



Photo taken from Wikipedia

Steelhead fingerlings have been threatened by bacteria and parasite infections.

Warm water and disease: a deadly combination that kills juvenile summer steelhead at Rock Creek Hatchery

FROM THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

ROSEBURG, Ore. – High water temperatures and repeated bouts of bacteria and parasite infections beginning in May have killed over 150,000 summer steelhead fingerlings at Rock Creek Hatchery.

The hatchery began losing fish in May when warm water temperatures led to outbreaks of both a bacterial infection and external parasite common in fish hatcheries, according to Dan Meyer, ODFW hatchery manager.

“We immediately treated the fish and got them healthy, but once we moved them to outside raceways, the disease broke again and again,” Meyer said. “However, the combination of pathogens and unusually high temperatures created a perfect

storm that we were never able to get out in front of.”

Although the majority of the fish died the week of July 9-17, when Meyer estimates losses were as high as 15 percent a day, hatchery staff didn’t realize the full extent of the loss until a routine inventory in early August. During much of June and July, when the fish were under constant treatment for infection, they were not healthy enough to withstand the sampling needed to get a more accurate count.

According to Craig Banner, ODFW fish pathologist, columnaris (a bacterial infection) and ichthyophthirius (an external parasite often known as “ick”) are found in low levels in the North Umpqua River, which supplies water to the hatchery. When water temperatures rise, pathogen levels can increase rapidly, overwhelming a fish’s natural

defenses. Water temperatures in the North Umpqua River exceeded 71 degrees in July, compared to previous years where highs were in the mid-60s.

Meyer said it will be difficult to accurately estimate the total extent of the loss until the fish are larger and ready for release in October. However, the loss is significant and Meyer estimates it could reach 95 percent. The impact on future fisheries is also difficult to predict. To meet the objectives of the Coastal Multi-species Conservation Plan, the hatchery had increased its summer steelhead production this year so there were more fish to start with. Also, summer steelhead in the Umpqua tend to return over a two year period so any declines in returns could be spread over time.

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Buoy 10 Chinook season goes to fin-clipped only on Monday

The Columbia River Buoy 10 Chinook fishery has limited harvest to keep the fishery open through labor day

FROM THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

CLACKAMAS, Ore. – In an effort to keep the Columbia River Buoy 10 Chinook fishery open through the Labor Day weekend, fishery managers decided today to limit Chinook harvest to hatchery adipose fin-clipped fish only beginning Monday, Aug. 24.

Thanks to excellent fishing early in the season, anglers are quickly approaching the number of allowable impacts on ESA-listed wild tule Chinook, the limiting factor for the Chinook fishery. Managers hope today’s action will extend the Chinook fishery through Sept. 7 as originally scheduled.

“This year’s Buoy 10 fishery started out strong, with very high catch rates and a near-record level of angler participation,” said Chris Kern, ODFW fish division deputy administrator. “Limiting harvest to hatchery fish should allow Chinook anglers to keep fishing through

the holiday weekend.” Catch in the Buoy 10 fishery through Aug. 20 includes 18,600 Chinook kept during 46,600 angler trips, and managers expect the good fishing to continue.

Under the rules adopted today:

Effective Monday, Aug. 24 through Monday, Sept. 7 only adipose fin-clipped Chinook may be retained.

The overall daily bag limit will continue to be two adult hatchery salmon or steelhead, in combination, only one of which may be a Chinook. All wild steelhead, coho, and Chinook salmon must be released. As in all years, all jack salmon caught between Tongue Point and Buoy 10 must be released through Sept. 30.

Anglers may transport un-clipped Chinook salmon caught in adjacent fisheries (such as the ocean or the Columbia River above Tongue Point) through the Buoy 10 area, but cannot fish in Buoy 10 with an un-clipped salmon on board.

All Chinook retention in the Buoy 10 area is scheduled to close Sept. 8-30. However, managers will be monitoring the fishery and an earlier closure is possible if effort and harvest rates continue to be high. See the ODFW web page for in-season updates.

In the meantime, managers are predicting over half a million coho will be returning to the mouth of the Columbia and anglers can look forward to some good coho fishing at Buoy 10, Kern said.

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