

MONTHLY NARRATIVE

CLEARWATER FISH HATCHERY

MARCH 2009

BY08 CHINOOK

At the end of March, there were 2,813,240 Chinook averaging 300 fpp on hand. This included 1,287,824 Chinook for the Powell-Selway releases and 1,525,416 Chinook for the South Fork releases.

Water temperatures thru the month stayed at 40°F. At month's end the water temperatures were 4°F colder than normal. Fish health remains good.

Fish marking is tentatively scheduled for the first week of May on the Selway, Clear Creek, Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery fish, and the first two weeks of June for the Powell, Red River and Crooked River Chinook.

BY09 STEELHEAD

By the end of March we had completed Steelhead spawning for our production and Magic Valley's eggs. In the first take for Clearwater production we took 107 females, six of them tested positive for IHN. Take two had 83 females and 20 tested positive for IHN. We had a 96.4% eye up and 981,040 eggs were on station at the end of March for our productions.

We have also completed all the Magic Valley takes with 240 females taken. These eggs are in isolation incubation and receive a treatment every day. Once eye up occurs picking will begin.

BY07 CHINOOK

There were 2,152,480 Chinook @ 16.48 fpp on hand this month. Hauling began on March 23, 2009.

A total of 201,998 Chinook @ 16.73 fpp were released into Powell Pond on March 23-24. This group of fish were held in the pond as a volitional release until April 1. At this time, 202,117 Chinook @ 16.42 fpp were released into the pond. The pond was force released April 1 @ 1900. These fish were part of an acclimated versus direct release study by Brian Leth.

Due to extreme winter weather this year, hauling was postponed until more favorable conditions arrived. Hauling resumed again on March 30-31 with 234,151 Chinook @ 16.00 fpp going into Clear Creek.

Once again, extreme winter conditions arrived. We decided to haul the Lower Selway Chinook, 399,257 @ 16.42 fpp earlier than scheduled for the tribe to prevent a bottleneck once the South Fork of the Clearwater opened up. Hauling occurred on April 2-3.

Finally, warmer weather arrived and we began hauling to Lower Crooked River April 6-8, with 710,101 Chinook @ 17.1 fpp were released.

A total of 404,856 Chinook @ 17.1 fpp were direct released at Red River on April 8-9. Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery employees assisted us in hauling to Crooked River and Red River in exchange for us hauling their Chinook to the Lower Selway.

All BY07 Chinook have been released as of April 9, 2009.

BY08 STEELHEAD

A total of 835,764 Steelhead at 5.17 fpp were on hand at month's end. We will begin hauling Steelhead on April 13.

Water temperatures remained at 40°F throughout the month. Fish health remains excellent.

MISC

Powell, Red River and Lower Crooked River satellite facilities were plowed out beginning on March 9. Red River and Lower Crooked River were plowed out four more times as another 4 ½ feet of snow fell before hauling began.

The Red River weir was installed on March 24. The Lower Crooked River weir was installed on April 7.

Jerry attended a meeting at Lapwai with the Nez Perce Tribe and Fish and Wildlife Service to determine protocol for distribution of adult Chinook trapped above brood stock needs.

This spring has been very challenging but it has brought out the best in Clearwater Fish Hatchery's staff. A great deal of team work has been displayed this year. There have been more curve balls thrown at our long range planning schedule this season than in any two years put together. Good job, everyone!

We could name this "The year of Cassie's Ever Changing Plans."

