

Fish Hatchery Production Plan 2006 Revision

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to revise the 1998 Revised Fish Hatchery Production Plan (1998 Plan) submitted by the Hatchery Workgroup and adopted by the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (Commission) under the April 2, 1998 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). This plan was developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies in fulfillment of the Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA) Section 313 (c). The Plan consists of recommendations to meet a portion of the increased fish-stocking needs in waters affected by the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) in Utah. The 1998 Plan was presented as the Proposed Action Alternative in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

It is the Mitigation Commission's intent to revise the 1998 Plan and make minor changes to two cold-water hatcheries included in the Plan: these are the Whiterocks State Fish Hatchery (SFH) and the Jones Hole National Fish Hatchery (NFH). Projected production levels and funding at all other facilities included in the 1998 Plan will remain unchanged.

The 1998 Plan recommended, among other things, that a total of seven facilities be funded for construction or rehabilitation to best meet the needs and purposes as described in the EA. These are: Kamas SFH, Fountain Green SFH, Whiterocks SFH, Big Springs Tribal Hatchery and Jones Hole NFH - all coldwater facilities; and a warm-water hatchery at a site to be determined, with a smaller interim June sucker hatchery.

The Commission has funded 75% of the cost of improvements identified in the Plan that have been completed (Kamas SFH and Fountain Green SFH) or that are under construction (Whiterocks SFH and Interim June Sucker SFH) to date. Site-specific NEPA analyses and decision notices were prepared for each facility before final facility designs were prepared and construction began.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHANGES

Under the Plan revision, the Commission proposes to fund a complete reconstruction of the Whiterocks facility (excluding residences) rather than only "Phase I" improvements described in the 1998 Plan. The complete reconstruction of Whiterocks SFH essentially adds new raceways at the south end of the site to replace the existing deteriorating structures, and a water treatment facility to replace the settling pond.

Under the Plan revision, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Commission would not construct additional raceways at the Jones Hole NFH. Instead, site improvements such as low-head oxygenation, water collection system improvements, facility protection from outside disease vectors, or similar improvements would be implemented. The proposed revisions would allow for improvement of the fish health and condition at the current production levels, and should also provide for some level of increased production using the existing raceway rearing capacity.

MEETING THE NEED

Under the 1998 Plan, the cold-water facilities, when completed, would meet approximately 50% of the increased cold-water fish production need for the planning period: 1995 - 2035. This total need was identified as 841,361 lbs. The expected increase production based on feasibility analyses, are given in Table 1. Using actual production numbers of the two completed facilities, Kamas SFH and Fountain Green SFH, the updated increased production is also shown in Table 1 for the proposed revision.

Table 1. Production capacity, in pounds, of Plan facilities under the 1998 Plan and the proposed revision.

Facility	Capacity (lbs)			Portion of need met (%)
	Pre Project	Post Reconstruction	Increase	
1998 Plan				
Kamas SFH	80,000	140,000	60,000	
Whiterocks SFH	35,510	87,700	52,189	
Jones Hole NFH	175,000	263,000	88,000	
Fountain Green SFH	59,250	106,650	47,400	
Big Springs Tribal		30,000	30,000	471,370
Total cold-water	349,760	676,130	326,370	56
Proposed Revision				
Kamas SFH	80,000	133,880	53,880	
Whiterocks SFH	35,510	131,390	95,880	
Jones Hole NFH	175,000	245,000 ¹	70,000	
Fountain Green SFH	59,250	161,550	102,300	
Big Springs Tribal ²		16,000	16,000	413,060-483,060
Total cold-water	349,760	687,820	336,060	49 - 57

Using the assumptions of the analysis for meeting the need in the 1998 Plan; that is, applying the entire post-reconstruction Jones Hole NFH production (263,000 lbs) and the SFH's increased production, the increased production of the 1998 Plan applied to Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP)-affected waters is 471,370 (see appendix). This meets 56% of the 841,361 lb identified cold-water fish production need. The estimated increased production from the feasibility studies was 422,589, which met 50% of the need.

With the Plan revision, depending on actions taken at the Jones Hole NFH, the increased production applied toward meeting the need is 413,060 (meets 49% of the identified need), assuming no increased production at the Jones Hole NFH. With a reasonable estimate at Jones Hole NFH of a 40% production increase, total production could be as high as 483,060 lbs. This increased level of production would meet 57% of the identified need.

¹ These increased numbers are based on a 40% production increase with oxygen injection. This is considered to be a reasonable level of increased level production based on experience at other hatcheries.

² The proposed action described in the 2003 Draft Environmental Assessment for the Big Springs Tribal Fish Hatchery is to construct facilities with a production capacity of 16,000 lbs.

Appendix

Production levels for Kamas and Fountain Green since construction; Utah Division of Wildlife Resources production records.

Year	Pounds produced and stocked
Kamas SFH	
2002	131,335
2003	134,733
2004	125,017
2005	144,439
Average	133,881
Fountain Green SFH	
2003	145,970
2004	147,530
2005	191,154
Average	161,551

Meeting the need analysis.

Facility	Capacity (lbs)		
	Post	CUPCA Increased Production	Portion of Need Met (%)
1998 Plan			
Kamas SFH	133,880	53,880	
Whiterocks SFH	87,700	52,190	
Jones Hole NFH	263,000	263,000	
Fountain Green SFH	161,550	102,300	
Big Springs Tribal	30,000		
Total cold-water	676,130	471,370	56
Proposed Revision			
Kamas SFH	133,880	53,880	
Whiterocks SFH	131,390	95,880	
Jones Hole NFH (without CUPCA improvements)	245,000	175,000	
Jones Hole NFH (with CUPCA improvements)		245,000	
Fountain Green SFH	161,550	102,300	
Big Springs Tribal	16,000		
Total cold-water	687,820	413,060-483,060	49-57

Categorical Exclusions Checklist

PROJECT NAME: Fish Hatchery Production Plan Amendment

DATE: February 2, 2006

NUMBER: 06-02

LOCATION OF PROJECT: This is a programmatic project, relating to the funding of hatchery construction and reconstruction under the authority of CUPCA 313(c). It is a Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (Commission) Statewide project.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Commission published a Finding of No Significant Impact on the Revised Fish Hatchery Production Plan (Plan) in February, 1998. The Plan called for the funding of coldwater hatcheries: Kamas State Fish Hatchery (SFH), Fountain Green SFH, Whiterocks SFH (Partial reconstruction), Jones Hole National Fish Hatchery (NFH), a new Tribal Fish Hatchery at Big Springs and Youth Camp; and a warm-water sport-fish and native aquatic species hatchery and an Interim June sucker Hatchery. These were included in the Plan to meet the increased need for augmentation under the Colorado River Storage Project in waters in Utah. Site specific NEPA has been conducted for the Kamas, Fountain Green, Whiterocks SFHs and the Interim June Sucker facility; a Draft Environmental Assessment was prepared for the Tribal Fish Hatchery at Big Springs and Youth Camp.

This Proposed Action is to modify the Plan to allow additional construction activities at the Whiterocks SFH site (described as "Phase II" – essentially full build out excluding residences); and reduce and modify construction activities at the Jones Hole NFH site. Site-specific impacts due to the additional construction at the Whiterocks site have been evaluated under a separate analysis. .

The Whiterocks Partial Reconstruction Project (Phase I) began in September 2005 and is ongoing. Phase II construction could begin in March 2006 and be completed by the original September 2006 date.

Changes in expected productions levels of coldwater fishes have been evaluated under the Plan revision. The increased production due to CUPCA hatchery improvements in the 1998 Plan was 277,589 pounds annually. Depending on the actions taken at the Jones Hole NFH, the increase in coldwater production due to CUPCA improvements would range from 268,059 to 338,059 pounds annually.

EVALUATION UNDER COMMISSION'S LIST OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Category: Changes or amendments to an approved action when such changes have no potential for causing substantial environmental impact.

Application of Category to this Project:

The 1998 Plan was analyzed in an Environmental Assessment and adopted by a Finding of No Significant Impact. The only change to the approved decision is a reallocation of funds from Jones Hole NFH to the Whiterocks SFH. Additional facilities would be constructed at the Whiterocks SFH than were approved in the original decision. The environmental impacts resulting from the construction of these additional facilities were analyzed under the site-specific Whiterocks SFH Environmental Assessment and determined to be insignificant. All other components of the 1998 Plan are included in the revised Plan. This revision is considered minor and the resulting change in increased production and any associated environmental impacts are not considered substantial.

EVALUATION OF EXCEPTIONS TO CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS

1. This action would have significant adverse effects on public health or safety.

No Uncertain Yes

2. This action would have an adverse effect on unique geographic characteristics such as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplain, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks.

No Uncertain Yes

3. The action will have highly controversial environmental effects.

No Uncertain Yes

4. The action will have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

No Uncertain Yes

5. This action will establish a precedent for future actions, or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

No Uncertain Yes

6. This action is directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

No Uncertain Yes

7. This action will have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

No Uncertain Yes

8. This action will have adverse effects on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for a listed species.

No Uncertain Yes

9. This action requires compliance with Executive Order 11986 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

No Uncertain Yes

10. This action threatens to violate a federal, state, local, or tribal law or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.

No Uncertain Yes

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS (MITIGATION), EXPLANATION OR REMARKS:

No new environmental commitments have been identified under this modification. All prior commitments are being implemented under the 1998 Plan. These are: Stocking impact study, State and Tribal stocking policies and inclusion of an educational component to all hatchery sites.

CONSULTATION/COORDINATION:

Agency members of the Fish Hatchery Production Plan workgroup were contacted in January and February, 2006. These are: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, and the Ute Tribe. No issues or concerns were identified during this coordination.

CONCLUSION:

- X This action appropriately falls under the CX process and no further NEPA compliance is required. If an "Exceptions" box was checked, please provide rationale.
- This action does not fall under the CX process and I recommend that an
EA **EIS** **be prepared.**

Prepared By: Maureen Wilson
Maureen Wilson Project Coordinator

Reviewed By: Richard Mingo
Richard Mingo Project Coordinator

Approved By: M. J. [Signature] 3/21/06
Executive Director Date