

Wolf Creek

National Fish Hatchery



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Station Facts

- Established: 1975.
- Number of staff: six permanent.
- Annual budget: \$506,000 (FY 07).

Geographic Area Covered

- Cumberland River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Lake Cumberland/Tailwater (TW), Martin's Fork Lake/TW, Laurel River Lake/TW.
- Kentucky River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Buckhorn Lake/TW, Carr Fork Lake/TW.
- Green River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Nolin River Lake/TW, Rough River Lake/TW, Barren River Lake/TW.
- Licking River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Cave Run Lake/TW.
- Little Sandy River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Grayson Lake/TW, Yatesville Lake/TW.
- Big Sandy River Basin, KY (mitigation)—Dewey Lake/TW, Fish Trap Lake/TW, Paintsville Lake/TW.
- Kentucky lakes and streams (reimbursable agreement).
- Cherokee Indian Reservation, Cherokee, NC.

Fish Species and Capability

- Rainbow Trout (mitigation/reimbursable) 215,384 lbs.—678,460 fish at nine inches 1,600 lbs.—16,000 fish at six inches.
- Brown Trout (mitigation/reimbursable) 9,708 lbs.—46,600 fish at eight inches 2,358 lbs.—75,450 fish at four inches.

Station Goals

- Provide rainbow and brown trout for mitigation stocking in Kentucky.
- Provide rainbow and brown trout to the Commonwealth of Kentucky (state management goals) under a reimbursable agreement.

- Provide rainbow and brown trout fingerlings for mitigation stocking in Georgia.
- Provide a refuge for threatened or endangered aquatic species and develop techniques required to culture these species.
- Assist Tribal governments in managing fisheries resources on Tribal lands.
- Implement a thorough, perennial hatchery product evaluation program.
- Provide environmental education.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with chambers of commerce, tourist commissions, Trout Unlimited and other agencies to promote regional support for the fish hatchery.
- Maintain a "Friends Group" to gain community support for the fish hatchery.

Public Use Opportunities

- More than 100,000 visitors yearly.
- Hatchery tours.
- Off-site presentations.
- Display room.
- Handicapped accessible public fishing area.

Calendar of Events

June: Annual Kids Fishing Derby held during National Fishing Week.

Questions and Answers

What kind of fish do you raise?

Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery is a coldwater fish hatchery which means we raise fish that do best in water temperatures below 60 degrees. Species currently in production at this facility are rainbow and brown trout.

Where do the eggs come from?

The rainbow trout eggs come from one of three other Federal hatcheries, Erwin NFH, TN; Ennis NFH, MT; and White Sulphur Springs, WV.

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The brown trout eggs come from the Saratoga NFH, WY. All of the eggs are received overnight by Federal Express.

What size are the fish when stocked?

A small number of fish are stocked at four inches, six inches, and eight inches to meet specific management needs. The majority of our fish are stocked as a catchable nine inch fish.

How long does it take from the egg stage to stocking size?

It takes 16-18 months to get a trout from the egg stage to nine inches.

Where do you stock the fish raised here?

Most of the fish are stocked into Federal mitigation waters in Kentucky. The other fish are provided to the Commonwealth of Kentucky under a reimbursable agreement to meet management goals in state controlled waters. More than 100 different waters in Kentucky are stocked with trout from this facility. A small number of fingerlings are provided to the Cherokee Indian Tribe in North Carolina.

Do you provide or sell fish to private individuals?

All fish raised at this facility are stocked into public fishing waters.

What do you feed them?

A special formulated trout diet very high in protein to obtain optimal growth. No cat food or dog food is used.

Where does the water come from?

The hatchery water is received gravity flow from Lake Cumberland at a rate of 12,000-15,000 g.p.m. The water is used one time then empties into the Cumberland River.

Do you provide all trout stocked in Kentucky?

Yes. The entire trout fishing program in Kentucky relies solely on the production of the Wolf Creek NFH.

What is the economic impact of the fish produced here?

The direct economic benefit of fish produced at the Wolf Creek NFH to the Kentucky economy is \$40 million annually. The indirect benefit is estimated at over \$75 million in 2001.