

**APPENDIX C**

**Leadville National Fish Hatchery  
All Species Hunt Plan**

**February 2019**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Leadville National Fish Hatchery  
2846 Highway 300  
Leadville, CO 80461  
Lake County**

Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Concurrence: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Approval: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Regional Director – FAC Date

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.*

# Leadville National Fish Hatchery

## All Species Hunt Plan

### **I. Introduction**

National Fish Hatcheries are guided by the mission and goals of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFH); the purposes of an individual hatchery; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy, laws and international treaties.

The Leadville National Fish Hatchery resides on 3,072 acres in Lake County, Colorado. The Hatchery was created by Executive Order of President Benjamin Harrison in 1889 for the purpose of restoring depleted stocks of trout in the Upper Arkansas Region of Colorado, the Black hills of South Dakota, and Nebraska. At that time the main water supply for the hatchery was from Rock Creek. To protect the hatchery's water supply, most of the Rock Creek drainage was included in the 3,072 acre hatchery land base. Leadville National Fish Hatchery is the second oldest federally operated fish hatchery in existence today and is one of the oldest surviving tangible examples of the historic legacy upon which the Service was first established.

The hatchery is located in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado approximately six miles southwest of the city of Leadville. Elevation ranges from 9,600 feet on the hatchery proper to over 13,000 feet on the Rock Creek drainage of Mount Massive. Typical Rocky Mountain subalpine forest vegetation of lodgepole pine and aspen make up 90 percent of the hatchery property vegetation. The hatchery property contains over 12 miles of hiking trails and connects to other trails, such as the Colorado Trail, located within the Mt. Massive Wilderness Area. Most of the hatchery property is bordered on three sides by federal land managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

The Mount Massive Wilderness was designated by the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-560, 99 Stat. 3265) on December 22, 1980. The Mt. Massive Wilderness Area encompasses 30,540 acres, with over 90% (27,980 acres) located in the San Isabel National Forest (USFS), while 2,560 acres are located in the Leadville National Fish Hatchery (managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)). This portion of the Mount Massive Wilderness is the only area in the National Wilderness Preservation System that is located in a National Fish Hatchery.

National fish hatchery areas are maintained for the fundamental purpose of the propagation and distribution of fish and other aquatic animal life and managed for the protection of all species of wildlife (50 CFR Ch.1 70.1)

### **II. Statement of Objectives**

The objectives of an all-legal species-hunting program on Leadville NFH are to provide:

- The public with an opportunity to experience, recreationally, wildlife on more hatchery lands and increase opportunities for hunters, especially for youth and families
- Biological diversity by preserving the natural diversity and variety of biotic communities occurring on Hatchery lands.
- Wildlife-dependent public recreation as mandated by and according to Service law and

policy.

The Hatchery will use an adaptive management approach by reviewing the Hunt Plan every 5 years and revising if necessary.



Figure 1: Location of Leadville National Fish Hatchery

### **III. Assessment**

There has been no formal assessment of wildlife on the hatchery property, however; the land has been open to hunting since its establishment in 1889 with no repercussions from hunter harvest. The viability of the game species populations proposed to be hunted is not expected to be negatively affected by hunting according to State season guidelines and management.

### **IV. Description of Hunting Program**

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

All hatchery land will be open to big game, furbearer and upland game bird hunting with the exception of a 100-yard distance from an occupied building or parking lot for discharging a firearm. Waterfowl hunting will be allowed within the Mt. Massive Wilderness Area. Additionally, waterfowl hunting will be allowed in the hatchery discharge sedimentation ponds by Special Use Permit. Where allowed, hunting on the hatchery land follows the season dates and bag limits outlined in the state of Colorado regulations. This consistency with the state helps

reduce confusion when hunters participate in hunting activities on Service lands. Trapping is not permitted on Leadville NFH property.

## **B. Species to be Taken, Hunting periods, Hunting Access**

All species taken on Hatchery property will be those legal to take according to the state of Colorado hunting regulations. Trapping will not be allowed. State seasons and bag limits apply. Hunter access will be limited to foot travel only. Parking will be available in designated areas only. Vehicle travel off road or behind gated roads is not allowed.

Game Species likely found on hatchery lands:

- Migratory Game Birds: ducks and geese
- Upland Game Birds: dusky grouse, turkey and white-tailed ptarmigan
- Big Game: elk, mule deer, moose, bighorn sheep, black bear and mountain lion
- Furbearers and Small Game: coyote, red fox, bobcat, pine martin, mink, long-tailed weasel, short-tailed weasel, pine squirrel, snowshoe hare, black-tailed jackrabbit, marmot, beaver, muskrat, striped skunk and raccoon

## **C. Hunter Permit Requirements**

Hunters are required to have licenses, permits and tags for the game they are hunting compliant with the state of Colorado hunting regulations.

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

Consultation and coordination between state and hatchery personnel is cooperative and ongoing.

## **E. Law Enforcement**

State law enforcement officers will be periodically checking hunters on the hatchery.

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

- Hatchery and hunt area boundaries outside the Mt. Massive Wilderness will be clearly posted at trailheads and/or wilderness boundary.
- The Hatchery will provide a brochure that shows hunt areas.
- Law enforcement officers will randomly check hunters for compliance with Federal and State Laws.

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

Costs associated with the development of infrastructure to support hunting at Leadville NFH are limited to installation of signage

Funding and staffing for hunting activities will be limited to administration of this plan only, as we rely on the State of Colorado for any necessary enforcement actions.

**Table 1. Costs to Administer a Fishing Program at Hotchkiss NFH**

<b>Activity or Project</b>	<b>One-time Expense</b>	<b>Recurring (Annual) Expense</b>
Signage	\$1,200	
Trash and recycling containers	No additional costs	
Maintenance		No additional costs
Staff		No additional costs
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,200</b>	<b>\$0</b>

#### **IV. Conduct of the Hunting Program**

##### **A. Hunter Permit Application, Selection, and/or Registration Procedures for Special Events and Youth Hunts.**

State of Colorado hunting regulations apply. Colorado hunting regulation pamphlets are available at the hatchery office located at 2846 Highway 300 Leadville, CO 80461 or online at: [CPW Hunting and Fishing regulations](#)

##### **B. Hatchery Specific Hunting Regulations**

General Provisions:

##### **50 CFR §71.2 Hunting and Fishing on National Fish Hatchery Areas. Subpart A. Hunting. General provisions ([Hunting and Fishing on National Fish Hatchery Areas](#))**

The following provisions shall apply to public hunting on a national fish hatchery area:

- (a) Each person shall secure and possess the required State license.
- (b) Each person 16 years of age and older shall secure and possess a Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp while hunting migratory waterfowl.
- (c) Each person shall comply with the applicable provisions of Federal laws and regulations and the current Federal Migratory Bird regulations.
- (d) Each person shall comply with the applicable provisions of the laws and regulations of the State wherein any hatchery is located unless further restricted by Federal law or regulation.
- (e) Each person shall comply with the terms and conditions authorizing access and use of the national fish hatchery area.

(f) Each person shall comply with the provisions of any special notices governing hunting on the national fish hatchery area. Such special notices will be posted throughout the area and will be available at the headquarters of the fish hatchery to which they relate.

### **C. Relevant State of Colorado Regulations**

- Hunters will follow all state hunting regulations and season dates

### **D. Other Rules and Regulations for Hunters**

- The land owned by the Fish and Wildlife Service and posted with National Fish Hatchery Boundary signs is open to public use. (50 CFR 26.22 General Exception for Entry)
- Roads with barriers and all road-less areas are closed to all motorized vehicles. (50 CFR 26.21)
- Baiting is not permitted on Fish and Wildlife Service lands
- Open fires are not permitted on the Hatchery except within the metal campfire rings provided in the Evergreen Lakes Day Use Area.
- Tree stands and ground blinds must be labeled with the name and address of the owner and readable from the ground and may only be placed from August 1 to December 31 annually. The use of nails, screws or a device that penetrates or damages trees is not allowed for stand or blind attachment.
- Cutting of shooting lanes or damaging trees is not allowed
- Collecting of pine and spruce bows is not allowed
- **50 CFR §71.2 Management of Fisheries conservation Areas. National Fish Hatcheries. Public entry and use. [Management of Fisheries Conservation Areas](#)**

The public entry and use provisions set forth in part 26 of this chapter are equally applicable to national fish hatchery areas.

## **V. Public Engagement**

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

The Hatchery maintains a mailing list, for news release purposes, to local newspapers, radio, websites, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and local sportsman's groups. Special announcements and articles may be released in conjunction with hunting seasons. In addition, information about the hunt will be available at Leadville NFH headquarters and on the Leadville NFH website.

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

Hunting has been allowed on the hatchery property since the facility was opened in 1889 and no reaction is anticipated since this is normal activity for the area.

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

General information regarding hunting and other wildlife-dependent public uses can be obtained at Leadville NFH headquarters at 2846 Highway 300, Leadville, CO 80461 or by calling (719) 486-0189.

## **VI. Compatibility Determination**

Hunting and all associated program activities proposed in this plan are compatible with the purpose of the Hatchery as outlined in the (50 CFR Ch.1 70.1) “Opening of National Fish Hatchery Areas to Hunting: National fish hatchery areas may be opened to hunting wildlife when such activity is not detrimental to the propagation and distribution of fish or other aquatic wildlife.”

## **VIII. Additional Figures**

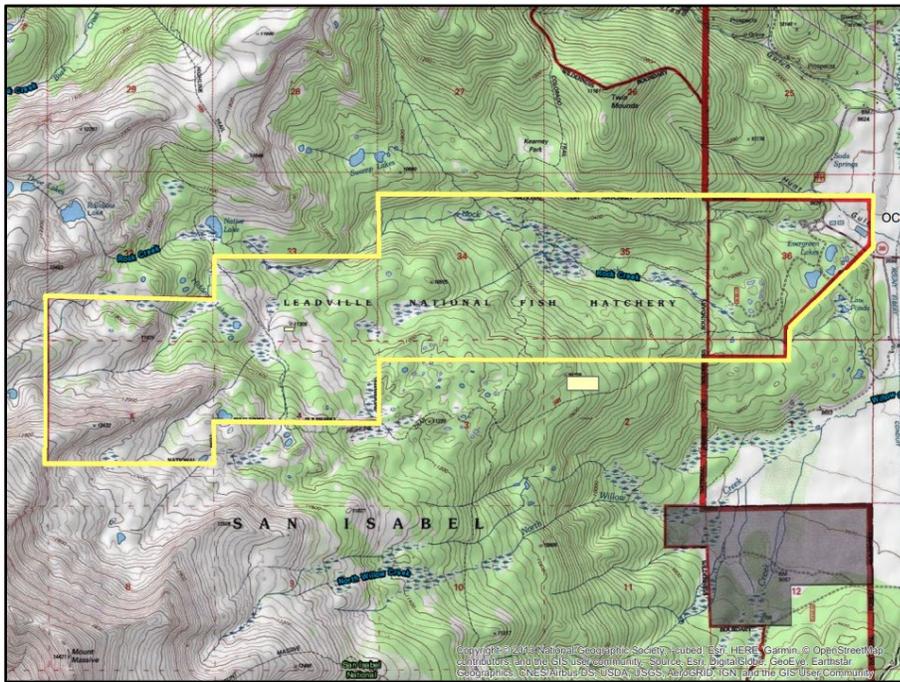


Figure 2: Hatchery Boundary (yellow). Wilderness boundary is thin north-south red line. Wilderness designation is located to the left of the line.

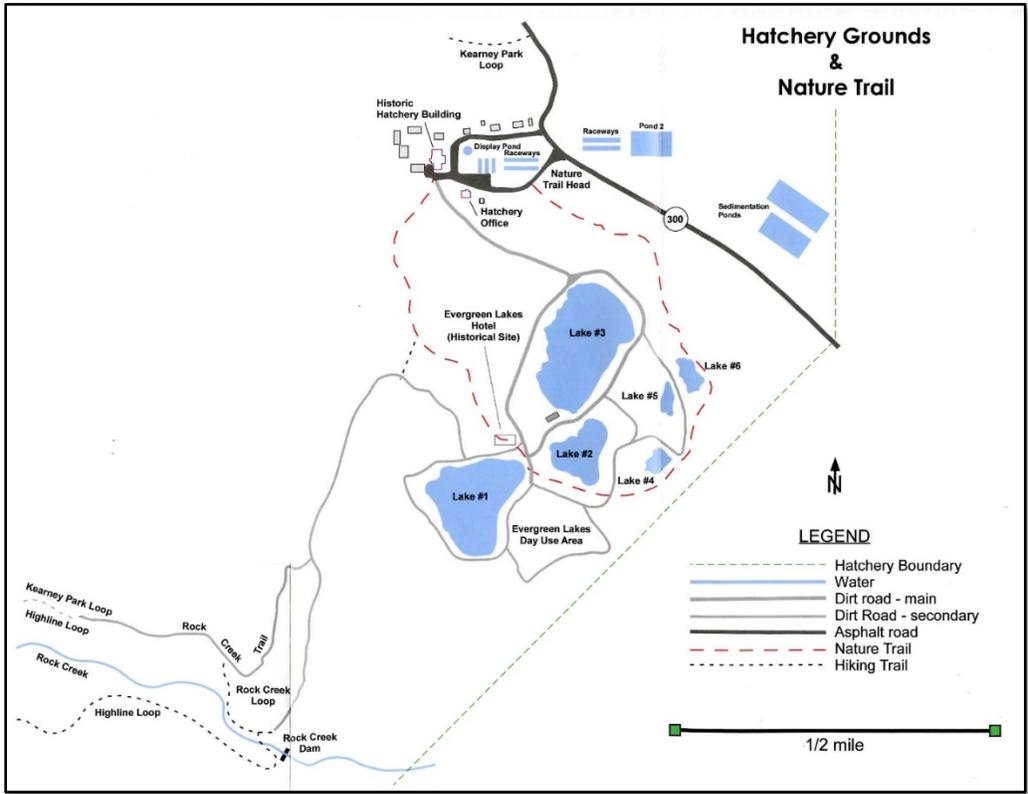


Figure 3: Main hatchery compound showing building locations and lower hatchery trails and roads.