

COLVILLE TRIBES FISH & WILDLIFE NEWS

FISH AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT SEEKS INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY



Loup Loup Diversion

The Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) Department is seeking public comment on properties the Colville Tribes acquired with funding from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). The Tribes acquired these properties to protect and restore habitat and instream flows for summer steelhead which are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2008, BPA and the Colville Tribes entered into a memorandum of agreement for fish habitat acquisitions. In that agreement, the Tribes committed to developing land management plans for each property it acquires.

The department recently developed a website where local community members can go on-line to www.colvilletribes.com/fw_anadromous_properties.php and submit comments. The site has information about each property, including management plans, baseline assessments, maps, and photographs. Visitors to the website can also find the 2008 Colville Tribes and BPA fish habitat agreement and related documents.

"Although the department employs biologists and technicians with specialized training and

experience in natural resource management, we know we don't have a monopoly on good ideas," said Charles Brushwood, CTFW senior policy analyst. "We want input from the public about our management plans and our implementation of them."

A link to the department's website and more information about the Tribes' fish habitat properties and CTFW management plans will be posted on the Colville Tribes website at www.colvilletribes.com, the Colville Tribal Broadcast, News and Information Facebook page, and several local newspapers. CTFW looks forward to hearing from the public.



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SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS



For Additional Information Contact:

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

Randy Friedlander,
Director of Fish and Wildlife
1 Colville Street PO Box 150
Nespelem, WA 99155
randall.friedlander@colvilletribes.com

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION

Dave Roberts,
Fish Biologist/Project Manager
905 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232
daroberts@bpa.gov



6TH ANNUAL REVIEW OF CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY PROGRAM

The Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) department hosted the Sixth Annual Chief Joseph Hatchery (CJH) Program Review on March 15 and 16 at the 12 Tribes Casino and Resort in Omak, WA.

On the first day, CTFW biologists and scientists presented harvest, hatchery and habitat data including research, monitoring and evaluation efforts that took place in 2015. The second day was set aside for staff to develop a CJH production, harvest and monitoring plan for 2016 and beyond.

"The CJH program had another successful year in 2015 and everything looks good for 2016," said Casey Baldwin, CTFW senior research scientist. "The program continues to make refinements each year, but the basic approach and target production levels appear consistent with the conservation objectives for the salmon populations. Recent

modeling and empirical data suggest the Okanogan summer/fall Chinook population is even more productive than we previously thought which really helps with resiliency to harsh environmental conditions and high harvest rates."

Mike Rayton, CTFW senior harvest biologist, discussed activities surrounding the harvest program and the goals for the coming year. "The purse seine fishing boat is the primary tool for broodstock collection and last year we also collected surplus fish at the CJH ladder and those fish were distributed to tribal members," said Rayton. "Over 9,000 summer and fall Chinook were harvested by the CTFW program and tribal fishermen and it's important that people report their catch and harvest data to creel clerks as that helps us to better gauge our tribal harvest."

Priorities for the selective harvest crew in

2016 will be to collect broodstock for the CJH program and provide salmon to the tribal membership for ceremonial and subsistence needs.

Participants included representatives from the Hatchery Science Review Group, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Okanogan Nation Alliance, Yakama Nation, Bonneville Power Administration, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, The Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board, area experts and regional Public Utility Districts.

Dan Warren, senior project manager and fisheries biologist for D.J. Warren & Associates Inc., coordinated this year's event. "It was very positive to see a turnout of over 44 attendees on day one, representing the Colville Tribes' funding partners and other key stakeholders. The annual meeting was very productive for the fish and wildlife department."

CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE

CJH staff spent much of their time carrying trays of salmon fry out of incubation and into raceways to rear them. About 630,000 alevin remain in the incubation room and staff ponded about 1,430,000 fingerlings this season.

All of the 2014 brood yearlings will be released this April from the hatchery and the acclimation ponds. A total of 520,000 spring Chinook yearlings and 410,000 summer Chinook yearlings will be released from the hatchery. 200,000 spring Chinook will be released from the Riverside Pond and 295,000 summer Chinook yearlings will be released from the Omak Pond. Staff will begin marking the 2015 brood sub-yearlings on April 4.



Tyler Marcellay, CJH staff



WILDLIFE PROGRAM CONTINUES MONITORING EFFORTS OF PRONGHORN

The release of pronghorn on the Colville Indian Reservation in January has brought a lot of excitement to the area, but there have been some mortalities. Most of the herd is doing well after being relocated to their new home from Nevada but 13 of the 52 pronghorn have died.

Currently 27 radio-collared pronghorn are transmitting data and all the collars from the deceased animals have been recovered. During the recovery effort, none of the 12 non-collared animals have been found according to wildlife staff. The pronghorn are still on the reservation and within the expected use area that was selected for the release.

Biologists were initially concerned with the rate of mortality, however some mortality can be expected. “Weather is always a difficult issue to deal with and it’s hard to predict exactly how it will influence any type of reintroduction effort,” said Kelly Singer, Land and Mitigation biologist for CTFW. “It is good to see the mortality rate going down now that the snow is melting off.”

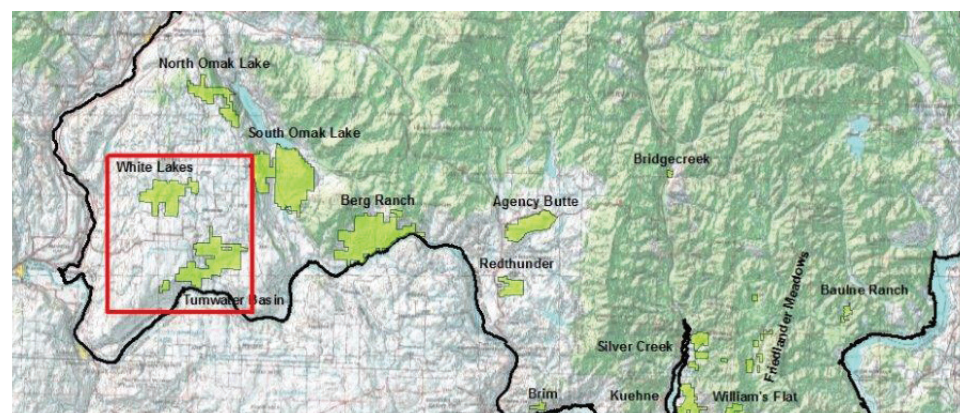
“Although coyotes may be the apparent cause of death, many factors could have led to the loss of individual pronghorn. Sometimes, animals can be stressed to unhealthy levels during the capture process which can lead to delayed mortality events,” said Richard Whitney, wildlife manager for CTFW.

“Pronghorn are very susceptible to issues that may arise from capture related stress. Coyotes will make use of these stressed animals and may easily predate upon them.” He said, “This may lead managers to believe that we have a coyote problem, when actually they may be helping the herd by removing the weak individuals. The exact reasons for the deaths are largely unknown, but luckily we haven’t had any recorded deaths in a few weeks.”

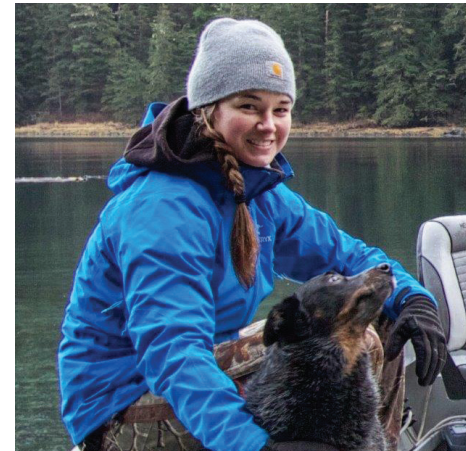
Wildlife biologists are looking forward to the fawning season which is typically from mid-May to mid-June. The female pronghorn usually have one or two fawns. The area where the animals were released is primarily shrub-steppe habitat with draws and drainages that support riparian vegetation. Primary vegetation contains a

shrub component of bitterbrush, basin big sagebrush, and/or threetip sagebrush, with undergrowth components of native perennial grasses and forbs. The shrub and grass species provides adequate high-quality forage for the pronghorn as well as thermal and hiding cover. The area also provides adequate water sources for pronghorn.

The Colville Tribes Wildlife Mitigation Project manages approximately 25,000 acres of land in the area that the pronghorn were released. These properties are primarily managed for the benefit of wildlife and their habitats through funding provided by Bonneville Power Administration to offset a portion of their wildlife mitigation obligation for the loss of wildlife habitats during the construction and inundation by Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph hydropower projects.



LET’S WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS



TAYLOR SCOTT recently joined CTFW as the assistant manager for Chief Joseph Hatchery. In her position, she is responsible for all tasks related to hatchery operations, including supervising and training fish culturists. She develops budgets, oversees maintenance needs, assists with collecting biological data, and monitors fish growth and fish health. Scott also assists with capture efforts, transport and spawning of adult Chinook including incubating eggs and monitoring egg development. Prior to taking on her new position, she worked as a biological scientific technician for Marrowstone Marine Field Station culturing numerous populations of diseased and pathogen-free fish involved in disease ecology research. She worked with Pacific herring, rainbow trout and Chinook salmon. Scott also worked for Hidden Falls Hatchery as a fish culturist and for Lewis River Hatchery as a technician. Scott earned her A.A.S. degree in fisheries technology from Mt. Hood Community College in 2010. She enjoys hiking, biking, fly fishing, and backpacking with her dogs and loves to cook.



DENNIS MOORE, recently graduated from Eastern Washington University earning his bachelor of science in biology and works as the habitat and hydro biologist for the CTFW department. While attending college, he took part in the CTFW Management Intern Program which assisted him financially in school and provided him summer internship experience working for the department. In his current position, he inventories riparian and aquatic habitat and fish passage barriers, implements and manages habitat restoration efforts, and supervises technical staff. Moore also assists key staff to protect and restore critical Lake Roosevelt habitat. He enjoys hunting, fishing, hiking and camping year around. “I was one of the fortunate students who utilized the Management Intern Program and I have to say it was instrumental in my success as the support and direction helped me maintain a focus on my studies while limiting outside distractions,” said Moore. “Knowing that I had summertime and post graduate employment arranged ahead of time relieved a great deal of the stress that many of my classmates experienced.”



JARRED ERICKSON, will begin his new position as a resource protection biologist at the end of March. He will conduct biological studies, research, and provide analysis of fish, wildlife, and habitat data. Erickson will serve as the Wildlife Program’s assistant 3P biologist. He will represent the tribe in the Timber and Fish and Wildlife program through review of forest practice applications, water type modifications, and participate in State ID teams in order to protect wildlife and habitat resources. He must maintain a fire control certification, respond to Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) fires, and write resource assessments. Erickson will work with other tribal programs, federal and state agencies, and the public.

Erickson previously worked as a weed control biologist and fisheries technician for CTFW and interned with the department while attending college. While interning he captured adult and juvenile sturgeon, collected larvae and DNA samples, electro-shocked predator fish, and worked on kokanee and rainbow trout projects. Erickson recently earned a biology of science degree from Eastern Washington University.

IJ STENSGAR, CTFW accounting manager, was recently hired to oversee an annual operating budget of \$35 million. His duties include accounting, budgeting, forecasts and financial reporting. Stensgar supervises staff that work on general ledger transactions, invoicing, accounts payable, procurement, payroll, travel, fixed assets and insurance. He also provides accounting

expertise and assistance to project managers, supervisors, and project leads. Prior to working for CTFW, he worked as an accountant for TANF and the Central Accounting office for the Colville Tribe. Stensgar earned his bachelor’s in business administration with a concentration in finance from Gonzaga University in 2010.