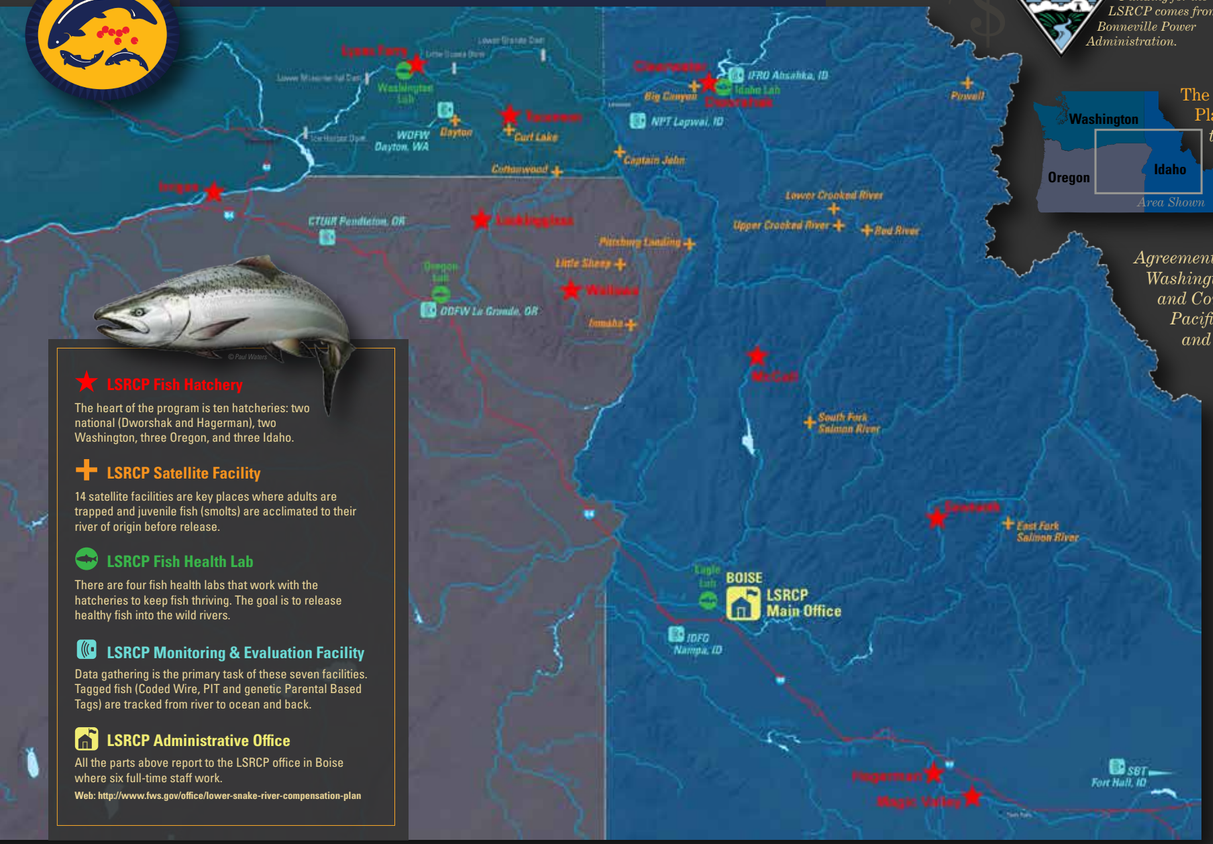
Lower Snake River Compensation Plan or LSRCP



LSRCP Fish Hatchery

The heart of the program is ten hatcheries: two national (Dworshak and Hagerman), two Washington, three Oregon, and three Idaho.

LSRCP Satellite Facility

14 satellite facilities are key places where adults are trapped and juvenile fish (smolts) are acclimated to their river of origin before release.

LSRCP Fish Health Lab

There are four fish health labs that work with the hatcheries to keep fish thriving. The goal is to release healthy fish into the wild rivers.

LSRCP Monitoring & Evaluation Facility

Data gathering is the primary task of these seven facilities. Tagged fish (Coded Wire, PIT and genetic Parental Based Tags) are tracked from river to ocean and back.

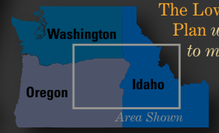
LSRCP Administrative Office

All the parts above report to the LSRCP office in Boise where six full-time staff work.

Web: http://www.fws.gov/office/lower-snake-river-compensation-plan

Funding for the LSRCP comes from the Bonneville Power Administration.

The LSRCP program is administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



The Lower Snake River Compensation Plan was authorized by Congress in 1976 to mitigate for the adverse impact four lower Snake River dams had on commercial, recreational and tribal fisheries. Our hatcheries and evaluation programs are conducted under Cooperative Agreements with the States of Idaho, Oregon and Washington, the Nez Perce, Shoshone-Bannock and Confederated Umatilla Tribes, and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Service hatcheries and field stations.

LSRCP yearly adult PRODUCTION:

91,500	Fall Chinook
293,500	Summer/Spring Chinook
165,300	steelhead…

for harvest in the ocean and Columbia below McNary Dam and to escape Chinook and steelhead adults along the lower Snake River. Subtract return goal (below) for coast wide harvest.

LSRCP yearly adult RETURN GOALS:

18,300	Fall Chinook
58,700	Summer/Spring Chinook
55,100	steelhead…

returning above McNary Dam to the LSRCP project or above.

LSRCP facilities raise 86,000 pounds of rainbow trout for local recreational fishing in Washington and Idaho.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries lists Snake River Chinook and steelhead as threatened and sockeye as endangered. The LSRCP supports recovery of these endangered stocks through outplanting juvenile and adult fish.

Tucannon Hatchery LSRCP goals: 1,152 spring Chinook; and 1,200 summer steelhead adults returning

1. Tucannon Hatchery is part of the Lyons Ferry Hatchery Complex. Curl Lake acclimation facility, five miles upriver, is where our spring Chinook and summer steelhead are released.
2. Tucannon River spring Chinook would be the logical stock for reintroducing these fish to Asotin Creek. Tucannon Hatchery would be a key player in this historic recovery effort
3. Tucannon and Lyons Ferry Hatcheries provide 88,000 catchable and 2,000 jumbo size rainbow trout to eight artificial lakes in the Wooten Wildlife Area along the Tucannon River.
4. Tucannon River and Asotin Creek steelhead are two endemic, Major Population Groups essential for species recovery, but their status is precarious
5. A cyclone fence was installed around Curl Lake in 2015 greatly reducing mammal predation on fish. October 31, after fishing season ends, Curl Lake is drained, but refilled in January.
6. Both Tucannon Hatchery spring Chinook and steelhead stray above Lower Granite Dam, in significant numbers. These strays are a loss for us and potential contamination of upstream runs.

Cover photo, Ryan Hagerty, USFWS

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Tucannon
Fish Hatchery

Tucannon Hatchery
2136 Tucannon Road
Pomeroy, WA 99347

509/843-1430
http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fishing

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
http://www.fws.gov/office/lower-snake-river-compensation-plan

December 21, 2023

Part of the ~
LOWER SNAKE RIVER COMPENSATION PLAN

Welcome to Tucannon Hatchery

Open daily 8 to 4. Arrange for guided group tours by calling (509) 843-1430.

Spring

Stock 25 lakes in southeast Wasington with rainbow trout

Release spring Chinook & steelhead juveniles to migrate to the ocean

Transport spring Chinook & steelhead adult broodstock to Lyons Ferry Hatchery for spawning

Summer

Rainbow trout rearing

Adult fish trapping at hatchery intake

Fall

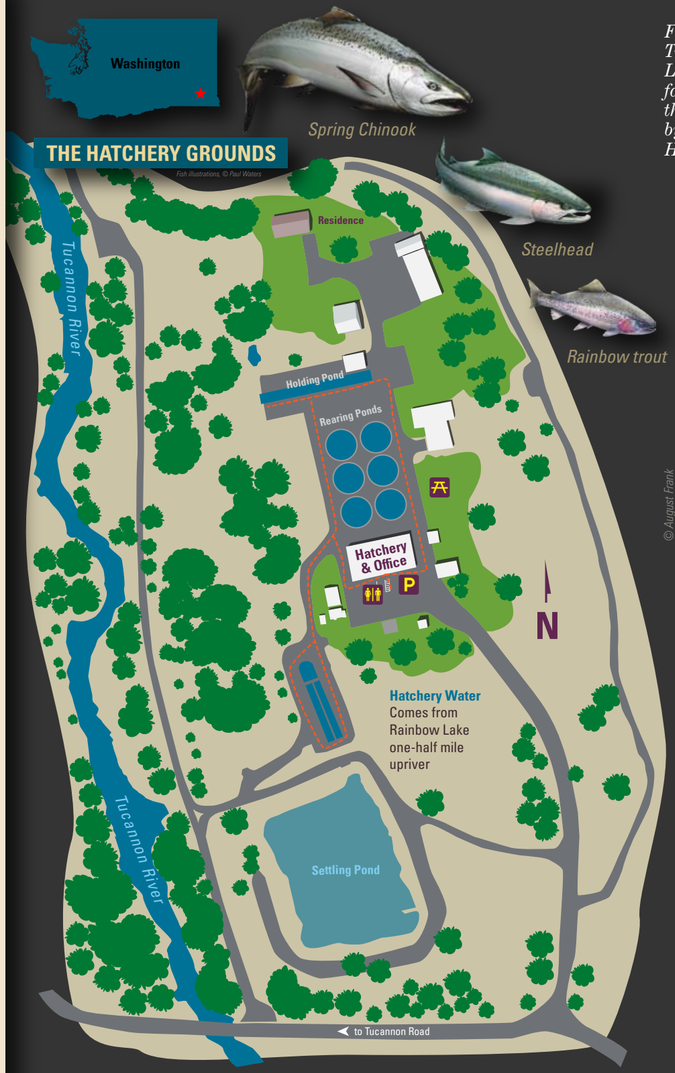
Transport spring Chinook from Lyons Ferry Hatchery to Tucannon to be held until spring release

Here, they imprint on the home or natal stream

Move the rainbow trout to the earthen rearing ponds

Winter

Rainbow trout & spring Chinook fish rearing



Fishing the Tucannon River Lakes is a popular family tradition that's supported by Tucannon Hatchery.


© Jupiter Images

1949 River


© August Frank

Collecting data.

LSRCP Hatchery


© August Frank

An adult Chinook is passed through a coded-wire tag reader at a Tucannon River fish trap.

The Tucannon River in 1949 had wild salmon: spring Chinook spawning in the mid to upper reaches, fall Chinook in the main stem mouth, summer steelhead throughout, and even, perhaps, some spawning coho. Tucannon Hatchery began propagating rainbow trout that year. In the 1950s several artificial lakes were created on the Tucannon: Spring, Curl, Rainbow, Deer, Blue, Watson, Beaver and Big 4. These continue to be extremely popular fishing spots today with an estimated contribution of $780,000 to local economies in 2016.

Jump to 1983 and construction to expand the hatchery begins. To say that the state of salmon on the Tucannon and Lower Snake was dire in 1983 would be an understatement. Coho were extinct, fall and spring Chinook in steep decline, and steelhead becoming scarce. Whereas in 1949 there was only one dam between Tucannon salmon and the ocean, by 1983 there were six. Therefore in 1986, the expansion completed, Tucannon Hatchery joined the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan (LSRCP) in an effort to keep salmon numbers up despite losses due to dams. Spring Chinook and summer steelhead were the new emphasis under the LSRCP, but rainbow trout were still raised for the Tucannon Lakes and elsewhere.


© Florian Graner

Wild steelhead sacfry/babies.

Unique Fish

Tucannon spring Chinook are carefully monitored. PIT tagging juveniles is key to tracking them.

By the mid 1990s the Snake River was dominated by hatchery salmon and steelhead. Four of five fish were hatchery raised—typical across the Columbia Basin. Wild fish were in grave trouble. In 1992 Snake River spring Chinook were listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act or ESA; steelhead were listed in 1997.

The Tucannon's spring Chinook are a Major Population Group essential to recovery under the ESA. In fact, it is the "lone extant population" remaining in Southeast Washington because the "springers" in Asotin Creek are "functionally extirpated." As of 2017 Tucannon's spring Chinook population is at moderate to high risk of extinction. That needle needs to move to "highly viable" in order for the spring Chinook to be "recovered." The situation for steelhead is similar but with two Major Population Groups: both Tucannon and Asotin Creek steelhead are extant. If either run becomes "highly viable," this would spell recovery.

Hatchery fish do not count when it comes to ESA recovery. In fact, hatchery fish must not overwhelm the remaining natural origin fish genetically or spatially. Conserving the unique genetic strain that is wild Tucannon River steelhead and spring Chinook is of paramount importance. Therefore, Tucannon Hatchery integrates natural origin fish into each year's brood, carefully breeding fish most like those naturally occurring in the river.

John Hannon, USBR

Spring Chinook smolt released in the Tucannon River will take about two months to get to the Columbia's estuary.

Tucannon River rainbow trout caught on a fly is artful fun!

Reliable Water

Presently, our steelhead and spring Chinook adults are moved to Lyons Ferry Hatchery for holding and spawning, their eggs incubated to hatching, the new fish fed and returned to Tucannon Hatchery as juveniles—sub-yearling spring Chinook and yearling steelhead. Lyons Ferry has reliably cold and plentiful water. Tucannon's water is not, at least not throughout the year.

Ideally, we would spawn our adult steelhead and Chinook on site, and raise them from egg to release using Tucannon water (be that river, spring or well). In 2018, major alterations were made to Rainbow Lake, a primary water source. The intent of these changes was for plentiful cool water coming to the hatchery.

The hatchery's future along and that of Tucannon River salmon and steelhead will depend on reliably abundant cold water.