

**Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery  
Fishing Plan**

2019

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery  
56961 State Highway 14  
Cook, Washington 98605

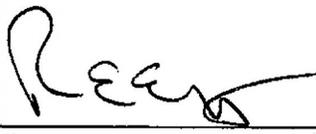
Submitted By:  
Project Leader

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature 10/8/19  
Date

Concurrence:  
Westside  
Line  
Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature 10/15/2019  
Date

Approved:  
Assistant  
Regional  
Director-  
Fish and  
Aquatic  
Conservation

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature 11 Oct. '19  
Date

## Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....	4
II. Statement of Objectives.....	5
III. Description of Fishing Program.....	6
A. Areas to be Opened to Fishing.....	6
B. Species to be Taken, Fishing Periods, Fishing Access.....	7
C. Fishing Permit Requirements.....	7
D. Consultation and Coordination with the State.....	7
E. Law Enforcement.....	8
F. Funding and Staffing Requirements .....	8
IV. Conduct of the Fishing Program.....	9
A. Fishing Permit Application, Selection, and/or Registration Procedures.....	9
B. Hatchery-Specific Regulations .....	9
C. Relevant State Regulations .....	9
D. Other Hatchery Rules and Regulations for Fishing.....	9
V. Public Engagement	
A. Outreach Plan for Announcing and Publicizing the Fishing Program.....	9
B. Anticipated Public Reaction to the Fishing Program .....	9
C. How the Public Will be Informed of Relevant Rules and Regulations .....	10

References

References .....10

List of Figures

Figure 1. Aerial view of Little White Salmon NFH with fishing areas denoted  
.....7

Appendices

Appendix A: Letter to the Washington Depart of Fish and Game initiating  
consultation and coordination for the Little White Salmon NFH Fishing  
Plan.....11

# LITTLE WHITE SALMON NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY DRAFT FISHING PLAN

## **I. Introduction**

National Fish Hatcheries are guided by the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program: FY2016-2020 (USFWS 2016), the mission and goals of the National Fish Hatchery (NFH) System, the authorized purposes of an individual hatchery, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy, laws and international treaties.

Little White Salmon NFH is located on the Little White Salmon River one mile upstream of its confluence with the Columbia River. The Little White Salmon River joins the Columbia River at RM 162. Drano Lake, a 223-acre natural depression at the mouth of the river flooded by the pool behind Bonneville Dam, is a popular sport and tribal fishing area.

The facility was placed in operation following Congressional authorization in 1896 with the intent to support the commercial fishing industry. The hatchery's role expanded during the 1930's under the Mitchell Act to mitigate for loss of habitat due to the completion of Bonneville Dam in 1938. The hatchery currently propagates upriver bright (URB) fall Chinook and Carson-strain spring Chinook.

National Fish Hatchery lands are maintained for the fundamental purpose of propagating and distributing fish and other aquatic animal life and managed for the protection of all species of wildlife (50 CFR Ch.1 70.1).

Little White Salmon NFH has provided fishing opportunities to the public since its establishment in 1896 and long before current environmental policies and regulations were promulgated. This document serves to retroactively and officially open designated portions of Little White Salmon NFH lands to public fishing via the Code of Federal Regulations. These action will ensure that all legal and policy obligations are met.

Recreational fishing is a popular sport on the Columbia River and in Drano Lake. The lake provides opportunities for both recreational angling and a tribal gill net fishery. Many anglers fish from boats launched at the Skamania County-owned boat ramp, but quite a few also fish from the shores of Drano Lake on Service-owned property. The one-mile-long, Service-owned, access road is the main entrance to the hatchery that also provides several parking areas, one of which includes an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant accessible ramp, restroom facility, and fishing platform. Several pullouts along the road provide for additional parking opportunities. These parking areas also service kayakers that utilize the Little White Salmon River mainly during the period from late winter through late spring as water flows permit.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is the state's principal steward of fish and wildlife resources. State law directs the Department to conserve native fish and wildlife

and their habitat, while also supporting sustainable fishing, hunting and other outdoor opportunities for millions of Washington residents and visitors. In 2017, WDFW completed its 2017-2019 Strategic Plan (WDFW 2017). The Service's authorization of fishing at Little White Salmon NFH is in compliance and consistent with WDFW's strategic plan. For fish species such as Pacific salmon, WDFW works closely with state and Federal agencies to set regulations that protect native species and allow for equitable harvest opportunities. The Department is committed to providing sustainable fishing opportunities throughout the state. Popular outdoor activities like fishing are a "quality of life" issue for millions of Washingtonians, and generate billions of dollars in economic benefits for local businesses and communities each year. Their plan is designed to maintain and increase those benefits with strategies that range from better access to better catch accounting.

## **II. Statement of Objectives**

The objective of this plan is to ensure that the federally-owned lands within the Little White Salmon NFH are made available to the public for fishing opportunities. This plan will take into account operational requirements that restrict access to certain areas of the property and the fact that not all of the property lends itself to fishing opportunities. The main contribution to fishing access provided by the hatchery is approximately 9.3 acres (a narrow strip of land approximately 55 feet wide and extending over 7,389 feet of shoreline) that exist from State Highway 14 to the hatchery buoy line and along the lake's northeastern shore (Figure 1). The buoy line across the Little White Salmon River prohibits fishing due to operational necessity.

### **Fishing Plan Goals**

Goal 1: *Fishing, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor activities are enhanced and expanded.* The Service strives to complement WDFW's goals which seek to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish and ecosystems while providing sustainable recreational and commercial fishing opportunities. These latter opportunities are enhanced via increased and improved access.

Goal 2: *Increase angling participation.* Diverse, stable and productive angling opportunities are the basis for increased angling participation. The Service strives to follow WDFW's objective of providing hatcheries and other public access sites that are safe, clean, and effectively support people's use and enjoyment of natural resources.

### **Fishing Plan Objective**

The objective of the fishing program at Little White Salmon NFH is to provide opportunities for visitors to fish from hatchery lands in accordance with the Service's Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program Strategic Goals, WDFW Strategic Plan Goals, and WDFW 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 fish and habitat objectives;
- Pose minimal conflict with other priority public use activities; and
- Provide a quality fishing program that provides opportunities for visitors to fish on hatchery lands.

### **Fishing Plan Strategies:**

- a. Allow anglers to fish along the northwest bank of Drano Lake on Hatchery property from State Highway 14 to the buoy line at the mouth of the Little White Salmon River and along the northeast and north shore from the buoy line to the edge of the hatchery's property.
- b. Provides handicap accessible fishing in Drano Lake from a dedicated, handicap-accessible ramp and fishing platform on hatchery property.
- c. Provide parking turnouts along the hatchery access road adjacent to Drano Lake .
- d. Provide rest room facilities at the main handicap-accessible parking area.
- e. Allow boats to be tied off overnight to the shoreline until December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- f. At all locations where bank fishing is allowed, provide fishing line recycling containers for anglers to discard their used monofilament line.
- g. Allow boat access to shoreline fishing on Drano Lake. Drano Lake and boat access to Drano Lake is however regulated and managed by WDFW.

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

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

Bank fishing will be allowed on Service property starting at State Highway 14, along the entire Drano Lake shoreline adjacent to the access road, upriver to the marked buoy line near the hatchery entrance, and along the lake's northeastern shore (Figure 1). This totals 7,389 feet of shoreline and the associated 9.3 acres of hatchery property. The buoy line restricts all fishing up river but does not impede recreational access (i.e., boating, paddle boarding, kayaking etc.).



Figure 1. Aerial view of Little White Salmon NFH with fishing areas denoted.

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

Anglers are required to comply with species and take limits in WDFW fishing regulations. The areas will be open for anglers to access year-round in accordance with WDFW regulations. Anglers need to ensure they observe scheduled closures during tribal gill net fisheries and single-day closures following gill net fishing (usually Wednesdays). Anglers also need to be aware of emergency closures enacted by WDFW to ensure hatchery broodstock needs are met. These closures and catch limit regulations will be posted on WDFW websites, in regulation books and onsite in informational kiosks.

## C. Fishing Permit Requirements

Anglers who are eligible to fish under Washington State law are eligible to fish on hatchery lands. They must obtain a Washington State fishing license and follow Washington State laws, limits, and regulations.

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

Coordination with WDFW consists primarily of ensuring the public gets pertinent information regarding seasons, catch limits and emergency closures dictated by hatchery brood stock needs.

The WDFW will coordinate with the hatchery manager and take brood stock levels into consideration when determining fishing regulations on the Columbia River and Drano Lake to ensure the hatchery receives the necessary brood stock to fulfill its mission. Some of the options may include a limit reduction on Drano Lake or to a more severe level a complete closure. The Yakama Tribe, that conducts a lottery for tribal members to set gill nets, will also coordinate with the hatchery manager to determine whether a gillnet fishery on Drano Lake is acceptable or will impede that ability for the hatchery to collect all needed brood stock. Following the opening of any gill net fishery, the tribe reports harvest to the hatchery manager thus allowing for a more informed decision to be made on further gill net events. These events can occur weekly, so gill net harvest data is very informative and necessary. There is also a Cooperative Road Management Agreement that exists between the Little White Salmon NFH and WDFW that permits state enforcement officers to enforce road regulations (i.e., the road closure from 11 pm to 4 am, speed limits, fire restrictions, no camping etc.) on the access road.

Consultation and coordination of this Fishing Plan was initiated via a letter to WDFW that described our intent to codify fishing access to our lands and explained that we would provide them with a draft copy of this Fishing Plan prior to its release for public comment (Appendix A).

#### **E. Law Enforcement**

Enforcement of fishing regulations on hatchery property will be primarily conducted by state wildlife law enforcement officers. Tribal police will also enforce fishing regulations when native anglers are involved.

The following methods are used to control and enforce fishing regulations:

- Hatchery and fishing area boundaries will be clearly posted;
- The hatchery will provide a brochure that shows fishing areas; and
- Federal law enforcement may randomly check anglers for compliance with Federal and state laws.

The hatchery will post fishing regulations on hatchery information kiosks and in hatchery offices. Tear sheets will be provided at hatchery kiosks and at the hatchery office.

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

There will be little costs associated with the development of infrastructure to support fishing at Little White Salmon NFH. Parking areas, informational kiosks, and handicap-accessible fishing access are already in place.

### **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**

Listed below are hatchery-specific regulations that pertain to fishing on Little White Salmon NFH as of the date of this plan. These regulations may be modified as conditions change or if hatchery lands expand.

Sport Fishing. We allow fishing on designated areas of the hatchery in accordance with state regulations. The hatchery access road is closed from 11 p.m. - 4 a.m. Fishing at night is currently permitted, but this could change in the future.

### **C. Relevant State Regulations<sup>[TB1]</sup>**

All current state regulations apply to fishing on Little White Salmon NFH lands.

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

- Camping, overnight use, and fires are prohibited
- Fishing on hatchery lands is allowed seven days per week
- The access road is closed every night from 11 pm to 4 am
- Hatchery requests that the public only use established trails

## **V. Public Engagement**

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

The hatchery maintains a mailing list, for news release purposes, of local newspapers, radio, and websites. Special announcements and articles may be released in conjunction with fishing seasons.

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

No public reaction would be anticipated to opening up fishing access. Fishing access has been available to the public for many years and no significant changes are planned.

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

General information regarding fishing can be obtained at Little White Salmon National Fish

Hatchery, 56961 State Highway 14, Cook, WA 98605. Maps and regulations (Tear Sheets) will be available on the station website at:

[www.fws.gov/gorgefish/LittleWhiteSalmonNFH/LittleWhiteSalmonIndex.cfm](http://www.fws.gov/gorgefish/LittleWhiteSalmonNFH/LittleWhiteSalmonIndex.cfm), the Hatchery Headquarters, and on Hatchery information kiosks. The 2019 Washington State Sport fishing Regulations can be found at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>.

## **References**

USFWS (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). 2016. Strategic Plan for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program: FY2016-2020. Falls Church, VA.

WDFW (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife). 2017. 2017-19 Strategic Plan. Olympia, WA.

Appendix A.

Mr. Matt Gardner  
Region 5 Biologist



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Spring Creek National Fish Hatchery  
61552 S.R. 14  
Underwood, WA 98651

February 13, 2019



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
5525 S 11<sup>th</sup> St.  
Ridgefield, WA 98642

Dear Mr. Gardner

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is in the process of assessing current and future Federal public fishing opportunities primarily on National Wildlife Refuge and National Fish Hatchery (NFH) lands. The first step in this process is to codify existing fishing opportunities at a number of our NFHs. This process involves developing hatchery-specific fishing plans, Environmental Assessments, and consulting on Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

This purpose of this letter is to inform you of this process and to coordinate completion of fishing plans for the Little White Salmon and Spring Creek NFH's (both in WDFW's Region 5). These plans explain and cover areas/opportunities for fishing at both facilities and will be sent to you in the near future for review and comment prior to their release for public comment.

Please find below, a brief summary of the areas at both facilities currently open to fishing. The newly drafted fishing plans for both facilities essentially maintain the current level of access.

***Spring Creek NFH:***

The entrance road to the hatchery is about two miles west of the White Salmon River mouth. The road is about one mile long; the first several hundred feet of which traverses Washington State Park lands. The public is allowed to fish at the beginning of the hatchery property (designated by our sign) along the shoreline of the Columbia River up to about ¼ mile west of the adult collection ladder. This represents approximately 8.8 acres of hatchery property.

***Big White Collection Ponds/egg collection facility on the Big White Salmon River:***

This hatchery property is located off State Highway 141 Alternate, about two miles north of State Highway 14. The gated entrance is at the start of SW Arnett Rd. No public motor vehicles are allowed past the gate, but anglers can walk the approximately ¼-mile-long road to get to the river. There is approximately 2,100 feet of riverfront that is open to fishing along with the associated 10 acres of hatchery property.

***Little White Salmon NFH, Drano Lake and Little White Salmon River:***

Bank fishing is allowed on hatchery property starting at State Highway 14, along the entire Drano Lake shoreline adjacent to the access road, upriver to the marked buoy line near the hatchery entrance, and along the lake's northeastern shore. This totals 7,389 feet of shoreline and the associated 9.3 acres of hatchery property.

If you require any additional information, please contact me at 509-493-1730.

Sincerely,



David Carie  
Deputy Complex Manager  
Columbia River Gorge NFH Complex

Cc: Bob Turik, Hatchery Manager, Little White Salmon NFH

