

COLVILLE TRIBES FISH & WILDLIFE NEWS

LET'S WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS



MARY DAVISSON recently began her position as a habitat biologist for CTFW. Her duties include conducting inventory of riparian and aquatic habitats including fish passage barriers, participating in regional climate change forums and monitoring efforts, reviewing environmental documents, and providing recommendations to management. Her job requires extensive field work as she assists with collection and analysis of data relevant to the Okanogan River Basin fish habitat. Prior to her new position, she worked as a fisheries and video technician for CTFW. Davisson is a recent Eastern Washington University graduate and earned a bachelor of science degree in biology. While attending EWU, she participated in the CTFW Management Intern Program which provided her financial support during school and summer internship work.

"The program helped me financially, allowing me to go to school. The various departments within the anadromous program were very helpful," said Davisson. "I was able to experience a lot of different work environments at CTFW, and was allowed to work for one summer at Pacific Northwest National Laboratories which is through the Department of Energy. A number of biologists at CTFW helped me personally with classes that I found particularly hard, mainly math." Outside of work, she enjoys videography, editing, picking huckleberries with family, family gatherings, hiking, bicycling, and traveling.

KIRSTEN BRUDEVOLD is continuing her education at EWU through the CTFW Management Intern Program. Brudevold is a junior in college and on her way to earning a four-year degree. At the end of the school year, she will begin her summer intern job for the CTFW Resident Fish Program. Her duties will be to assist in a variety of fish habitat monitoring and restoration projects including population studies. She will gather and analyze data from reservation lakes and streams and conduct hydro-acoustic, gill-netting, electro-fishing, and creel studies. She will sample and tag fish and provide harvest, mortality, species composition, life history, abundance, distribution, age, growth, and other basic biological data for fishery management purposes.



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS



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CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE



Chief Joseph Hatchery

CJH FACTS:

• Chief Joseph Hatchery was built to increase spring, summer, and fall Chinook salmon in the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers. The hatchery produces millions of Chinook smolts each year and provides salmon for tribal ceremonies, subsistence needs for tribal members, and increases recreational fishing opportunities for all.

• Construction cost was approximately \$50 million and was funded by monies acquired through rate payer dollars from Bonneville Power Administration, through the Colville Tribe's Fish Accords. Grant PUD funded \$10 million for construction of the hatchery.

• The hatchery was completed in February 2013.

• The hatchery started up in July 2013, producing 1.8 million Chinook smolts and

will be fully ramped up by 2017 producing up to 2.9 million Chinook smolts annually.

• It is estimated that up to one percent of each year's annual release will return to the Upper Columbia.

• CJH is situated on 15 acres of land owned by the Army Corps of Engineers, but within the boundaries of the Colville Indian Reservation; the Colville Tribes operates the facility.



Automated trailer system



Tiny salmon in tank prior to being marked



CEREMONY DRAWS TRIBAL LEADERS FROM U.S. AND CANADA

The Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) Department hosted the First Salmon Ceremony at the Chief Joseph Hatchery in Bridgeport, Wash. on Friday, May 13, to celebrate the return of spring Chinook. Attendees also celebrated the return of the first hatchery Chinook released from CJH three years ago.

The first salmon was caught by tribal member Tony Cleveland at sunrise and tribal elder Leroy "Chaz" Williams lead with a prayer and song. The Director of CTFW Randy Friedlander welcomed guests. "Our ancestors have done the salmon ceremony for thousands of years. Those ceremonies were all but lost until native people began to revitalize the tradition more than a decade ago. It's important for tribes to revitalize this tradition. We have to honor and take care of the salmon," Friedlander said.

Kary Nichols, CTFW assistant director, spoke about the canned salmon project and the partnership with Okanogan Nation Alliance (ONA) and the process it took to get there. "We looked at what our neighboring tribes were doing and what else could we do besides freezing salmon for subsistence," said Nichols. "We toured the Swinomish Tribe's fish processing plant, looked at canning size and contracted with the Swinomish and ended up doing 8,700 cans and shared half of that with ONA as they helped us."

"I'm so grateful every year to share in this special ceremony with you," said ONA Executive Director Pauline Terbasket. "ONA and Colville tribal leaders have come

together so our children will have salmon. We are taking care of our shared responsibility with indigenous peoples but also the broader community," said Terbasket. "We have a lot to do, from salmon introduction into Sakha, to bringing salmon back to the Upper Columbia system. We need one another to do that."

The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) is an organization made up of five tribes that include the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Spokane Tribe of Indians and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. UCUT Committee Coordinator John Sirois spoke about efforts the organization has been working on with tribes and other agencies. "We are looking at what the obstacles are and focusing our efforts on the next treaty," said Sirois. "We are looking at flood risk, impacts of dams along the Columbia River, and leaders of tribes are looking at eco-based function. The original treaty between U.S. and Canada didn't have eco-based function. We need to negotiate fish passage in the next treaty. Fish passage needs to be added on both sides."

About 200 attendees including students from the Inchelium School District toured the hatchery, feed tiny salmon, and played with sponge balls in a fish cannon system demonstrated by Todd Deligan, vice-president of Whoosh Innovations.

"Thank you for having us here today, with support of the Colvilles, Yakama, and UCUT, we came with a crazy idea," said Deligan. "People said that crazy idea might



Youth feed fish on a tour at CJH during First Salmon Ceremony

actually work. We created a new technology to transport salmon. We use a soft flexible tube, air, and seal vacuum that transports fish through the soft flexible sleeve. We have to take a step-by-step approach before trying to get salmon over Chief Jo. We have been hands on working with tribes, building data, and in our minds we know we can do it. John and D.R. from UCUT have been taking the lead and spearheading the effort and it's on everyone's radar screen," Deligan said.



John Sirois, UCUT Committee Coordinator



Richard Whitney, Wildlife Manager for CTFW speaks to youth



Wild Steelhead from Omak Creek collected for Broodstock

THOUSANDS OF STEELHEAD SMOLTS RELEASED IN OMAK CREEK

The Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) Department and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) recently released 40,000 steelhead smolts into Omak Creek. About 15,000 of these fish have been PIT tagged so fisheries managers can monitor their migration to the ocean and on their journey back as adults.

Wesley Tibbits, fisheries biologist for CTFW, describes the program in depth. "We released 10,000 hatchery steelhead in Omak Creek from the St. Mary's acclimation pond," said Tibbits. "This release is part of our locally-adapted program. We collect adults at the Omak Creek weir and they go to the Wells Fish Hatchery (WFH) and are spawned out. Some of these fish are acclimated for 30 days in the pond with Omak Creek water to imprint which improves their homing skills."

In addition to the release from St. Mary's acclimation pond, about 30,000 hatchery reared steelhead were released above Mission Falls in Omak Creek. "There is about 18 miles of spawning habitat for these fish above Mission Falls," said Tibbits. "Adult returns to the Okanogan Basin and specifically Omak Creek have been on an upward trend over the past five years."

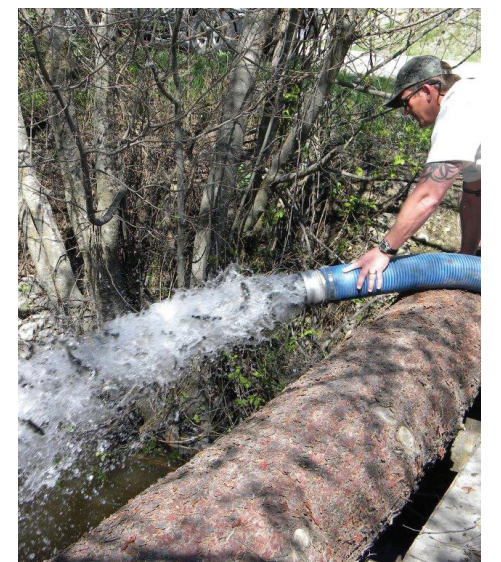
John Arterburn, principle biologist for CTFW said, "These hatchery releases are one tool along with habitat restoration, innovative fish management and monitoring the Colville Tribes are using to recover threatened Upper Columbia summer steelhead."

The Colville Tribes along with WDFW cooperatively manage the Okanogan River summer steelhead program. Fisheries biologists from the tribes implement, monitor and evaluate the steelhead program under a contract with Grant Public Utility District (GPUD).

"GPUD has funded the program for nine years and continues to fund the hatchery steelhead program in the Okanogan," said Tibbits. "Hatchery steelhead augmentation in the Similkameen River, Omak and Salmon Creeks has increased the numbers of returning adults to the Okanogan, which in turn has promoted natural rearing and returning numbers of wild steelhead. Because of this, we have hope for recovery of ESA listed summer steelhead in the Okanogan which is the ultimate goal."

In addition to the hatchery efforts, several BPA funded projects such as the Okanogan Basin Monitoring and Evaluation Program and

the Omak Creek Habitat Restoration Project are active in the Omak Creek watershed. CTFW biologists work cooperatively with many stakeholders to provide benefits from habitat improvements and manage hatchery production to maximize wild summer steelhead production in Omak Creek and throughout many areas of the Okanogan River and its tributaries including Canada.



Steelhead Release at Omak Creek