Crew Rufus Woods project

TROUT HATCHERY RELEASES THOUSANDS OF FISH IN LOCAL LAKE

Staff from the Colville Tribal Resident Fish (CTRF) program stocked Lake Rufus Woods with 1,400 triploid rainbow trout (from their hatchery) on October 22, 2014. Also, the Rufus Woods Net Pen Project, managed by CTRF, released over 20,000 triploid rainbow trout averaging 1.2 to 1.7 pounds each into Rufus Woods on October 30, 2014.

"All fish stocked into Rufus Woods from both projects can be identified as hatchery origin by the absence of the adipose fin," said Jill Phillips, Resident Hatchery manager. "We encourage anglers to take advantage of this opportunity."

The Colville Tribal Fish Hatchery is used to enhance reservation fisheries by producing a minimum of 50,000 pounds of trout annually. These hatchery fish are distributed throughout reservation waters and are used as substitution for the lost anadromous fish that once thrived in the upper Columbia River before construction of Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams. The Rufus Woods Net Pen Project is part of a supplementation effort that is overseen by the CTRF program which provides the fish to the Rufus Woods fishery.

All non-members who are fishing by boat on the boundary waters of the reservation or from the shore of Lake Rufus Woods at a Designated Fishing Area (DFA) must have either a valid Colville Indian Reservation Fishing Permit, or a valid fishing license issued by the State of Washington. Non-members fishing outside of the DFA must have a tribal permit. At this time, there is only one DFA on Lake Rufus Woods which is located downstream of the Pacific Aquaculture Fish Farm net pens. Colville tribal members must possess a Colville tribal identification card that serves as a permit to fish. Anglers who purchase tribal permits help support the continued success of this fishery.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS

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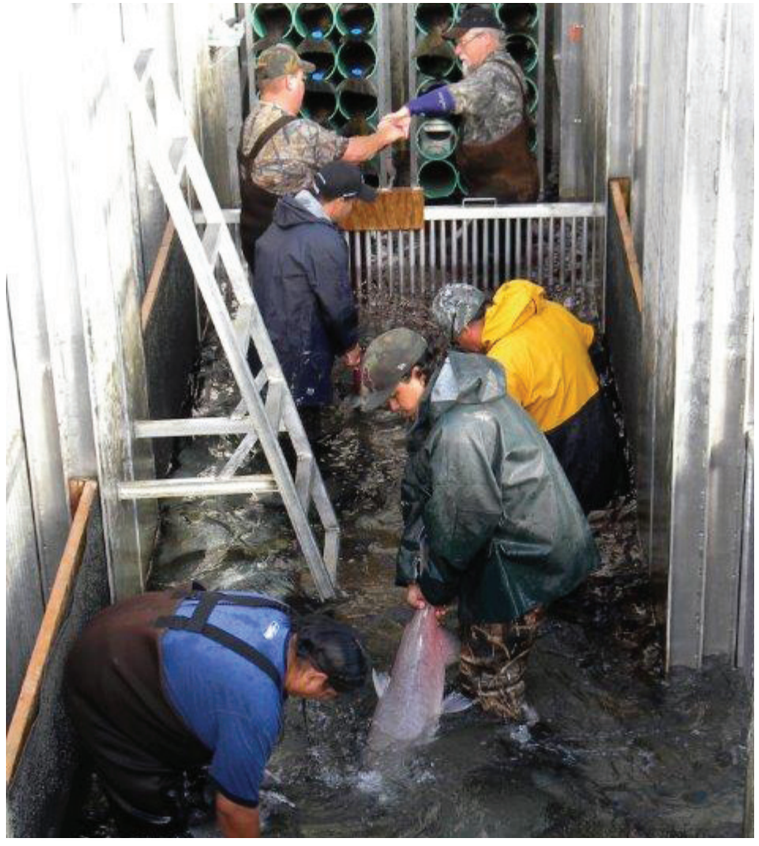
CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE



Fisheries staff seperate male and female Chinook salmon for spawning

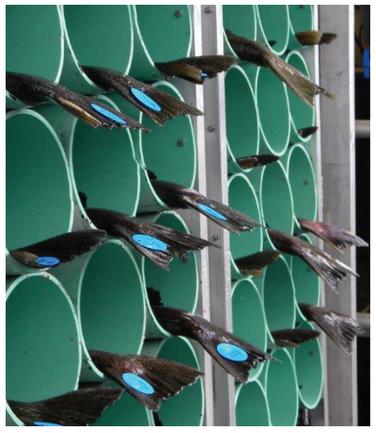
Chief Joseph Hatchery (CJH) staff completed their summer Chinook spawning activities by mid-November, collecting approximately 2,395,000 eggs. They also have approximately 811,639 spring Chinook eggs on station at the hatchery, including 592,758 spring Chinook eggs to support the spring Chinook segregated harvest program (a program solely dedicated to the harvest of spring Chinook, rather than a program supporting harvest and conservation), and 218,881 to support the Okanogan River spring Chinook reintroduction program.

According to CJH staff, there are 514,913 spring Chinook yearlings and about 416,526 summer Chinook yearlings in holding ponds at the hatchery to support the segregated harvest program. These fish are being fed about 400 pounds of fish feed per day, four times each week. The Omak pond currently holds about 309,046 yearling summer Chinook and the Similkameen pond holds 199,266 yearling summer Chinook to support Okanogan River summer Chinook harvest and conservation efforts. The Riverside acclimation pond is holding about 200,000 Methow Composite yearlings from the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery to support the Okanogan River spring Chinook reintroduction effort.

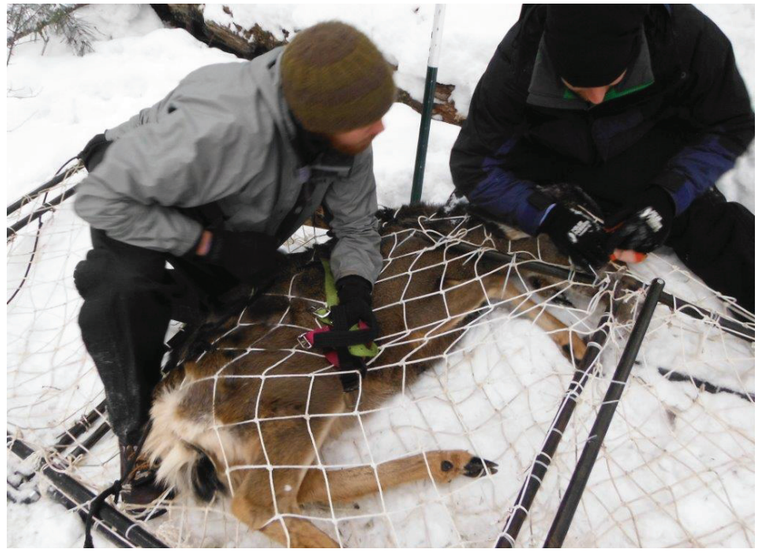
"All the yearling fish from the 2013 brood year will be released this April," said CJH Fish Culturist, Amber Cate. "This includes all the fish at the hatchery and at each of the acclimation sites."

Spawning and feeding activities have kept the hatchery crew busy, but they've also winterized the hatchery, cleaned up the grounds and are preparing rearing vessels (intermediate troughs, raceways) for the upcoming 2014 ponding of fry.

"We are processing our eggs and getting them all shocked, picked and enumerated and tucking them in nicely and waiting for them to hatch out. We will begin ponding our first group of sub-yearlings the beginning of January," said Cate. "We will also be putting bird netting over the ponds in the next few weeks."



Salmon are seperated, and each female gets numbered



Dellinger and Technician collar deer

UW STUDENT'S RESEARCH WORK BENEFITS TRIBE

University of Washington (UW) PhD student and Wildlife Biologist, Justin Dellinger, has been working closely with staff from the Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) Dept. examining deer behavior in areas where gray wolves are present and in areas without wolves.

Dellinger has been working on his wolf-deer study with UW for over two years. During that time, he has been capturing, radio-collaring, and tracking gray wolves, mule deer, and white-tailed deer. He has been studying the effects of gray wolves on deer in Washington State that include the Colville Reservation and North Half. He started his field work in December 2012, which eventually led to being hired by CTFW in January 2014.

"I will be starting my third field season this December which will involve catching deer," said Dellinger. "I'm doing four deer catching field seasons in total. Outside of winter, I have focused more on the wolf part of the study, basically attempting to radio-collar and track them. I also spend a lot of time checking on my remote game cameras that are scattered across the reservation which will give data on the overall focus of the study."

The goals of his project are to: look at what wolves are eating, understand deer behavior in how they allocate their time (vigilance and foraging) in habitat areas with and without wolves, see if wolves cause mule deer and white-tailed deer to compete less for resources, understand how wolves are impacting seasonal habitat use of mule deer and white-tailed deer, along with other variables such as cougars, bears, and how well adult deer are surviving on an annual basis, and what the main source of mortality is.

"Dellinger's study will provide valuable data for our wildlife program," said Richard Whitney, wildlife program manager for the CTFW. "Annual aerial surveys for big game help to provide a window into how our total herd numbers are doing, but we don't always know how well our deer are doing on an individual basis. The survival analysis based on a fairly large sample of deer will help us to determine how well our deer survive and what are the main sources of mortality in our populations." He said, "This study will show us if wolves, another predator, harvest, or some other cause are having large impacts on our deer numbers. On the other hand, the study may also show us that our deer are doing great, and deer are surviving very well. I feel that this is just the type of study that tribal members would like to know the result from."

"So far, we've collared 100 deer and only one has been eaten by wolves, five have been eaten by cougars, five were eaten by coyotes, seven were taken by hunters, and one by a black bear and one died of natural causes. So overall survival is really high," said Dellinger.

After completing his field work next winter, Dellinger will have the data he needs to complete his study. However, two more UW PhD students will soon join him in the field and expand on the work he is doing. One student will look at the impacts of wolves on deer fawn survival. The other student will look at how wolves impact foraging behavior of deer. In addition, a PhD student from Washington State University is also looking into wolf and livestock interactions on the reservation and the surrounding region in an effort to understand predation risks, responses of livestock due to wolf presence, and possible non-lethal deterrent strategies. "The more that we can partner with universities to help us with man-power and study designs, the more work we can accomplish on the ground to answer management questions that our wildlife program have been trying to answer for some time," said Whitney.

Prior to working with CTFW, Dellinger spent three years researching red wolves in eastern North Carolina while attending Auburn University where he earned his master's degree in wildlife sciences. That research focused on determining wolf habitat use and foraging patterns. He spent about two years in Arizona and New Mexico catching, radio-collaring, and tracking cougars, estimating cougar numbers and impacts to livestock. In his early college years, his work involved removing problem alligators and snakes and he caught bats in large underground caves.

Collared deer

EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

SHELLY DAVIS began working for CTFW in 1994 as the front desk receptionist and is currently the staff assistant (payroll). She prepares new hire packets, handles orientation, and routes personnel documents for signature. Davis manages the payroll program and collects timesheets, and prepares and submits payroll forms for employees. She ensures employees are enrolled in all benefit programs and works with the tribes' Human Resource Dept. to resolve employee payroll and benefits issues.

BILLY GUNN, contract representative for the CTFW, began his position in December 2010. Gunn manages multiple contracts and is the key liaison to outside funding agencies. He resolves issues and monitors contract awards, assesses technical progress and performance, and provides guidance on negotiations of agreements that include costs, rates, deliverables, and compliance issues. He updates program leads and staff on any policy changes and prepares timely reports.

KODI JO JASPERS, resource protection wildlife biologist, began her job at CTFW in September 2011. She conducts biological studies, research and analysis of fish, wildlife, and habitat. Jaspers is the Wildlife Program's 3P process lead and researches, develops, monitors, and provides official comments on any natural resource activities that may have impacts to fish, wildlife, and habitats. She also participates in Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation activities.

JILL PHILLIPS is the hatchery manager II for the Resident Fish Hatchery near Bridgeport, Wash. She began her position in August 2009 and is responsible for fish culture operations at the facility. Phillips also manages a broodstock net pen project located on Rufus Woods Lake. She oversees annual budgets and communicates needs to staff. She also develops short and long term plans and program goals related to production, operations, facilities and site improvements.

MICHAEL FALL, hatchery technician II, began working for the Resident Fish Hatchery in May 2005. He performs a variety of tasks associated with the operation and maintenance of the hatchery. Fall is involved with fish culture duties, hatchery maintenance, fish releases in local reservation lakes, and supports education and outreach efforts. He also assists with other fish and wildlife projects and aids in the collection of fish species and responds to hatchery alarms when needed.

DONOVAN ANTOINE, wildlife technician IV, started his career with CTFW in September 1999 and became a full-time employee in March of 2,000. As a lead technician, he works on a variety of projects, and is tasked with providing oversight to less experienced technicians. He assists with aerial and ground surveys, animal captures, DNA sampling, trapping and collaring, and works to protect, monitor and enhance wildlife resources.

ANDREA PEARL, fisheries biologist for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Program, began her position in October 2011. She collects field data on anadromous fish in the Okanogan and Similkameen Rivers. Her field projects include juvenile rotary screw trapping, juvenile beach seining and pit tagging, adult weir trapping, and spawning ground surveys. She is responsible for the quality of data collected in the field, broodstock, live, and selective fisheries monitoring. She maintains annual contracts with outside consultants and various state, federal, and private entities.

ABRAHAM BEST, fisheries technician for the Chief Joseph Hatchery Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Program, began his position in January 2012. He collects field data on anadromous fish in the upper Columbia region, including the Okanogan and Similkameen Rivers. He works with rotary screw traps, beach seines and pit tags, and adult weir traps. Best collects biological data for fishery management purposes and also assists hatchery production staff in broodstock collection, fish acclimation pond care, and hatchery spawning efforts.