

**APPENDIX B**

**Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery  
Draft Fishing Plan  
February 2019**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery  
8077 Hatchery Road  
Hotchkiss, CO 81419  
Delta County**

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Approval: \_\_\_\_\_  
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# HOTCHKISS NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY DRAFT FISHING PLAN

## I. Introduction

National Fish Hatcheries are guided by the mission and goals of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS), the purposes of an individual hatchery, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter referred to as the Service or USFWS, interchangeable) policy, and laws and international treaties. Relevant guidance includes selected portions of the Code of Federal Regulations and Fish and Wildlife Service Manual.

Hotchkiss NFH is located about 20 miles east of Delta, CO near the town of Hotchkiss and was established in 1967 as part of the Colorado River Storage Project Act. Located on 58 acres along the banks of the North Fork of the Gunnison River, the hatchery's cold, clean water supply comes from the adjacent Tommy Dowell Spring. Hotchkiss NFH facilities include 24 inside nursery tanks, 40 concrete raceways, and 2 earthen ponds use for effluent treatment and sedimentation.



**Figure 1: Location of Hotchkiss NFH in Hotchkiss, CO**

For visitors to the area, the hatchery offers picnic shelters, wildlife watching, access to the North Fork of the Gunnison River and visitor center to ensure a rewarding experience for all visitors.

There has not been a formal program previously established on Hotchkiss NFH to fish public waters. Fishing occurs on the North Fork of the Gunnison River adjacent to the hatchery.

## II. Statement of Objectives

Allowing fishing access from hatchery property is consistent with the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program's Strategic goal to "Enhance Recreational Fishing and Other Public Uses of Aquatic Resources". The Service has a long tradition of fostering public uses and enjoyment of aquatic resources through its work to conserve these resources, to support fishing and other aquatic outdoor recreational activities, and national education programs.

## **Fishing Plan Goal**

*Increase angling participation.* Diverse, stable and productive angling opportunities are the basis for increased angling participation. Programs should foster life-long participation in fishing and the outdoors based on simple, easily available opportunities and skills that can be learned at any age.

## **Fishing Plan Objective**

The objective of a fishing program on Hotchkiss NFH is to provide opportunities for visitors to fish via access to the North Fork of the Gunnison River from hatchery property in accordance with FAC goals and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife's fishing regulations.

The program will:

- Include clear and concise regulations that are readily available to visitors on the hatchery website;
- Pose minimal conflict with overall FAC and hatchery objectives;
- Pose minimal conflict with other priority public use activities; and
- Provide a quality angling program that provides opportunities for visitors to fish from or on hatchery lands.

## **Fishing Plan Strategies:**

- a. Allow anglers to access the North Fork of the Gunnison River via an identified access point, and/or to bank fish along the shore bordering the hatchery.

## **III. Description of Fishing Program**

### **A. Areas to be Opened to Fishing**

Bank fishing would occur along the shore bordering the hatchery as well as the river itself. Available shoreline area is limited by extensive riparian growth including trees and shrubs.

### **B. Species to be Taken, Fishing Periods, Fishing Access**

The areas will be open for anglers year around from dawn to dusk. Anglers will access the River at the river access area west of the covered raceways on the west end of the hatchery property. Parking is also permitted in the day use parking area.

Species available in the River primarily include rainbow trout and brown trout.



**Figure 2: Map of Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery Grounds showing parking and fishing access.**

### **C. Fishing Permit Requirements**

Anglers who are eligible to fish under Colorado law are eligible to fish public waters from hatchery property. They must obtain a Colorado fishing license and follow Colorado state laws, limits, and regulations.

### **D. Consultation and Coordination with the State**

The Service reviewed any applicable state fishing regulations to ensure consistency, and has been in contact with Colorado Parks and Wildlife about support for the Service proposal.

### **E. Law Enforcement**

The hatchery has no law enforcement component.

The following methods are used to control and enforce regulations:

- Hatchery and fishing area boundaries will be clearly posted;
- The hatchery website will provide information for anglers including links to State websites relative to regulations and obtaining fishing licenses;
- Fishing information will be available in the visitor kiosk and/or in the visitor center.

### **F. Funding and Staffing Requirements**

There will be costs associated with the development of infrastructure to support fishing at Hotchkiss NFH. Following the development and approval of a fishing opening package, initial improvement costs will include acquisition and installation of signage as well as purchase and placement of recycling and trash containers.

Annual costs to administer the fishing program at Hotchkiss NFH, including salary, equipment, and maintenance, totals approximately \$3,500. Expenses will consist primarily of posting and maintaining “Public Fishing Area” signs, maintenance of the trail and parking lot, disposal of waste from trash containers, and production and dissemination of materials regarding fishing access and regulations.

**Table 1. Costs to Administer a Fishing Program at Hotchkiss NFH**

<b>Activity or Project</b>	<b>One-time Expense</b>	<b>Recurring (Annual) Expense</b>
Signage	\$800	
Trash and recycling containers	\$1,000	
Maintenance		\$1,500
Staff		\$3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,800</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>

#### **IV. Conduct of the Fishing Program**

##### **A. Fishing Permit Application, Selection, and/or Registration Procedures**

No special application or registration process is required.

##### **B. Hatchery-Specific Fishing Regulations**

There are no hatchery-specific fishing regulations.

##### **C. Relevant State Regulations**

[CPW State fishing information and regulations](#)

##### **Other Hatchery Rules and Regulations for Fishing**

- Camping, overnight use, and fires are prohibited.
- Cleaning of fish on the hatchery is prohibited.
- Pets must be on leash while on the hatchery or under direct control of the owner.

## **V. Public Engagement**

### **A. Outreach for Announcing and Publicizing the Fishing Program**

Announcement concerning public fishing will be made on the Hotchkiss NFH Facebook page, with information about fishing available on the Hotchkiss NFH website:

[Hotchkiss NFH Website](#)

### **B. Anticipated Public Reaction to the Fishing Program**

The Service does not anticipate any controversy as a result of opening this use on Hotchkiss NFH.

### **C. How Anglers Will Be Informed of Relevant Rules and Regulations**

General information regarding fishing and other wildlife-dependent public uses can be obtained from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website:

[CPW General Information regarding fishing](#)

## **VI. Compatibility Determination**

Fishing and all associated program activities proposed in this plan are determined to be compatible with the purposes of the hatchery, and not detrimental to the propagation and distribution of fish or other aquatic wildlife (50 CFR 71).