



Chief Joseph Hatchery Fact Sheet



Chief Joseph Hatchery was built to increase spring, summer, and fall Chinook salmon in the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers. The hatchery produces up to 2.9 million Chinook smolts each year and provides salmon for tribal ceremonies, subsistence needs for tribal members, and increases recreational fishing opportunities for all.

Construction of Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph dams eliminated salmon from surrounding rivers. To provide for losses of anadromous fish species, Congress authorized construction of four hatcheries, but only three were ever built until 2013 when Chief Joseph Hatchery began operation.



- Construction began in 2010 and was funded by Bonneville Power Administration, through the Colville Tribe's Fish Accords. Grant PUD funded for a portion of construction and Grant, Chelan and Douglas PUDs all contribute cost share dollars to operate and monitor the performance of the hatchery and the returning hatchery fish.
- The hatchery started up in July 2013, producing 1.8 million Chinook smolts and will be fully ramped up by 2017 producing up to 2.9 million Chinook smolts annually. 2017 is the first year that adult salmon (age 4) are returning from the CJH releases.
- The hatchery broodstock are collected at the mouth of the Okanogan River via a 30' purse seine called "The Dreamcatcher". It uses a 700' purse seine net to collect both hatchery and wild adults, for transport to the hatchery. **WILD CHINOOK NOT NEEDED FOR HATCHERY BROOD ARE RELEASED UNHARMED FROM THE PURSE SEINE.**
- The hatchery program calls for 656 NORs (natural origin recruits) and 552 HORs (hatchery origin recruits). The reason we utilize both NORs and HORs is that our production program is based on releasing juveniles both into the Okanogan and the main stem Columbia in Bridgeport.
- The goal is to maintain natural origin genetics in both production groups. Beginning this year, our goal is to collect HORs that were produced by NOR adults. All of our production is marked with an adipose fin clip for retention in fisheries.

- In addition to the purse seine collecting brood for the hatchery, it also is utilized for collecting excess hatchery Chinook, for distribution to the Tribal membership. Removing excess hatchery fish before they can migrate to the spawning grounds is vital in maintaining the natural origin genetics that makes the Okanogan Summer Chinook such a strong run.
- The release of wild fish from the purse seine and in the recreational fisheries is critical to meeting population objectives for escapement and spawner composition in the Okanogan and Similkameen Rivers. Without a healthy population of wild spawners the hatchery releases in the Okanogan and Similkameen would have to be reduced.
- Since 2013, the CCT has released 13,293 wild summer/fall Chinook back into the river and recreational anglers upstream of Wells Dam have released 10,165. These efforts have made a tremendous difference in the natural production of wild salmon for future generations.
- Harvest agreements, negotiated with all the co-managers of the Columbia River fisheries, allow the Colville Tribe to harvest salmon and steelhead for subsistence and ceremonial purposes. Harvest levels are based on a percentage of the total run size in the Columbia.
- The Colville Tribe is committed to ensuring that adequate numbers of both Chinook and Sockeye escape to the spawning grounds. These metrics are based on available habitat, and are also negotiated with the co-managers.
- Over the past 10 years, the Colville Tribe has spent millions of dollars in habitat improvement and acquiring water rights to improve stream flows for salmon in the Okanogan and its tributary streams. Once the available habitat is fully seeded and population objectives are being met there could be an opportunity for more harvest of natural origin (wild) Chinook.