

# Busy time for fisheries

People who work in Warm Springs fisheries programs are busy throughout the year, but the end of August and beginning of September can be an especially busy time.

For the past few weeks, the workers at the Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery have been spawning the fish of the spring Chinook run.

Also, last week a group of fisheries workers were releasing fish – about 200 that were ready to spawn – into the Shitike. This was part of a fish re-introduction on the Shitike that began last year.

### Visit by students

A group of Native American youths from other tribes this year visited the hatchery during the spawning activity. The students were part of a new OMSI summer program, called the Salmon Camp Research Team.

The Warm Springs hatchery is particularly interesting to students because the facility uses the leading hatchery techniques and methods, said Marlene Schmidt, who led the OMSI student team.

In controlling disease among the young fish, in research of returning fish, for example, the Warm Springs hatchery is on the cutting edge, Schmidt said.

During the week, she and the students in the OMSI program camped at Trout Creek Ranch, which is owned by PGE and the tribes, and maintained for improvement of fish habitat. The OMSI students visited the hatchery five times during the summer.

Earlier this summer, Warm Springs youth Michael Van Pelt participated in the OMSI summer program.

### Hatchery process explained

The spawning program at the hatchery involves collecting the thousands of eggs from the fish.

The eggs are kept in colanders in tanks of circulating water for one month, explained Mike Paiya, hatchery manager.

For the next three months the eggs go into incubators, where they hatch. The juvenile fish are then transferred to in-door tanks, where the colanders earlier had been located, Paiya said.

The young fish remain in these tanks, where they're regularly fed, for another three months, he said.

By this time it would be March, and the fish are put into five outside raceways.

They stay in these raceways for a month, at which point the hatchery workers place a coded wire tag in each fish's snout.

The young fish by this time are about three inches long. After they're tagged, the fish are spread out in 25 raceways.

They're fed for another year, and then released the following April. About six inches in length, the fish then migrate to the ocean, and return upstream as adult salmon after one, two or three years.

### Shitike project

As the spawning program was going on at the hatchery, some fisheries workers transported 200 spring Chinook from the hatchery to various spots along Shitike Creek.

The fish were released along five different sites on the Shitike, said Bob Spatcholts, fisheries biologist for the tribes. Sixty percent of the fish were females, and 40 percent were males.

Most were four years old, weighing between ten and 12 pounds, and were ready to spawn about the time they were released, Spatcholts said.

A couple of weeks ago, summer youth workers helped with the Shitike re-stocking project, he said.

Last week, Spatcholts was working with Aldo Garcia, LeiLani Tias and David Lucei.



## Fishing season under way

Fishing began last month for subsistence fall chinook salmon and ends after 300 wild adult chinook salmon have been caught, as established by Tribal Council in Resolution 10075.

As of this week about 100 had been caught.

The Natural Resources Department expects 8,500 salmon to return to the Deschutes, and 2,600 to migrate above Sherars Falls.

To assure fall chinook salmon production above Sherars Falls continues to provide a harvestable number of fish to tribal members, Tribal Council placed a 300 salmon limit on the fishery.

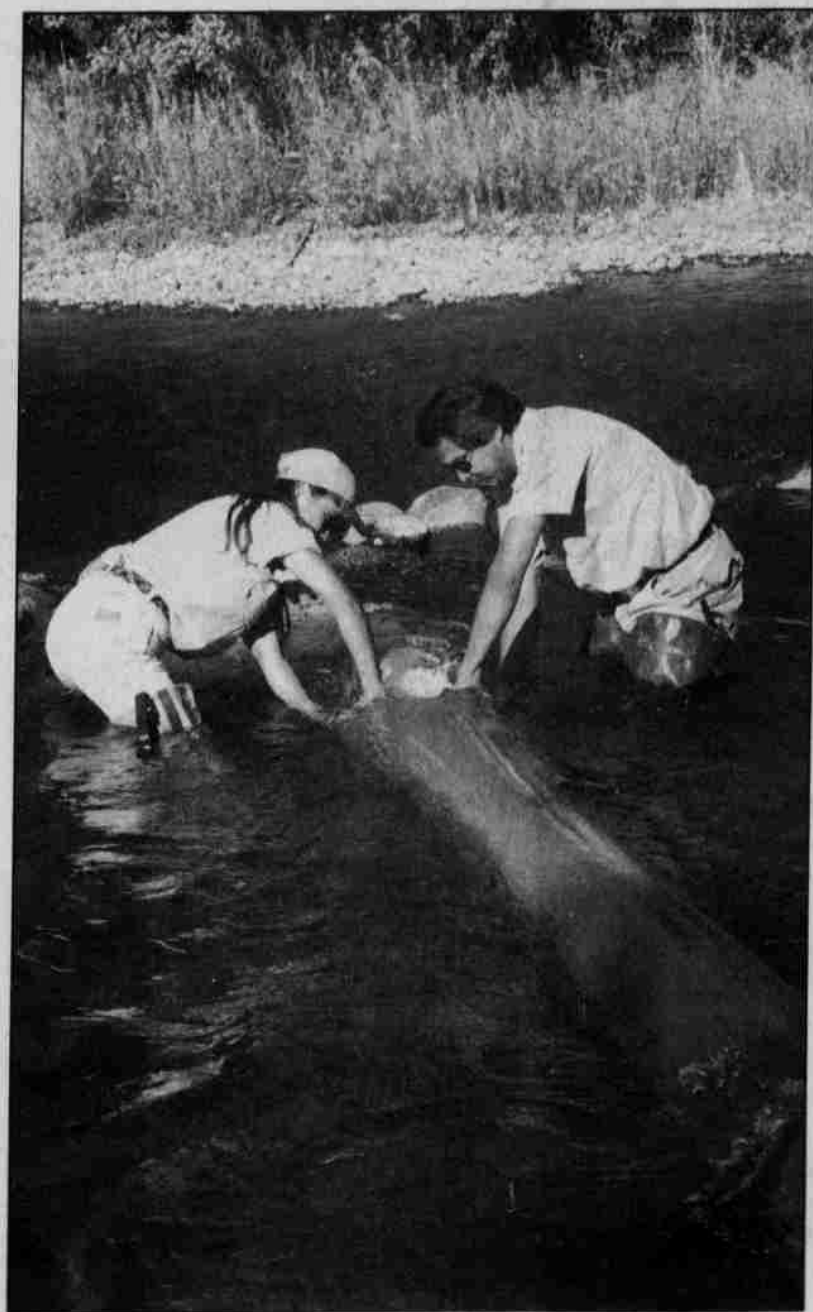
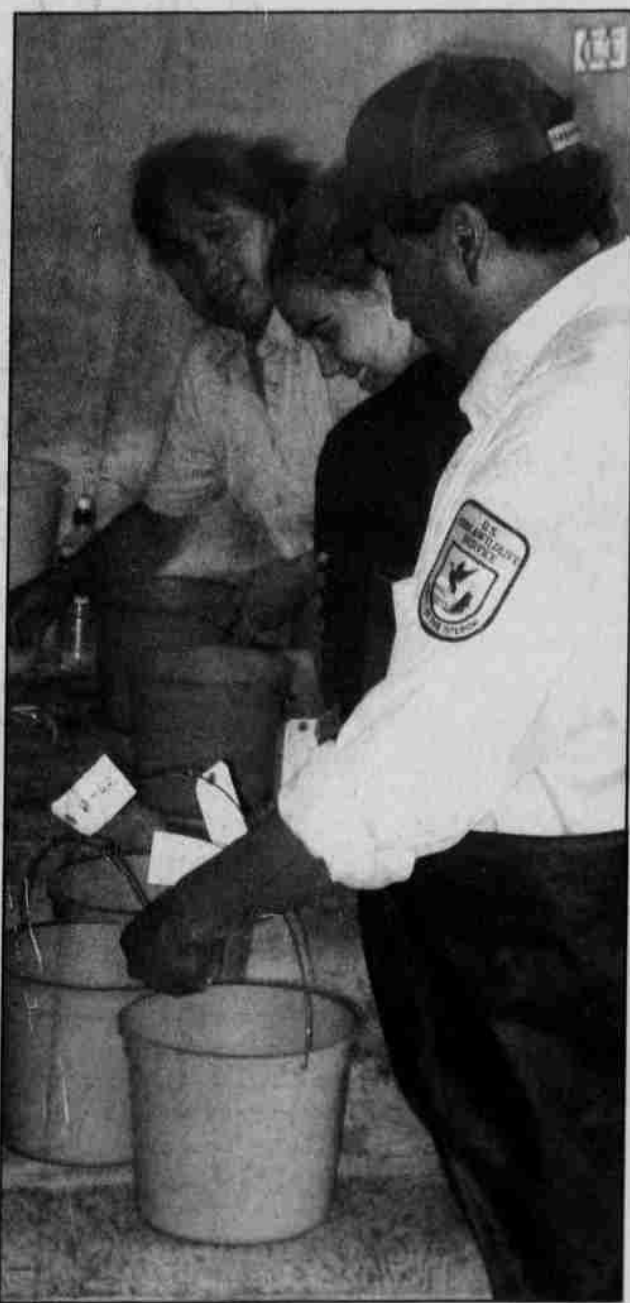
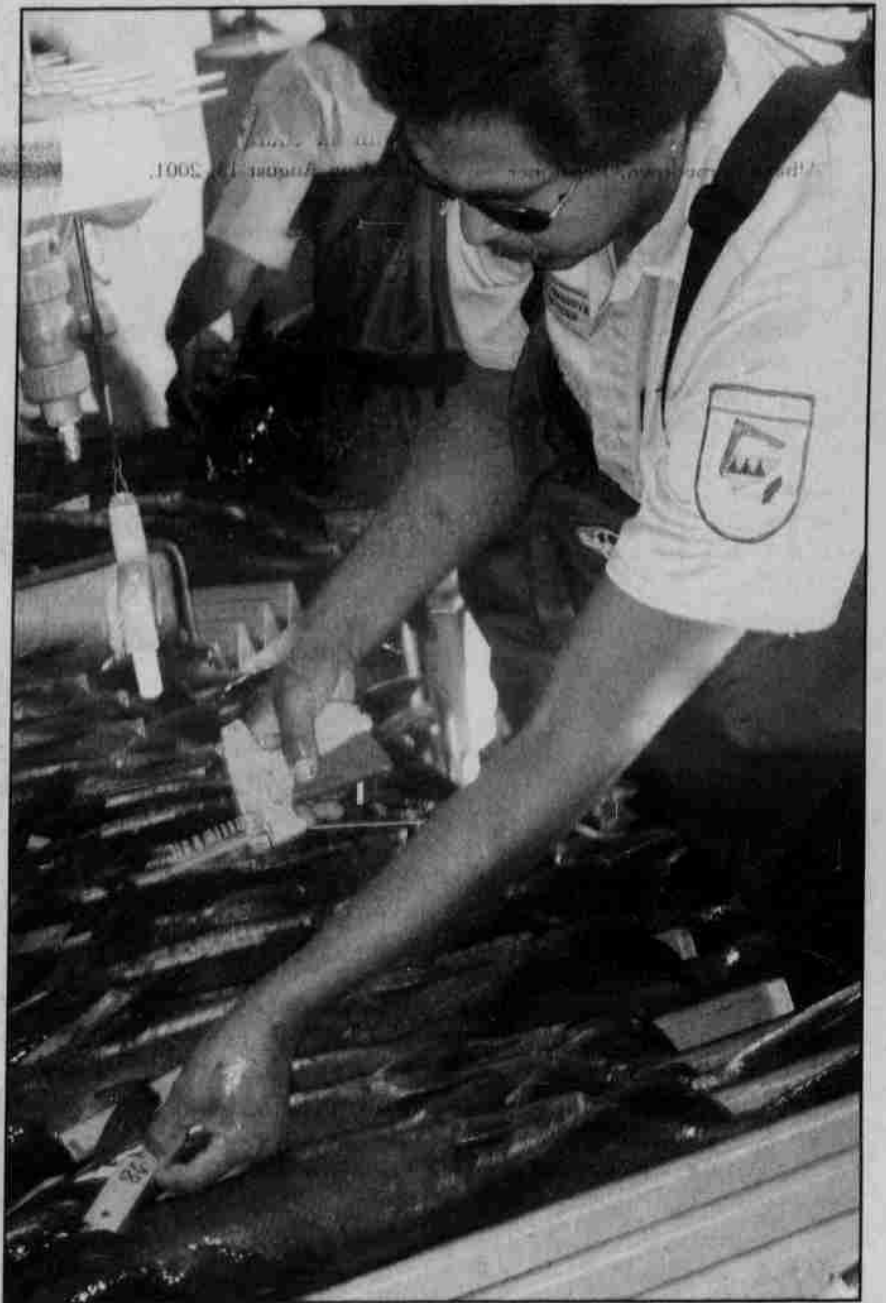
After the 300 salmon harvest cap is reached, fishing will continue for hatchery (fin clipped) steelhead and lamprey until December 31.

All wild (non-clipped fin) steelhead must be released unharmed into the Deschutes River throughout the entire fishing season.

This fishing season allows dip net, set net, and hook-and-line fishing to occur seven days a week.

All fish caught are for subsistence use only. No sales to the public are allowed.

Above, Randy Boise weighs a fish at the hatchery; at right, David Lucei tags a fish, as OMSI students watch from a window above (photo at bottom right). Below, Lucei and LeiLani Tias release fish into the Shitike. In the photo at bottom right, hatchery workers demonstrate part of the spawning process to a student.



Photos and text by Jerry Brunoe and Dave McMechan