

Battle Creek Watershed: July 2011 Update
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Activities

RED BLUFF FISH & WILDLIFE OFFICE

JIM SMITH, PROJECT LEADER

Battle Creek Monitoring

Matt Brown

Adult Salmonid Monitoring

The 2011 monitoring season began on March 1, 2011 sampling in the CNFH spawning building until March 28, when the river ladder was opened and fish were allowed to pass into Battle Creek above the barrier weir. The barrier weir trap was not used this year because it appears to have been delaying fish passage. Two years of radiotelemetry studies indicate that the ladder does not delay fish passage. The fisheries agencies will consider modifying the trap or its location, or building a new trap, potentially in the monitoring vault which was built for this purpose.

No un-clipped Chinook were passed during sampling in the spawning building. **Since March 29, 103 un-clipped Chinook, 35 clipped Chinook and 70 adult lamprey were video recorded passing the fish ladder. The monitoring season at the barrier weir ladder will end August 1st when the ladder is closed until Coleman NFH spawning operations begin October 1st.**

Spring Chinook Snorkel Surveys

During the period 9/20/2010-11/4/2010, we completed six snorkel surveys on Battle Creek to count spring Chinook salmon redds and sample Chinook carcasses. We increased the number of snorkel surveys from three to six in order to recover as many carcasses as possible. Carcass recovery was especially important this year because of the unusually high number of hatchery-origin salmon that migrated into Battle Creek during the spring run immigration period (as seen on video footage). We counted a total of 94 redds and recovered seven coded-wire tags from carcasses. Information on the coded-wire tags indicated all seven fish were from the Feather River Hatchery (in Oroville). Six fish were spring run and one was fall run.

Juvenile Salmonid Monitoring

The 2010-2011 juvenile salmonid production monitoring season ended on June 30, 2011. We captured 4,864 spring Chinook salmon in the rotary screw trap.

Recently completed annual reports include the 2009 juvenile salmonid monitoring report and the 2009 adult salmonid monitoring report. Annual monitoring reports can be downloaded at <http://www.fws.gov/redbluff/cvpia.html>.

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Hatchery Evaluation Program:

Kevin Niemela

The Hatchery Evaluation Program at the Red Bluff Fish and Wildlife Office, working in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, **is performing the 2011 Winter Chinook Carcass Survey**. Information collected on the carcass survey is used to generate an estimate of spawner abundance and to evaluate the effects of the winter Chinook supplementation program at the Livingston Stone NFH. **Information collected to date suggests a very low abundance of winter Chinook in 2011.** The carcass survey is conducted daily from May through August.

Battle Creek Fall Chinook Counting Weir

DFG and USFWS staff have completed operation of the seasonally installed fish counting weir in lower Battle Creek. The fish counting weir was operated from mid-August through mid-November 2010, for the purpose of estimating the abundance of fall Chinook in Battle Creek. Final run size estimates will be derived by DFG after the data has been checked for accuracy. The final data is reported in Grand Tab (the DFG annual report summarizing Chinook population estimates for the Central Valley; <http://www.calfish.org/tabid/104/Default.aspx>).

COLEMAN NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY COMPLEX

SCOTT HAMELBERG, PROJECT LDR

Fish Releases:

Over 1 million Late-fall Chinook salmon were released in December 2010.

Approximately 700,000 steelhead juveniles were released in early January 2011.

Over 120,000 winter Chinook salmon were released from Livingston Stone NFH on February 3, 2011.

Winter Chinook:

As of July 14, the hatchery has collected 45 females and 33 males. The run has been very late in both adult collection and spawning. The first female was spawned on June 13. In most years, this date is late April or early May. 32 females have been spawned and the eye-up to date is 98%. Adult collection will continue through the end of July. As of May 12, the hatchery has retained 27 females and 19 male WCS to date a total of 46 fish. Trapping was slow due to high water releases, but numbers have increased the last few weeks. (John Rueth, LS NFH).

At the barrier weir, efforts are underway for the retrofit of the overshot gate and construction of a concrete visitor viewing platform.

Outreach:

Docent training is scheduled for Sept 16. Video on the Salmon Festival completed. Informational booth was set up at the March "Sport, Boat and RV Show" in Anderson, CA. Maps of Battle Creek Salmon Trail are at <http://www.fws.gov/coleman/trail.html>