

Monthly Activity Narrative

Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery (HNFH)

February 2020

Meetings/Training/Events:

- Feb.7- We were contacted by Jim White (CPW) about changing fish species stocking in the Animas River from brown trout to a Colorado rainbow trout strain crossed with a Hoffer and Gunnison River Rainbow (HxG). We did some investigation into where in Colorado the broodstock is reared and spawned. The cross is between a female Hoffer and a male Gunnison River Rainbow. The Glenwood Springs Hatchery has the broodstock and that concerns me since the last two times Hotchkiss NFH tested positive for bacterial kidney disease the eggs came from Glenwood. Later this summer we'll have to have a meeting with CPW, Ute Tribe, and possibly BOR.

Mitigation/Recreational Fish Production:

- February we have been busy moving fish from the nursery to the outside raceways. Primarily to lessen the fish densities in the nursery tanks, reduce stress, and to get them acclimated to outdoor conditions. Another reason is to make room for approximately 325,000 White Sulphur Springs Shasta rainbow trout eggs the end of March. Currently we have 717,459 fish on station at different stages of growth.

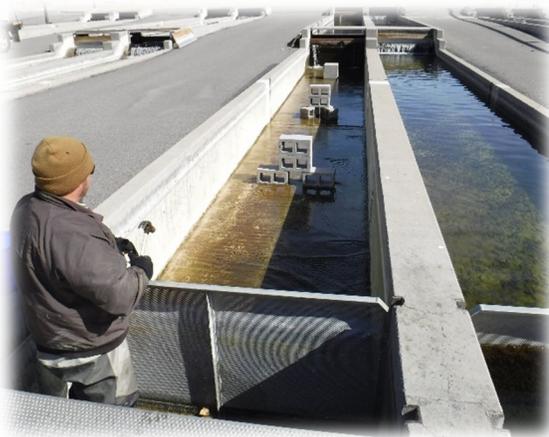
Below table shows fish currently on station at the end of February, blue text means in nursery.

Species	Strain	Number	Weight	Fish/lb.	Size/in
RBT	FLD-ENN-19	125,610	29,555	4.25	8.38
RBT	SSD-WSS-19	126,210	26,154	4.38	8.41
RBT	HxH-CRH-19	89,584	534	167.9	2.46
RBT	ARD-ENN-19	83,360	253	330	1.96
BNT	PRD-BNT-19	100,995	317	318.3	2.01
RBT	SSD-ENN-20	191,700	87	2216	1.04
	Total	717,459	56,900		

RBT= Rainbow Trout; FLD= Fish Lake Domestic, SSD= Shasta Domestic, ARD=Arlee Domestic, HxH= Hofer x Harrison (Colorado Strain), and BNT= Brown Trout; PRD=Plymouth Rock Domestic. ENN- Ennis NFH, and WSS= White Sulphur Springs NFH.



- The crew, Mark Gaub, Dominic Giordullo and myself have been cleaning sand out of the headboxes of A & B bank. Back in September, we had an unusually high water flow (6,425 gpm) from the main spring, in fact the highest recorded here since the hatchery began keeping record. With the high flow came sand, a lot, and we have been cleaning it out from the nursery tanks and raceways as fish movements allow us.
- With our new program and the way it is operated we needed to place brown trout in the outside raceways to make room for incoming rainbow trout eggs. Normally we rear the brown trout to five inches in the nursery and load them on the distribution truck and deliver them in June. Brown trout by nature cling to the bottom of whatever rearing container they are put in in clumps. They don't come to the surface to feed but stay on the bottom, so it is difficult to tell how or if they are feeding. Knowing this, the crew placed cinder blocks in the raceways as habitat to see if the brown trout will respond in a positive way.



The brown trout did as expected and headed for cover around the created habitat. Cleaning might be a little difficult but with the crew we have I'm sure we will figure it out.



Fish Health:

- Feb 18- Lacey Hopper and Rick Cordes, from the Bozeman Fish Health Center (BFHC), arrived at the hatchery to perform the annual fish health inspection. They took fish samples from all the fish lots we have on station and will take them back to Bozeman, MT for further analysis. Lacey and Rick also took water samples of our springs to determine if we have harmful bacteria present in our water source



Hatchery Maintenance

- Feb 6-- Quarters #3: Project Leader replaced the toilet. A hairline crack in the tank was causing a water leak that was accumulating around the base of the toilet.
- Feb 10- Quarters #3 received a new range. Normally we try, as funds permit, to update the three housing unit's appliances. Quarters #3 is the last to receive a new range the old one is nearly 25 years old.