



## WILDLIFE EMPLOYEE RETIRES AFTER MANY YEARS OF SERVICE

Rick Desautel, tribal member from Inchelium, Wash., retired from Colville Tribes' Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) on March 16. He has worked for the department since 1994 as a game management specialist, wildlife enforcer and an advisor.

Rodney Cawston, chair of the Natural Resource Committee spoke a few words. "I grew up in Nespelem and my dad, we would go hunting and fishing and in those days we lived off fish and deer meat for subsistence," said Cawston. "Look at the progress our tribe has made and the Fish and Wildlife department in particular. The reintroduction of big game and we see salmon. It was absent for so many years and Rick he's been here all that time." He continued, "Watching the video and seeing his career, he had one of the coolest jobs at the tribe, what an office. He's made a significant and positive impact here and I want to thank him for that."

During his 24 years of service, Desautel worked with all kinds of wildlife and his job included outreach and education, providing information to youth and adults and to businesses on ways to reduce conflicts with wildlife. He would assist at booth events, teach

kids how to fish, and his fur demonstration was popular, so popular that the students and teachers would always ask him to come back.

Desautel assisted with developing hunting and trapping regulations, wildlife surveys, animal capture operations, re-introduction and transplants efforts, and helped distribute salmon to the membership. Every year, he would cook salmon at different events and at salmon ceremonies on the reservation and in Canada.

"Everybody in this room has probably seen Rick cook salmon," said Randy Friedlander, CTFW director. "He told me how he first got roped into it at a salmon festival in Leavenworth and this family asked him to watch the fire and they would be back, well they never came back and he's been doing this for a while now." He said, "I've been watching him to see who he's gonna have take over or if he'll come over, that would be a special treat."

In 2005, he became an advisor and represented the Sinixt/Arrow Lakes people in attaining their hunting and gathering rights within their traditional territories in B.C. Canada. He was a great asset to the department and the tribe, and he will be missed.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS



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## CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE

In January, Chief Joseph Hatchery (CJH) staff set up fish tanks in several schools around the reservation for the first "Salmon in the Classroom" project. Students from Paschal Sherman Indian School, Nespelem, Omak Elementary, Okanogan, Inchelium and Keller Schools will release their fish at the end of March.

"The plan is to transport the fish in a five-gallon bucket with lid to the release location," said Taylor Scott, CJH assistant manager. "Then hand out cups each containing one-to-two fry to the students so they can personally

release their fish. There will also likely be some questions and discussion with students about evaluating the release habitat, what they learned about salmon biology, and anything else they took away from participating in the program."

Fisheries staff have been caring for thousands of salmon eggs and alevin over the winter months. In early February, staff ponded 200,000 sub-yearling summer Chinook. "The fertilized eggs are laid down into incubators for four to eight months and the eggs are regularly treated with formalin to keep the surface of the egg clean and devoid of fungus," said Scott. "Once hatched and buttoned up, fry are transferred from incubators to start tanks and they reside in the start tanks for two weeks and learn to eat commercial fish feed."

Currently there are 464,000 segregated yearling summer Chinook and 555,000 segregated spring Chinook at CJH. There are 201,000 integrated spring Chinook at the Riverside acclimation pond (MetComp 10j's) and 302,000 integrated yearling summer Chinook at the Omak acclimation pond.



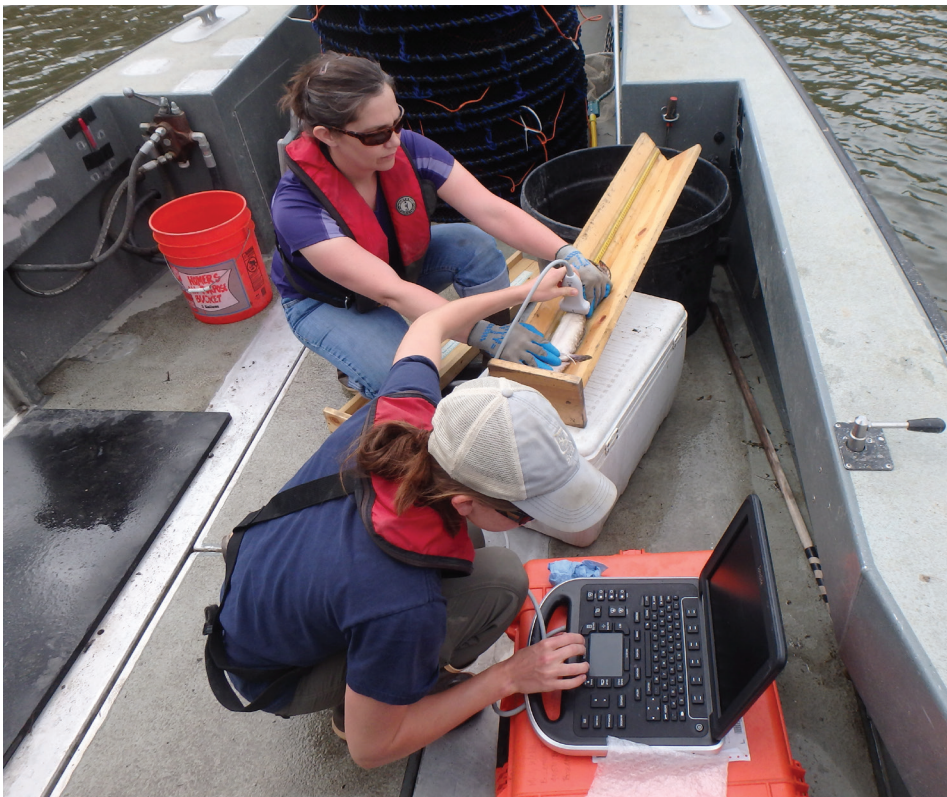
**MATTHEW MCDANIEL** was recently hired as the new hatchery manager for Chief Joseph Hatchery. He previously worked for White River Hatchery in Enumclaw, Wash. where he oversaw all aspects of the hatchery operations for Pacific salmon including: spawning, incubation, rearing, health and treatment of fish, stocking strategies, and marking and tagging activities. McDaniel worked with multiple agencies to coordinate spawning protocol for White River spring Chinook. He also worked as a fish hatchery specialist for the Soos Creek Hatchery in Auburn, Wash. and as a fish identification and habitat instructor for Green River College. McDaniel earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington in aquatic and fisheries sciences with an emphasis in ecology.

In his new position, he will plan and direct the fish culture operations necessary to meet the annual production of Chinook salmon at CJH. (At full production, the hatchery will rear up to two million summer and fall Chinook and 900,000 spring Chinook.) He will also be responsible for hiring, development, and retention of hatchery staff and oversee a fish culturist training program. McDaniel will manage the hatchery's annual budget and formulate long and short-term plans related to production, operations and facility improvements. An objective of the hatchery is to support the ceremonial, subsistence, and cultural needs of the tribe.





LAKE ROOSEVELT BURBOT PROJECT



Ultrasound to determine sex

The Colville Tribes’ Resident Fish (CTRF) Division initiated the Lake Roosevelt Burbot project in 2013 as a means to provide technical advice to Lake Roosevelt co-managers (Spokane Tribe, Colville Tribes and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) on managing the burbot population in Lake Roosevelt waters.

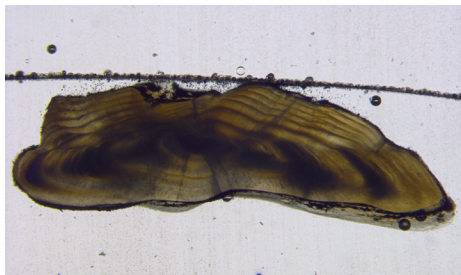
Charlee Capaul, CTFW biologist, has been working on the Lake Roosevelt Burbot project since 2014 and collects these fish using a variety of gears such as nets, traps, and trawls. Last year, she conducted sampling for population monitoring, a reproductive maturation study, a contaminant analysis, and in the process she handled hundreds of burbot.

“Burbot are the only cod species to spend their entire life in freshwater and are fondly known by anglers as poor man’s lobster,” said Capaul. “However, they have been largely overlooked by anglers and fishery managers in Lake Roosevelt. Low harvest and angler effort along with an increase in the abundance of burbot in Lake Roosevelt, since the early 2000s, suggests that the population could potentially support greater harvest.”



Burbot

“In addition to this work, we have been using otoliths prepared by the thin section method to age burbot and we are one of a limited number of organizations that have the equipment to do this,” said Jason McLellan, research scientist for CTFW. “Our findings indicate that the Lake Roosevelt population is relatively stable, and through our cooperative research with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bozeman Fish Technology Center, we can use non-lethal methods (blood plasma, ultrasound) to determine the gender of burbot.”



eDNA

McLellan also hopes these same techniques can also be used to predict spawning. Research will continue as fisheries staff will evaluate factors influencing population productivity such as reservoir operations.

“This year, we are going to attempt to capture them at the larval stage and use eDNA (environmental DNA is a method of determining the presence of different fish species through water samples) to investigate spawning in tributary streams, continue our population monitoring efforts, and population modeling,” Capaul said.

This is one of two burbot projects in the entire Columbia River Basin. The Kootenai River is dealing with a recovery effort. McLellan believes the two projects complement each other and increase knowledge regarding burbot populations and management. Bonneville Power Administration has put forth over \$387,000 to fund the Lake Roosevelt Burbot Population Assessment project in 2018.



Burbot trap retrieval

2018 ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW



The Colville Tribes’ Fish and Wildlife (CTFW) department hosted the Eighth Annual Chief Joseph Hatchery (CJH) Program Review on March 14 and 15, at the 12 Tribes Casino and Resort in Omak, Wash. to discuss findings from the previous year and to develop a CJH production, harvest and science monitoring plan for 2018.

“The hatchery is in its fifth year of operation and last year we were excited to see the first returns of adult Chinook and unfortunately, poor ocean conditions, predation, and harvest in other areas resulted in low returns to the Upper Columbia,” said Randy Friedlander, CTFW director. “Our overall tribal harvest of Chinook for the year was around 1,300 fish, which is similar to one day of fishing based on historical harvest estimates. Compared to the lower Columbia and Snake River regions, there is very little Chinook hatchery production in the Upper Columbia, that’s why we need to get all we can out of CJH.”



CTFW presenters discussed harvest, hatchery, and habitat outcomes, research and monitoring efforts, and fish ladder and weir activities that took place in 2017 and discussed their goals and objectives for the future.

“The weir is a valuable asset for the CJH program because it’s a tool that can meet 15 percent of the broodstock goal for the hatchery’s integrated program as well as manage the proportion of hatchery-origin fish on the spawning grounds,” said Andrea Pearl, CTFW senior fisheries biologist. “We plan to use the weir to meet these same goals in 2018.”

“The program successfully implemented the management actions and monitoring necessary to evaluate the status of Chinook populations in the Okanogan River, to document the successful harvest of returning CJH fish, and to operate the program consistent with conservation objectives for the wild population,” said Casey Baldwin, CTFW



senior research scientist. “Although the hatchery did not meet full production targets, it still provided three times more Chinook juvenile releases than the pre-CJH program.”

CTFW staff are expecting a similar run size as last year, with fewer wild fish and more hatchery returns than in recent years. Staff will collect broodstock similar to the past using the purse seine fishing boat and weir, and they will make some changes in how they handle the fish and water management to try to improve survival rates in the hatchery.

For more information about the CJH program, go to [www.cct-firw.com/salmon-hatchery](http://www.cct-firw.com/salmon-hatchery)

