

The National Fish Hatchery System



The National Fish

Hatchery System works

with partners through

its 69 operational

National Fish

Hatcheries, seven Fish

Technology Centers,

nine Fish Health

Centers and one

Historic National Fish

Hatchery and remains

the national leader in

many aspects of fish

culture and broodstock

management, especially

for recreationally

valuable and imperiled

species.

Innovation and continual adaptation have pioneered fish culture techniques for a variety of recreationally valuable and imperiled species such as striped bass, lake trout, salmon, pallid sturgeon, paddlefish, alligator gar, and numerous other aquatic species. Many of these innovations are shared with the private sector. Hatchery facilities also provide educational programs in aquatic resource conservation for many local communities.

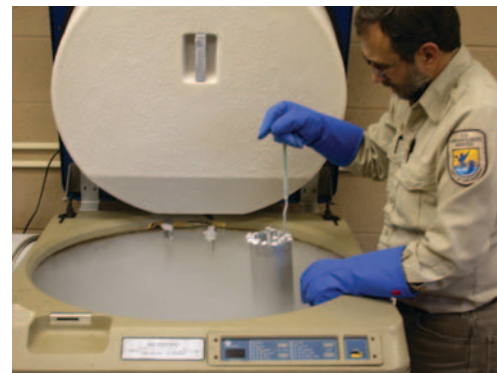
Restoring depleted populations and their habitat involves a number of different tasks, the most important of which is forging partnerships that allow restoration programs to operate efficiently and effectively. This work is implemented under the guidance of multi-State fishery management, restoration and Endangered Species Recovery plans. Stocking fish into restored streams is only a portion of the work that goes into developing a sound hatchery program. The Hatchery System works with partners to provide technical assistance to ensure that habitat restoration, genetic considerations, fish health issues and other aspects of restoration program are well-coordinated. Hatcheries also perform extensive mitigation work, helping insure that viable and healthy fisheries are maintained in water affected by Federal dam construction.

The program ensures that hatchery fish are able to compete in the wild, and Fish Health Center and National Fish Hatchery biologists develop and implement plans for fish health management for all propagation programs. The combination of prompt disease diagnosis and recommendations for corrective actions reduces mortality during rearing, increases survival after release and helps protect wild fish from inadvertent exposure to disease. The fish health program is also involved with partners in efforts to protect the nation's fishery resources from the introduction of fish diseases from foreign sources.

Fish Technology Centers develop and provide new tools for use by the Service and partners in managing aquatic resources. In addition, scientists at Fish Technology centers and National Fish Hatcheries develop genetic management plans to ensure that refugia populations and broodstocks are genetically appropriate for

restoring native populations. Careful genetic screening and planning on the part of the biologists at the Hatchery System and in Fish Technology Centers have been critical to preserving genetic diversity.

Restoration of depleted populations of native game fish, through stocking by the Hatchery System, provides and enhances recreational fishing opportunities for the Nation's 58 million anglers.



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