

# Dale Hollow

## National Fish Hatchery



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### Station Facts

- Established: 1966.
- Number of staff: eight.
- Annual budget (FY 06) \$641,656.

### Geographic Area Covered

- Cumberland River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Wolf River, Center Hill Reservoir Tailwater (TW), Dale Hollow Reservoir and TW, J. Percy Priest Reservoir TW.
- Hiwassee River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Apalachia Reservoir TW.
- Holston River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Fort Patrick Henry Reservoir and TW, South Holston Reservoir and TW, Wilbur Reservoir TW, Watauga Reservoir; Cherokee Reservoir TW.
- Duck River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Normandy Reservoir TW.
- Clinch River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Norris Reservoir TW.
- Elk River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Tims Ford Reservoir TW.
- Northern Georgia (mitigation) - Federal Water Development Projects.
- Little Tennessee River Basin, TN (mitigation) - Tellico Reservoir, Tellico River.
- Little Tennessee River Basin, TN (reimbursable) - Calderwood Reservoir; Chilhowee Reservoir.
- Sipsy River Basin, AL (restoration tradeoff) - Lewis Smith Reservoir TW.
- Red River Basin, TN (reimbursable) - Fort Campbell.

### Station Goals

- Provide rainbow, brown, and lake trout for mitigation stocking in Tennessee and Georgia.
- Provide rainbow trout to Alabama in return for Gulf Coast striped bass eggs and fry.
- Provide a limited number of rainbow and lake trout for non-mitigation stocking in Tennessee under a reimbursable agreement with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.
- Assist in the recovery and restoration of imperiled aquatic species by developing propagation/culture techniques and rearing animals for reintroduction into the wild.
- Assist Tribal governments in managing fisheries resources on Tribal lands.
- Implement a thorough, perennial hatchery product evaluation program.
- Provide quality environmental education opportunities.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with chambers of commerce, state tourism departments, and other agencies to promote regional support for the fish hatchery.
- Establish and maintain a "Friends Group" to gain community support for the fish hatchery.

### Fish Species and Capability

- Rainbow trout (mitigation/restoration trade-off/reimbursable) - 820,850 nine inch fish (245,000 lbs.); 4,000 seven inch fish (550 lbs.); 660,000 three to four inch fish (9,600 lbs.).

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- Brown trout (mitigation) - 250,000 eight inch fish (52,000 lbs.); 50,000 four inch fish (1,300 lbs.).
- Lake trout (mitigation/reimbursable) - 100,000 six inch fish (5,400 lbs.).

## Public Use Opportunities

- More than 55,000 visitors yearly.
- Hatchery tours.
- Off-site presentations.
- Aquarium/visitor center.
- Paved walking and exercise road.
- Public fishing area.

## Calendar of Events

**March - November:** Camping in adjacent Corps of Engineers campground, reservations recommended.

**May:** International Migratory Bird Day Celebration.

**June:** Ninth Annual Kid's Fishing Rodeo - held on Tennessee's Free Fishing Day, June 10, 2006.

**December:** Christmas Bird Count.

Open House - to be announced.

Year-round fishing in local waters.

## Questions and Answers

*What kind of fish do you raise?*

Dale Hollow National Fish Hatchery is a coldwater fish hatchery which means we raise fish that do best in water temperatures between 45°F and 65°F. Current species in production at this facility include rainbow trout, brown trout, and lake trout.

*How big are the fish when they are released?*

The vast majority of rainbow trout reared at this facility are used for programs requiring continuous stocking of nine-inch fish in waters which typically experience intense fishing pressure and little natural reproduction. A nine-inch fish is considered large enough for fishermen to keep.

Lake trout are stocked at a size of 6 inches. These fish are stocked into reservoirs having conditions conducive to good growth and survival. Brown trout are managed by stocking tailwaters that will support small fish with two-three inch fingerlings. Waters which have proved not to generate high survivability when stocked with smaller fish, receive stockings of 8-inch brown trout. Nature grows these fish to a harvestable size.

*Where do you stock the fish?*

All of the brown trout and most of the rainbow trout and lake trout reared at Dale Hollow are stocked in and below U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) impoundments in Tennessee.

Fingerling rainbow trout are also supplied to the State of Georgia. These fish are transferred to a state fish hatchery where they are grown to a harvestable size and are subsequently stocked in and below TVA impoundments in Georgia. In addition, catchable size rainbow trout are stocked in the tailwater of Lewis Smith Lake in Alabama.

*How do you get the eggs from the fish?*

Spawning operations are not conducted at this hatchery. Fertilized eggs are received from other federal and state hatcheries by overnight shipping in special egg-shipping cartons and are placed into incubator trays. As they hatch they are placed into tanks to grow.

Rainbow trout eggs are generally available from July through the middle of April. Brown and lake trout eggs are only available from the middle of October to the end of December.

*Stocking trout is not "natural" is it?*

Stocking non-native species of trout is not "natural" but neither are dams. Dams perform critical functions such as flood control and hydro-electric power generation but there is a down side to dams. Construction of a dam, regardless of its type, alters the entire river ecosystem.

Dams often produce large, deep reservoirs in which the water stratifies into temperature layers during the summer. The water released downstream into the tailwater comes from a deep, cool layer. This newly created coldwater habitat does not provide conditions necessary for populations of native warmwater fish to be self-sustaining. Trout stocking is carried out in order to utilize the available coldwater habitat and to mitigate for the impacts that these water development projects have on the respective river ecosystems.