demonstrated the value of fishery interests and livestock operators working together for mutual benefit. The spirit of cooperation proved to be contagious. It led to cooperative screening of irrigation diversions to prevent fish losses, and to construction of addi-