

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Spring 2023 Root River Weir Summary

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The Root River Steelhead Facility (RRSF) was in operation for five processing dates during the spring 2023 migration, and we captured 450 steelhead between March 22 and April 17. Our biological sampling goals were met, and fish health inspections were conducted.

The number of fish captured at RRSF is a subset of the 2023 steelhead run in the Root River. We do not stop every fish in the river, as they can move upstream past the facility before it is operational in early spring. In addition, high flows throughout March due to rain and snow melt allowed some fish to move upstream past the facility during the sampling season. Therefore, any comparison to past years' processing numbers will not provide a meaningful measure of the overall return of steelhead back to the Root River.

The spring 2023 RRSF steelhead effort is summarized below.

CAPTURED	SPAWNED	EGGS TAKEN	PASSED UPSTREAM
450	291	532,688	299

Throughout the spring season, steelhead were sampled as part of an ongoing multi-agency, lake-wide study on natural reproduction and movement. Stocked steelhead have been implanted with small, coded wire tags prior to release, and tags were recovered from 112 fish at RRSF. Analysis of the tags will provide fish managers with more information on movement patterns of steelhead in the lake, growth rates and the occurrence of "straying," when a mature fish returns to a stream other than the one where it was originally stocked.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would like to acknowledge the support of Salmon Unlimited in keeping the RRSF operational. Special thanks also go to the volunteers from Salmon Unlimited for the daily opening and closing of the facility's viewing window.

We plan to resume operations at the weir in the fall.