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COLVILLE TRIBES FISH & WILDLIFE NEWS

HIGH RUNOFF IMPACTS CCT FISHERIES

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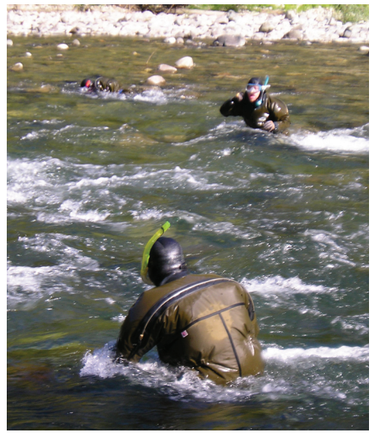
In addition the salmon runs were running two, even three weeks late. There is still plenty of summer Chinook to come over Wells Dam as of today. The sockeye have come and gone straight up in to Canada. We went into Canada and spent three days with ONA fisheries staff with the Dream Catcher, given the sockeye were in Lake Osooyos. We were able to harvest approximately 700 sockeye for them. We were hoping to get our hands on many more.

We will continue to look at ways to harvest salmon for the Colville people. It is exciting to see these traditional fisheries coming back.

Until next time…. Lem limt

RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM SUPPORTS CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY



The Chief Joseph Hatchery Science Program (CJHP) monitors hatchery production, harvest and habitat conditions. It provides a science–based approach toward meeting tribal and regional conservation and harvest goals. This ensures that the hatchery operations produce high quality fish that can survive in the receiving environment. As Dr. Keith Wolf, lead scientist/biologist for the CCT Fish and Wildlife explained, "Each year's fish production and stock composition is composed of several monitoring elements: hatchery production, harvest, life-stage survival, genetics and habitat conditions." Combined, over sixty-seven biological and physical attributes are measured and analyzed for the hatchery alone."

Habitat, Hatchery and Harvest Programs are integrated to quantify the current status of anadromous fish habitats and populations. "The objective is to assist the entire program in steady and thoughtful progress toward conservation and recovery of both fish and their environment," said Wolf. "The CJHP also has a keen focus on meeting long-delayed tribal ceremonial and subsistence goals."

"This will increase the abundance of natural-origin fish as we integrate with the hatchery program," said Jerry Marco, Anadromous Division program manager. "This program-wide integration will bring a rigorous analysis forward each year to the policy/science decision group." This group includes state, federal, congressional and stakeholder representation and is led by the Colville Tribes and is facilitated by the Science Program.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PROJECT PARTNERS

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation 1872

Bonneville Power Administration

Northwest Power and Conservation Council

US Army Corps of Engineers

Chelan County P.U.D. Power

Grant County Public Utility District

Douglas County P.U.D.

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CHIEF JOSEPH HATCHERY UPDATE

On a clear day you can see a hatchery taking shape! The scale of the project and relationship of the components becomes more evident in the aerial photos provided by PCL. Photographers are flying over the sight regularly to document progress and there's been a lot of that this summer. The project is about half way completed according to John McGlenn, senior structural engineer and director of the Tetra Tech design team.

"After years of planning, design and permitting, it was a real joy to watch the tilt-up concrete walls and timber roof framing of the hatchery building come together recently," said McGlenn, himself an avid fisherman.

The construction crews are making the most of the weather to get the roof on the main hatchery building so that construction of the complex mechanical and electrical systems along with interior finishes can be completed over the winter. Crews are finishing the two large banks of raceways – the tanks where the salmon are raised. By next spring, the steel frames and netting that protect the young fish from predatory birds will be completed.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits are in-hand to begin the in-water construction of the fish ladder. The design engineers and contractor have been working out a way to construct the fish ladder since geologic conditions at the site will preclude the use of conventional cofferdam techniques. The fish ladder is a fascinating part of the complex and its design reflects the tribe's approach to perfecting non-lethal methods of collecting broodstock. Homecoming fish will be attracted to the ladder by the scent in the discharged hatchery production water that will flow down the ladder. Mature fish will swim up the ladder to a point where they can be crowded into a vertical shaft with fluctuating water levels that acts as a fish lift. Fish are raised up to a working deck where they can be sorted. Fish sought for broodstock will be placed in concrete raceways to ripen. Certain fish will be returned to the river and others will be harvested.

A cleaning waste facility will receive solid waste that is vacuumed from raceways and rearing ponds. Here the solids are settled out for later collection and transfer to disposal sites or for use as fertilizer. Clear water is allowed to flow out past a discharge weir to join the stream of process water discharging from the ponds and raceways.

An important building with an unusual name, headbox, is also underway. This is where the different water supplies from the well field and reservoir converge to be directed, conditioned or mixed as needed on their way to incubators, transfer tanks, raceways or ponds. Clean, cold water, up to 40 million gallons a day, will flow from the headbox to the hatchery building, raceways and ponds. This water will then be discharged to the ladder or the by-pass line which parallels the ladder into the river.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

TRIBAL ELDER TEACHES TRADITIONAL WAY TO FISH

Leroy "Chaz" Williams, a Colville tribal member, was recently contracted by the Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) Fish and Wildlife Department to build hoop nets and dip nets and he will train tribal members on how to construct these nets. As part of the agreement, Williams will also use these nets to fish for salmon from now till the end of October.

Leroy "Chaz" Williams grew up in Nespelem, Wash., has 26 grandchildren, and taught his two sons Eli and Mylan how to fish. Williams said his two uncles taught him at a young age how to fish and make hoop nets.

"I get excited each year when it's time to go fishing with the nets," said Williams. "I get my wire for my nets at a place in the Dalles. It takes about 300 feet of wire to make a good size net and if you work hard, you can complete one in about a day and a half."

Williams said the cost to make a large hoop net is around $450 which includes the webbing for the net and wire for the large hoop itself. For the dip nets, they combine two long poles with a metal cylinder to create a pole 33 feet in length. To protect the wooden poles, they wrap the poles with electrical tape. With these long poles they are able to cover a larger area of water moving from one side of the scaffold to the other hoping to catch a fish or two. "Ain't no better way to fish," says Mylan Williams. "Once you catch a fish like this, especially when you catch two, this is the best way."

"We are anticipating having Leroy set up a few training demonstrations in each of the districts," said Joe Peone, director of Fish and Wildlife for the Colville Tribes. "The plan is to have these trainings get underway in November, after the fishing season."

The Williams family enjoys camping and fishing at Icicle and if you happen to take a drive at night to the new fishing scaffolds near the tribal fish hatchery at Bridgeport, Wash., you will see them fishing there as well.

The salmon that is caught will be taken to the fish processing building at the old Pascal Sherman Indian School east of Omak, Wash. The fish will be packaged for distribution to tribal members.

CCT Fish and Wildlife plan to add two to four scaffolds per year for tribal members to fish from with dip nets and hoop nets. Next year, the department plans to build two scaffolds near the new Chief Joseph Chinook Hatchery. In the future, the tribe will be looking at other locations along the Okanogan River and San Poil River. Any thoughts from Colville tribal members on locations would be greatly appreciated.

NEW FISHING SCAFFOLDS ALONG THE COLUMBIA HELPS TO REVIVE CULTURE

Two new fishing scaffolds were recently built so Colville tribal members have a place to fish for salmon using their hoop nets and dip nets. JWP Construction, a tribally-owned local company, built the two scaffolds and was selected through a competitive bidding process.

"It took us three weeks, 1,100 man hours to build them and I had ten guys working on this project," said Jesse Palmer, owner of JWP Construction. "The biggest part of the job was the excavation; the original design had to be modified due to the steep slope of the hillside."

The permanent scaffolds are eight feet wide and twenty-six feet long and were built to withstand the weather for years.

"These scaffolds are really nice and a lot larger than what we're use to," said tribal fisherman Mylan Williams. "Some places that we fished at, we are walking on thin planks, these are much better to fish on."

New signs will be posted in the area with rules regarding this new fishing site. Only one person at a time should be fishing from each of the scaffolds.

THE RULES STATE:

- No snagging allowed per council resolution 2011-532
- Hoop nets on scaffolds only
- Dip nets on scaffolds only
- No alcohol or drugs allowed
- No cleaning fish at the fishing area
- Tribal members only
- Officer on patrol
- No littering, use garbage cans
- Quiet time from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.

HIGH RUNOFF IMPACTS CCT FISHERIES

BY JOE PEONE, CCT FISH AND WILDLIFE DIRECTOR

The winter of 2010 and 2011 brought a lot of snow and moisture to the Pacific Northwest. In fact it brought so much, the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers had some of the highest runoff since 1997. That's not bad news, except if you are a tribal fisherman waiting patiently for the salmon to come and to top it off, it has been one of the best summer Chinook (80,000 to 90,000) and sockeye runs (187,000) in recent years. Even after the sportsman, commercial fisherman and treaty tribes harvest their share; there was plenty over Wells Dam for CCT members and local sportsman to harvest. But why then was it so hard to catch our harvest allocation of summer Chinook and sockeye this summer?

It has a lot to do with the water temperature of the Okanogan River at its confluence with the Columbia River and high volume of runoff. In a normal year and summer, the Okanogan River is 73° and higher in temperature. The salmon hold up in the edges of the Columbia River where it buts up to the Okanogan River. This in return allows the Colville tribes selective harvest crew - Dale Clark, James Ives and Mike Rayton to fish from the purse seine "Dream Catcher." They live capture large numbers of summer Chinook and sockeye, while releasing natural origin summer Chinook and harvest hatchery summer Chinook. The sockeye do not need to be sorted, we harvest them up to our allocation.

In the last two years (2009 and 2010), we were able to harvest 16,000 and 20,000 respectively. Now in 2011, we have a harvest of less than 1,000. Not so good, but we are still learning and will improve over time.

The bottom line is when the high waters flow into late August, the temp barrier does not build up in the Okanogan, so the fish continue to migrate up the Okanogan to their spawning grounds. Summer Chinook head for the Smilkameen River and the sockeye head for Canada. Water temps in the mouth of the Okanogan on July 1 (when the crew began this year) was 61 degrees. Normally it is in the low to mid-70's by August. Not the case this year.

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TRIBAL COMPANY FULL STEAM AHEAD ON MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT

Colville Electrical Contractor's (CEC) continues to show progress on a $3.6 million electrical project at the Chief Joseph Hatchery in Bridgeport, Wash. CEC began this project in January, 2011 and currently has ten employees working on-site of which 85% are tribal members.

The company is working on all electrical and instrumentation associated with the water supply and hatchery. John Wagstaff, project manager for CEC is proud of what his team has accomplished.

CEC workers are installing all the electrical systems for the well field pipelines, potable water well, relief tunnel system, reservoir water system, hatchery, office and storage buildings, headbox, broodstock and fish ladder, including raceways, ponds, and cleaning waste structure.

Joe Ferguson, lead electrician for CEC, is in charge of wiring the entire hatchery building. "It's about five miles or more of wiring that goes into this building, it's going to be a nice clean installation," he said. John LaFountain, electrician for CEC, oversees the electrical work on the headbox which will join multiple water sources and distribute water throughout the hatchery.

The electrical company is also running 5,000 feet of cable (one continuous length) from a control room on one side of Chief Joseph Dam through the spillways to the other side of the dam. This cable will allow communication between the well houses. "We are also installing all the motor starters, variable frequency drives, all the equipment pads, motor control centers, backup generators, unit heaters and exhaust fans," said Nathan Moulton, division manager for CEC. "It's quit a large and extensive job."

"We have good electricians that have pride in their work. We stay on task and on schedule and sometimes we have been ahead of schedule, our guys are doing a great job."

- John Wagstaff