

Valerie Fellows: Hi, my name is Valerie Fellows, and I work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Public Affairs. Today, we're celebrating the Fisheries' 140th anniversary. Our Fisheries programs has been conserving aquatic resources across the country for over 140 years. Today, I'm talking with Carlos Martinez from the D.C. Booth Historical National Fish Hatchery and Archives in South Dakota. First established in 1896, D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives was formerly called the Spearfish National Fish Hatchery. It's one of the oldest operating hatcheries in the country dedicated to fish culture and resource management. The hatchery was constructed to propagate, stock, and establish trout populations in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming. After a very successful fish production history, the hatchery ceased operations in the mid-80s and reopened with a new mission and partnerships to help preserve the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's historic and cultural heritage. Today, D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives serves as a living fishery museum to the public and many organizations. Still rearing trout for the Black Hills through a cooperative effort with the State, the hatchery also serves to protect and preserve fishery records and artifacts for educational, research, and historic purposes, and provide interpretive and educational programs for the public. Now I'd like to introduce Carlos and ask Carlos a couple of questions about D.C. Booth. Hi Carlos.

Carlos Martinez: Hi.

Valerie: Why is it named the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery?

Carlos: There's an individual by the name of DeWitt Clinton Booth, or "D.C." as he insisted on being called, who was our station's first superintendent. Under primitive conditions, D.C not only pioneered and developed the Black Hills Fishery, but the magnificent, internationally known Yellowstone Park Fishery as well. He served 33 years as the station's superintendent, leaving us a legacy that no doubt impacted and advanced fisheries throughout the U.S. and contributing to our recreational, social, and economic wellbeing. After a temporary closure and re-alignment of our mission in the mid-1980s, it was fitting to rename the station in D.C. Booth's honor.

Valerie: Tell me a little about D.C. Booth today. What does it look like?

Carlos: D.C. Booth is a beautiful, one-of-a-kind facility with a very strong fisheries history presence. Among the station's attractions is a railcar that has been restored to its period in order to display how fish were once transported across the country. The old superintendent's house is fully remodeled. It is representative of how the facility's namesake and family lived more than 100 years ago. The Hector Von Bayer Museum of Fisheries History is housed in the original 1899 fish hatchery building, which we use to showcase some of the station's artifacts from our archive collection. We have a fish

viewing window where visitors can see monster trout and manicured lawns. Aesthetically pleasing structures and bronze statues make it one of the most photogenic stations in the Fish and Wildlife Service, something that I think 150,000 visitors a year can vouch for.

Valerie: Wow! And what kind of fish does the hatchery produce today?

Carlos: Well historically, the facility has raised every inland species imaginable, but currently we raise rainbow trout, brown trout, through a cooperative effort with the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks. We stock 10-15 inch catchables throughout the Black Hills for recreational purposes which provides a nice, economical boost to the region. In addition, we will be maintaining backup root stock population for the Shasta strain and McConaughy strain of rainbow trout in the future.

And with nearly 150,000 visitors every year, do you do any type of programs at your facility for the public?

Carlos: We do. We are very dependent on a volunteer program that provides us with over 14,000 volunteer hours a year. That's the equivalent of seven full-time employees. Included in that program are the Hatchery Helpers which is an award-winning youth volunteer and educational outreach program. It is their help and their assistance that allows us to keep the grounds and facilities looking as pristine as they are and allows us to keep the visitors' center and museum manned and available to the public.

Valerie: D.C. Booth is also home to the Fisheries' historical archives. I'm here talking with Randi Smith, museum curator. Randi, can you tell me a little bit about the archives?

Randi Smith: Sure. It's about 175,000 items; it's our estimated count. That includes 15,000 objects, and 160,000 pieces of archival material which can range from a single photograph to a box of papers, books, a wide variety of things. The date range goes from the 1860s up until today. We're actively collecting the history of fisheries work in the United States, and also the Fish and Wildlife Service. We're collecting from federal, state, tribal, commercial, private, anybody that's working with Fish. We're interested. We do have a document that covers what we collect. Most of our collection is from the United States, so we occasionally have something like a Russian fish transport bag. The sizes of the objects go from a bead used in fish tagging up to a distribution truck or a boat. It includes our uniforms, annual reports from hatcheries, log books from hatcheries, photographs, equipment, some of everything.

Valerie: Wow! So what are these items used for? Or what happens to them once they go to the museum?

Randi: We use our 1899 hatchery building as a museum. Some things are more or less

permanently in there, and some things rotate to try to educate our visitors. We get about 150,000 a year, and a lot of those go through the museum. Some things are loaned to other museums for exhibits. Some go to temporary exhibits. Some are just research. They will never leave the storage area. They're not either exhibit quality or they just document something that's important to our history and nobody will probably ever want to exhibit them. We also use them for straight research questions, like the history of a hatchery – what a building looked like, family history. We have a call or a question now from a private individual whose grandfather sold fish to the Leadville Hatchery in the 19-teens or 20s, and she's looking for some documentation of that. So we're trying to go back to the records and see if we can point any sales to the Leadville Hatchery. Sometimes distribution and stocking information is used for endangered species work. A bunch of different things.

Valerie: Great! Well, thank you! Carlos, is there something special about D.C. Booth that you want people to know? About how the resources that it protects, or maybe the resources that it provides?

Carlos: Even though we are a facility that stresses volunteer and visitor educational outreach, our primary mission is to serve as our country's fisheries' archives. We want to stress that our archives largely depends on the forethought generosity of donors who provide us with these artifacts, such as tools, equipment, finds, books, photographs, journals, and so forth. We hope that supervisors in the Service will encourage that our hatcheries and refuges will consider the archives when they're cleaning out file cabinets, closets, barns, garages. Then we also want to encourage private citizens, possibly retirees of the Service, to considering donating their collections to us for safe keeping so that they're available for future generations of biologists, scientific researchers, and historians. Obviously, we want everyone to know that our archives is available to the public and not just to government agencies.

Valerie: Great! Well, thank you, and thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. That was Carlos Martinez with D.C. Booth National Fish Hatchery and Archives. If you're interested in finding out more about D.C. Booth, please visit their website at <http://www.fws.gov/dcbooth>. Thanks for joining us. This was Valerie Fellows of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Public Affairs.