

Pittsford

National Fish Hatchery

Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Resources Complex

Represented by Members of Congress:

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Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT)

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Purpose

Pittsford National Fish Hatchery produces sea-run Atlantic salmon as part of the effort to restore migratory fish populations in the Connecticut River basin. The hatchery also produces lake trout for restoration in the lower Great Lakes and has oversight for Atlantic salmon production and operations at the Berkshire Trout Hatchery in Massachusetts.

Management Activities

- Annually produces 350,000 Atlantic salmon fry and 80,000 to 100,000 smolts for release in the Connecticut River basin.
- In 2006, in cooperation with the New York, released 15,000 lake trout for restoring inter-jurisdictional and recreational fisheries in Lake Champlain

- Initiated the production of more than 150,000 lake trout for lower Great Lakes (Ontario and Erie) in 2006.
- Has oversight of production and operations at the Berkshire Trout Hatchery
- Presents the Adopt-A-Salmon Family and other programs in schools and at other community events.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Raceways

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Highlights

Atlantic salmon fry and smolts raised at the hatchery are released into the Connecticut River. Pittsford was responsible for the most adult returns of Atlantic salmon to the Connecticut River when 529 adult salmon ascended the river in 1979. In 2006, over 20 percent of Atlantic salmon returning to the Connecticut River originated from Pittsford-raised smolts.

Under a new agreement with the nonprofit Berkshire Hatchery Foundation, Pittsford National Fish Hatchery staff are providing oversight for the first and only hatchery in National Fish Hatchery System run solely by volunteers

In 2007, Pittsford will continue to assist with lake trout production for the Great Lakes due to loss of production capability in that system. The hatchery has received lake trout eggs for rearing and release in 2008, but the longevity of this program has yet to be determined.

Pittsford is an historic hatchery that celebrated its 100th year of operation in 2006. As a fisheries technical center in the first half of the 20th century, the station pioneered many culture techniques for a dozen or more species of trout, char, grayling and salmon. The hatchery has a low-cost gravity-fed water supply that is considered to have an ideal water chemistry and temperature regime for salmonid culture.

Issues

Aging hatchery facilities are in need of upgrade and repair to take full advantage of a unique water source.

Due to severe budget constraints within the Fish and Wildlife Service, the future of some fisheries field stations is unclear. Pittsford tries to maintain flexibility with its infrastructure and programs to meet the future fisheries needs of the Northeast.

