



Robert Thomas, Fish Tech holds 20lb. Northern Pike

NORTHERN PIKE PROGRAM PAYS OFF

The Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife Department (CTFW) announces that its Northern Pike Rewards Program is in full swing as 43 pike heads were turned in for the month of May, paying out \$430 to anglers. The program started on May 1 and will end on December 31, allowing anglers ample time to catch their limit of 59 pike each.

"We are processing reward payments monthly and we expect more pike to be turned in once the reservoir refills and the weather is nicer," said Holly McLellan, fisheries biologist for CTFW. "We want to make sure people turn their fish heads in by the end of each month. All size pike count for a payout, even small fish."

There are two locations for anglers to take their fish heads. One is located at the Noisy Water Gas Station and one is near the Park Service at the Kettle Falls fish cleaning station.

CTFW recently expanded the capture area from Grand Coulee Dam to Wells Dam. Therefore, you may submit your pike head(s) to the Nespelem Fish and Wildlife Office until a new drop off location is developed.

"We appreciate the public's support for the program and we look forward to working with local anglers to protect the Lake Roosevelt ecosystem," said McLellan. "We are receiving positive feedback from the public about the

program. Anglers want to help protect the Lake Roosevelt fishery."

The three co-managers (Colville Tribes, Spokane Tribe of Indians and WDFW) of Lake Roosevelt removed 1,058 pike in 2017. "We have documented pike moving downstream as far as Barnaby. We will continue our removal efforts all year as a way to stop the pike population from exploding in Lake Roosevelt and moving downstream," she said.

At this time, no angler has made it to the \$590 maximum payout. For more information on the program, go to colvilletribes.com, scroll to Natural Resources and then to the Fish and Wildlife page.



Kettle River juvenile pike

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS



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CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE



CJH staff marked, tagged, and released thousands of fish and ponded spring and summer Chinook fry. Tiny smolts were released from CJH and the acclimation ponds in April and May. Spring Chinook were collected from the fish ladder comprised of returns from the first year's release. Staff also assisted with events such as Earth Day with USACE, the First Salmon Ceremony, and school tours.

The hatchery has an integrated and a segregated program. The integrated program has fish that came from wild parents and are released at the acclimation sites on the

Okanogan River. The segregated program means that these fish came from hatchery parents and are released at CJH.

There are currently 2,002,000 fish at the hatchery that staff are feeding and caring for. This is the largest number of fish on site since CJH opened in July 2013. Next, staff will focus their efforts on collecting summer Chinook brood, operating the fish ladder for harvest of returning hatchery-origin summer Chinook and sockeye, marking and tagging spring and summer Chinook and feeding those two million baby salmon!



FISH RELEASES INCLUDE:

- 745,000 spring Chinook, segregated, released from CJH
- 200,000 spring Chinook, integrated (MetComp 10j), released from Riverside Pond
- 232,000 summer Chinook yearlings, segregated, released from CJH
- 350,000 summer Chinook yearlings, integrated, released from Omak Pond
- 185,000 summer Chinook sub-yearlings, segregated released from CJH
- 216,000 summer Chinook sub-yearlings, integrated released from Omak Pond



HATCHERY STAFF ASSIST IN REARING AND RELEASE EFFORTS



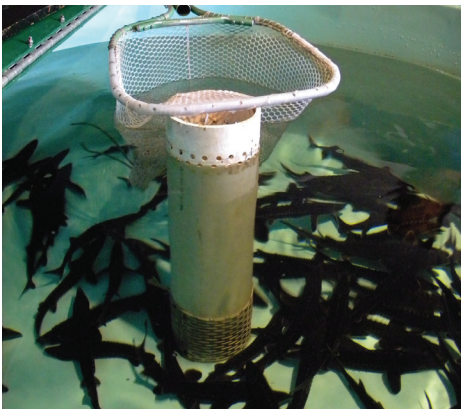
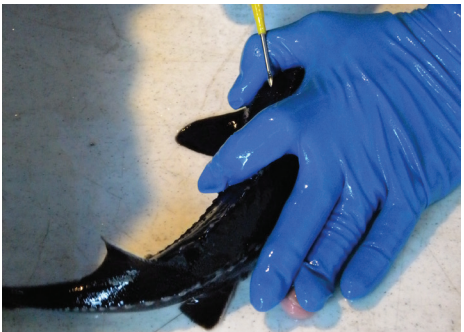
The Colville Tribes’ Resident Fish Hatchery (RFH) staff along with the Spokane Tribe of Indians (STI) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) tagged and released about 1,134 sturgeon on June 7. The fish were released in to Lake Roosevelt, near the Kettle Falls area and averaged about 12 inches in length.

“The STI and BPA have funded the short time these fish were at the Resident Fish Hatchery,” said Jill Phillips, hatchery manager. “The wild caught larvae were initially taken to Sherman Creek Hatchery, where they are raised until about the first of March. It is at this time that Sherman Creek lost its water supply for these fish. The pumps at Sherman Creek Hatchery were dewatered when Lake Roosevelt’s drawn down was below 1,260 feet elevation in the spring.” Phillips said, “Taking

the fish to our hatchery allowed them to be released later in the spring when they have a better chance to survive. This is also when Lake Roosevelt is refilling.”

Staff from WDFW and STI removed three scutes from each fish before they were delivered to the Resident Fish Hatchery. BPA, WDFW, CCT, and the STI have been working together for the past three years rearing white sturgeon.

“We are supporting the Spokane Tribe’s BPA-funded Lake Roosevelt Sturgeon Recovery Project and one component of the project is stocking white sturgeon juveniles in to Lake Roosevelt to restore populations and maintain genetic diversity due to a lack of natural production of juvenile fish,” said Jason McLellan, fisheries biologist for CTFW.



The STI contracted much of this work with WDFW, and the Colville Tribes has played a supporting role throughout the project. Beginning in 2011, the program transitioned to using wild caught sturgeon larvae for its source of fish. Wild larvae captured in Lake Roosevelt are reared at a hatchery until release at 10 months of age. All rearing until recently was conducted at WDFW’s Sherman Creek Hatchery.

“Also, previous studies show spring releases survive better than fall/winter release,” said McLellan. “In order to address this problem, our hatchery has reared the Lake Roosevelt sturgeon for a few months each of the last three springs to address the complications at Sherman Creek.”



LARGE GROUP OF STURGEON RELEASED AT RUFUS WOODS

Approximately 1,400 white sturgeon were released into Rufus Woods Lake on May 17, averaging about 10 inches in length. These armored-like fish were collected as larvae from Lake Roosevelt and were raised at the Wells Fish Hatchery for about 10 months.

“White sturgeon are released in Wells Reservoir as one of the obligations of Douglas County Public Utility District’s FERC license for the Wells Hydroelectric Project,” said Jason McLellan, fisheries biologist for CTFW.

“Due to good survival rates at Wells Hatchery, there were some surplus white sturgeon. Discussions took place around the fate of the surplus fish. Several options were considered; however, the resource managers agreed that an experimental release into Rufus Woods would be an appropriate use of these fish.”

The overall objective for fisheries managers will be to evaluate the feasibility of further supplementation in the Rufus Woods Reservoir.

The young sturgeon were PIT tagged and three of their scutes were removed to indicate that they had been reared in a hatchery. This marking method allows staff to monitor the fish and gather information as to whether future releases might be successful. They will be looking at entrainment rates, growth, condition, and survival rates. CTFW staff will complete field surveys over the next several years.

“The Rufus Woods experiment is something that our Resident Fish Division has wanted to pursue for some time, but funds had not been available. This just happened to be a great opportunity,” said McLellan.

This project was funded by Douglas County PUD. The Wells Fish Hatchery is operated by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. For the past couple of years, CTFW staff have been working with Douglas County PUD to capture white sturgeon larvae produced in the wild for stocking into Wells Reservoir and this year Rufus Woods has benefited from this work.



CEREMONY HELD AT SALMON HATCHERY

CTFW hosted the First Salmon Ceremony at Chief Joseph Hatchery on May 19. Approximately 200 people turned out to celebrate the return of spring Chinook, hear about success stories, tour the hatchery, and enjoy a salmon luncheon.

Leroy “Chaz” Williams lead with prayer and song early in the morning while fishermen worked hard to catch the first salmon. Randall Friedlander, CTFW director and master of ceremonies, welcomed everyone in attendance. Jim Andrews, CJH fisheries tech, discussed hatchery production and fish releases. Casey Baldwin, senior research scientist for CTFW, discussed how the department is assessing suitability above Grand Coulee Dam for reintroduction of

salmon and steelhead. The final presentation was led by Mike Rayton, senior harvest biologist for CTFW. His presentation included 2016 salmon return numbers and the forecasted 2017 numbers for spring Chinook, summer Chinook, and sockeye.

