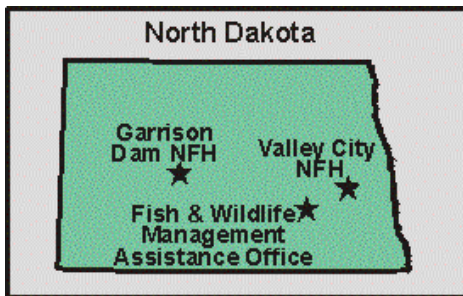




# Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery, North Dakota

## *Restoring America's Fisheries*



*"The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people."*

### National Fish Hatchery System: Who We Are

The National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS) is comprised of 70 Fish Hatcheries, 7 Fish Technology Centers, and 9 Fish Health Centers nationwide. The NFHS operated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has a unique responsibility in helping restore native aquatic populations, mitigate for fisheries lost as a result of federal water projects, provide fish to benefit Tribes and the National Wildlife Refuges, and to recover species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The NFHS works closely with other programs in the Service and with the States, Tribes, and the private sector to complement habitat restoration and other resource management strategies for maintaining healthy ecosystems that support healthy fisheries.

### Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery

Garrison Dam NFH was originally established in 1957 to provide fish for recreational fishing in new reservoirs created by federal water development projects in the Midwest. Today, the hatchery continues to provide management and production of many freshwater fishes for the Missouri River Dam development projects, National Wildlife Refuges, Native American waters, and state programs of North Dakota.

As many of the native fishes struggle with the changes in the Missouri aquatic ecosystems, the hatchery's role has changed to include maintaining migratory fishes, such as the paddlefish, and restoring endangered species, such as the pallid sturgeon.

To meet the high fish production demands, Garrison Dam NFH encompasses 209 acres of land and has a total of 64 rearing ponds.

In fiscal year 2000, the hatchery produced over 11 million fish and stocked over 140 different water areas throughout North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

Some of the fish species that Garrison Dam NFH are rearing include:

- northern pike
- walleye
- smallmouth bass
- crappie
- rainbow trout
- lake trout
- brown trout

- chinook salmon
- paddlefish
- pallid sturgeon

Over 300,000 angler days of recreational fishing in North Dakota valued at over \$15 million are a result of the stocking efforts.

### How Does the Hatchery Help?

Garrison Dam NFH helps in many ways! Currently, the hatchery produces a variety of fish species to fill needs across the Midwest. These fish help to replenish and encourage sustainable fish populations and provide angling opportunities for recreational users like you.

As the natural aquatic habitat changes from *natural* (drought, flood, habitat destruction) or *human* (over-harvest, pollution, habitat loss due to development and dam construction) influences, the natural production of fish declines. Stocking of fish is one of the many management strategies used by biologists to help replenish the populations for years to come.



Welcome to Garrison Dam NFH;  
USFWS



*Hatchery employees collecting milt from an endangered pallid sturgeon; photo/Phillip Miesrala*

### **Public Use Opportunities**

Garrison Dam NFH provides many exciting visitor opportunities, and contributes to local communities.

Open to the public, Garrison Dam NFH welcomes visitors to the hatchery for a close-up view of the fish production process. With over 23,000 visitors annually, the dedicated staff and volunteers at the hatchery are happy to answer any questions while you enjoy the self-guided hatchery tour. The Visitor Center also brings the hatchery experience alive with aquariums and an interactive touch screen computer that provides information about the Service's fisheries programs and fish species found throughout the United States.

Educational programs and tours are provided for school groups when scheduled in advance.

The hatchery is located in a recreation area that draws in excess of 2 million visitors annually. In addition to the hatchery experience, visitors also have a bounty of recreational opportunities to explore in the surrounding area:

- Camping
- Hiking/nature trails
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Wildlife and birdwatching
- Photography
- Canoeing and boating
- Mountain biking
- Cross country skiing
- Snowshoeing

Be sure to bring your binoculars and test your wildlife knowledge when hiking the hatchery's wildlife observation trail and enjoying the viewing blind.

The hatchery is also a proud participant in the annual Physically Challenged Children's Fishing Derby in conjunction with the Great Plainsers Trout and Salmon Club.

### **Partnerships Make it Happen!**

Garrison NFH operates closely through a series of partnerships with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, the Corps of Engineers, and other Service hatcheries. In addition, many local civic groups and volunteer citizens are actively involved with the hatchery's operations, education, and outreach.

These many dedicated partners and volunteers keep the Garrison NFH operating to bring recreational angling opportunities and healthy aquatic ecosystems to you, your family, and future generations.

Garrison Dam NFH is located in west-central North Dakota midway between Minot and Bismark and directly below Lake Sakakawea. Come prepared for a day of fun!



*Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery; USFWS*