

# Wolf Creek

## National Fish Hatchery



photo: USFWS



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### Station Facts

- Established: 1975.
- Number of staff: six permanent.

### 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.

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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.