



Leadville National Fish Hatchery

June 2020

June at Leadville National Fish Hatchery is the time for spawning cutthroats. All three of our cutthroat strains, greenback, Hayden (linage green) and Carr Creek (linage green), ripen up in June. Around 200,000 greenback cutthroat eggs were taken, with the majority (191,000) sent to Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Salida Isolation Unit for rearing. Approximately 10,000 eggs were kept at Leadville for future brood development. Around 32,000 eggs were taken from the Hayden Creek cutthroats in our isolation building. These fish are the last remaining fish taken from the wild in 2016 during the Hayden Pass fire. Later in the fall of 2016 rain in the burn scar area completely wiped out the creek habitat and all the remaining fish in the wild. Our old Carr Creek broodstock (10-11 years old) is being discontinued this year and all the females were stripped of their eggs. These fish will be released in early August after they complete their required MS222 with drawl period.



Spawning greenback cutthroats.



Paige Moran and Brandee Keuer spawning greenback cutthroats (above). A plexiglass screen was erected where employees couldn't keep the minimum 6-ft distance apart. Bio Tech Michael Heckman (pictured below) removes a teaspoon of eggs from each paired mating before putting the remaining eggs in upwelling buckets for water hardening.



June 12 saw the release of 44 of our adult Wyoming toads in approved recovery sites in the Laramie Basin of Wyoming. Twelve of these toads were selected to be part of a habitat use study being conducted by the University of Wyoming and the USFWS. These toads were fitted with little radio transmitters to be followed weekly by technicians recording habitat use and toad health. On June 26 102 Wyoming toad tadpoles were transferred from the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo to Leadville for our grow-out facility. We will raise these tadpoles to adults over the next year for use in research projects and eventual release.



Some of our adult toads ready for transport to Wyoming for release.

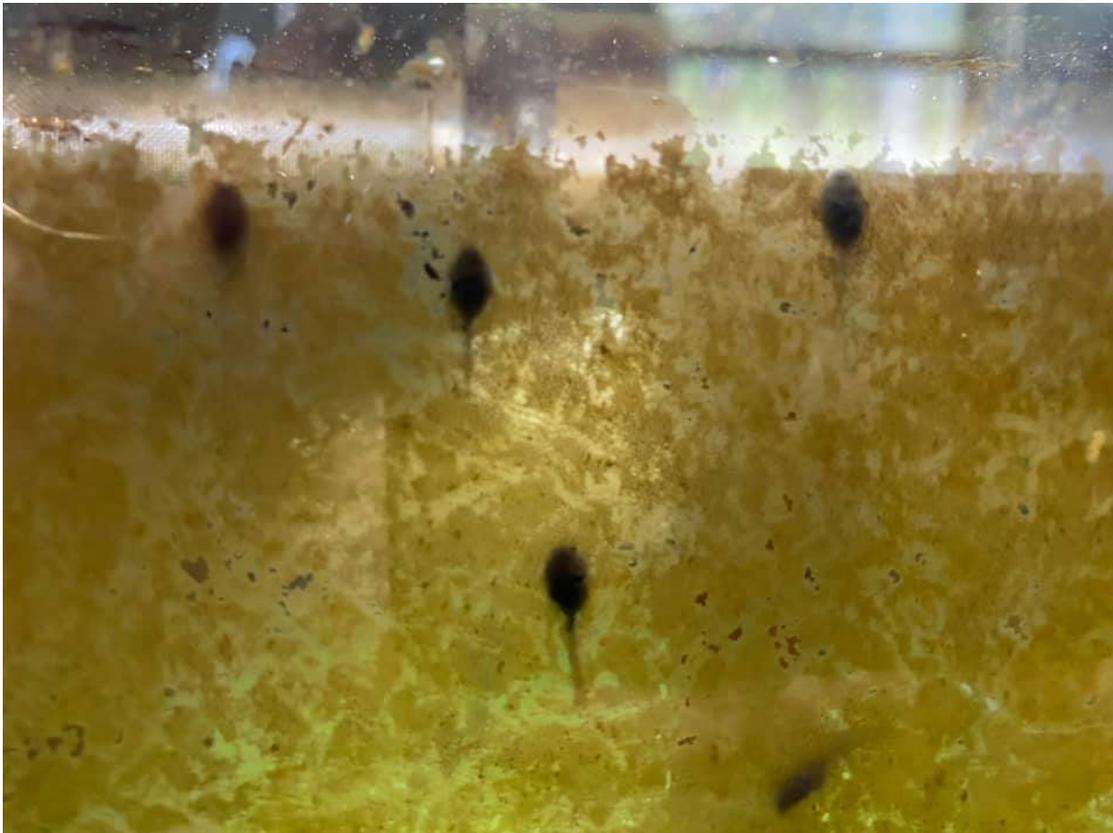


Pictured above is a newly released Wyoming toad. Below is one of our toads fitted with a backpack transmitter before release.





Biologist Chris Kennedy holding one of the newly arrived bags of Wyoming toad tadpoles from Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.





Stocking continued in June with fish being released in Twin Lakes, Turquoise, and Clear Creek Reservoirs, along with Crystal (pictured above) and Emerald Lakes.

Two FWS employees were on detail at Leadville in June. Josh Homer, Quinault National Fish Hatchery manager, was here on a 30-day detail to gain some experience working with critters other than salmon. Chris Kennedy, Fish Biologist with Colorado FWCO, was here for a two-month detail assisting with all the cutthroat spawning and data collection. Bio Tech Brandee Keuer transferred to the Ouray National Fish Hatchery Grand Valley Unit.

Three retired summer volunteers started the end of May. Jim and Linda Williams have volunteered several seasons over the last decade. Diane Larrabee was back for her third season (out of the last seven). Having experienced volunteer help is a great asset assisting with maintenance, outreach and some animal culture duties.



Summer retired volunteers Linda Williams (upper left), Diane Larrabee (upper right) and Jim Williams (below) have all volunteered at Leadville for three or more seasons over the last decade. Having experienced volunteer help is a great asset to the program.



June Hatchery Staff

Project Leader - Ed Stege

Fish Biologist - Paige Moran

Facility Operations Specialist – Vacant

Temp Biological Technicians:

Brandee Keuer (transferred to Ouray NFH June 8)

Alyssa Capriotti

Michael Heckman

Ryan Maxwell

Supervisory Fish Biologist – Josh Homer (30-day detail)

Fish Biologist – Chris Kennedy (~60-day detail)

Summer volunteers: Jim and Linda Williams, Diane Larrabee