



Fall 2015 Root River Weir Summary

The Root River Steelhead Facility (RRSF) was in operation for 10 processing days during the Fall 2015 fish migration. We were able to capture and process 2,840 fish between September 21 and November 9. Our egg-take and biological sampling goals were met, and coho health inspections were conducted. The Fall 2015 Root River effort is summarized below.

	Captured	Spawned	Eggs taken	Passed Upstream
Chinook	1,309	197*	564,309*	880
Coho	1,436	1,221	931,280	1,351
Rainbow	9	0	0	9
Brown	86	0	0	52
Totals	2,840			2,292

* Chinooks spawned for Indiana DNR.

Water levels in the Root River were very low throughout the Chinook run, but some well-timed rain events occurred at the start of the coho run, increasing flows and allowing for a decent coho return. Due to poor Chinook returns in Michigan tributaries, we assisted Indiana DNR with their egg collection efforts. They sent staff to spawn Chinooks at the Root and were able to fulfil their egg quota.

Throughout the fall season, Chinooks were sampled as part of an ongoing multi-agency, lakewide study on natural reproduction. Stocked Chinooks were implanted with small coded wire tags prior to release, and tags were recovered from 384 fish at RRSF. Analysis of the tags will provide fish managers with more information on movement patterns of Chinooks in the lake, growth rates, and the occurrence of “straying,” when a mature fish returns to a stream other than the one where it was originally stocked.

The 7th Annual Open House was held at RRSF on Saturday, October 10, and over 900 people attended the event. DNR staff gave tours of the facility and led discussions on aquatic invasive species and boating safety. Volunteers from Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin served as greeters to welcome visitors, provided food, displayed a Lake Michigan fishing boat, and instructed kids on how to cast a fishing rod and tie fishing knots. Additional volunteers from Southeast Wisconsin and Gary Berger Chapters of Trout Unlimited demonstrated fly tying and fly casting. Thank you to all those who participated and helped make the day a success!

Wisconsin DNR would like to acknowledge the support of Salmon Unlimited in keeping the Root River Steelhead Facility operational, and a special thank you goes out to the volunteers who opened and closed the viewing window at the facility each day during the season.

We will resume operations at the weir in the spring. For the latest Lake Michigan sport and commercial fishing information, please visit our website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan>.

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