

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES**

**Great Lakes Trout And Salmon Stamp
Revenue And Expenditures Report**

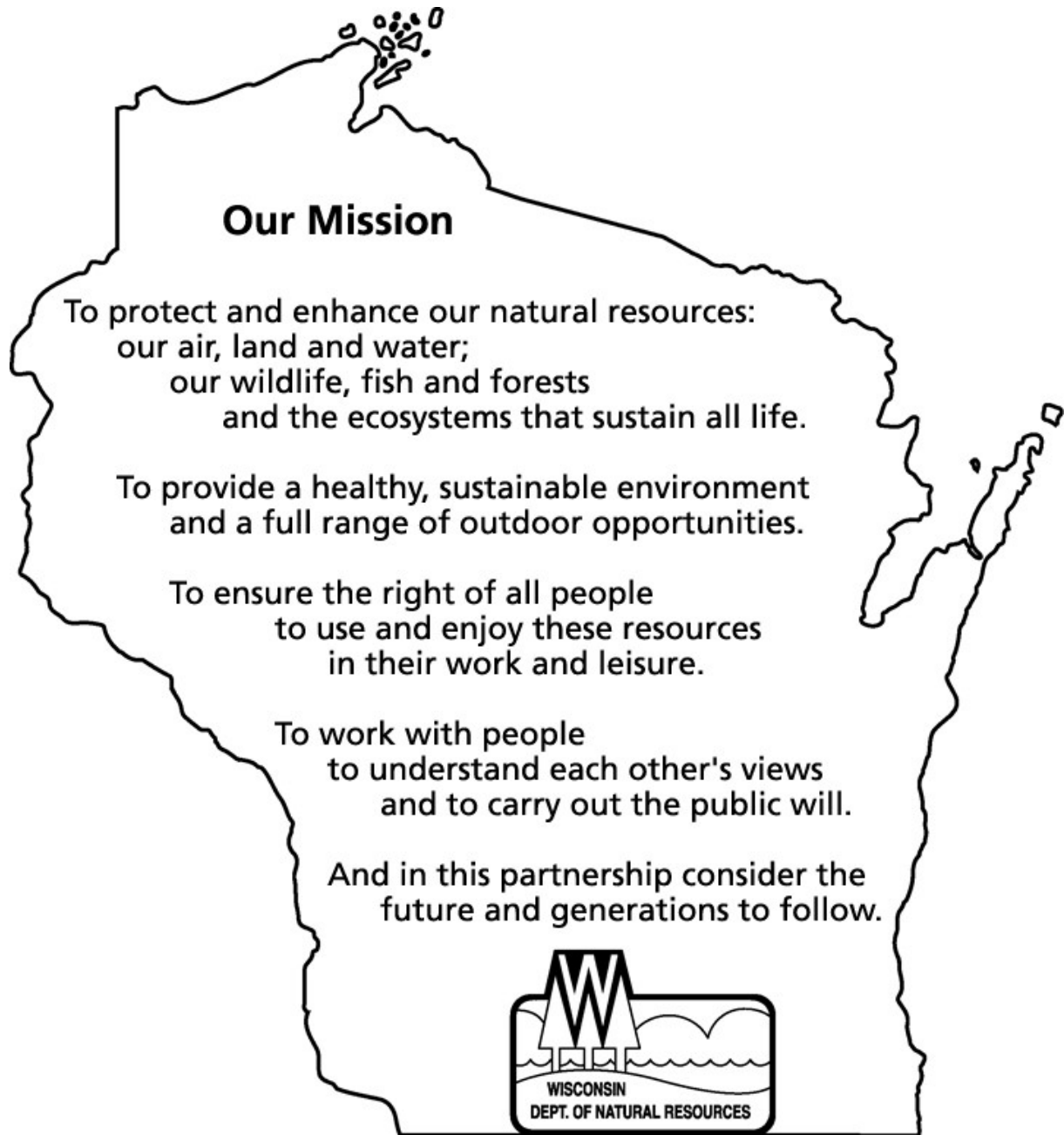
FISCAL YEARS 2016-2017



DNR staff corralling mature Chinook salmon that returned to Strawberry Creek to collect biological data and then spawn the fish to produce eggs for hatchery production and stocking. / Photo credit: Wisconsin DNR



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Program Background

CREATION OF THE TROUT AND SALMON STAMP PROGRAM

In the early 1980s, the loss of federal funding for non-native trout and salmon stocking prompted the creation of Wisconsin's Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp Program. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) faced the prospect of large reductions in the Great Lakes stocking program, including the elimination of Coho Salmon stocking. Concerned Great Lakes anglers initiated and promoted the legislation that created the Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp (commonly referred to as the Salmon Stamp).

Since 1982, anglers fishing for salmon or trout in Wisconsin's Great Lakes have been required to purchase a Salmon Stamp in addition to a fishing license. Revenues from the sale of Salmon Stamps help support the DNR trout and salmon rearing and stocking program for the Great Lakes.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF GREAT LAKES SALMON & TROUT STAMP REVENUES

Wisconsin statutes stipulate, "The department shall expend the receipts from the sale of Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamps to supplement and enhance the existing trout and salmon rearing and stocking program for outlying waters and to administer this section."

The expenditures are (1) species limited to salmon and trout only, (2) geographically limited to the Wisconsin waters of Lakes Michigan and Superior and their tributaries, and (3) program limited to the rearing and stocking program.

Projects funded by stamp monies must meet these three requirements or be related to the administration of these monies.

SPECIES REQUIREMENT

The use of Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp revenues is only for projects pertaining to *salmonine* species. These species include Pacific salmon (Coho, Chinook), trout (Rainbow [steelhead], Brown) and chars (Brook Trout, Splake and Lake Trout). The use of stamp money excludes projects specifically directed toward warm or cool water fishes such as *Percids*, *Esocids* and *Centrarchids*.



GEOGRAPHICAL REQUIREMENT

Projects that use stamp revenues must focus geographically on the Great Lakes watershed. Specifically, the geographical scope of these projects may include tributaries accessible to Great Lakes salmon and trout and Lakes Michigan and Superior themselves. Projects that pertain to trout waters other than the Great Lakes (e.g., Great Lakes tributaries inaccessible to Great Lakes salmon and trout, inland trout streams and lakes) may not use Salmon Stamp funds.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENT

Projects funded with Salmon Stamp money must also relate specifically to the Great Lakes stocking program. Activities within the stocking program may be categorized as evaluation and research or propagation activities (including facility developments).

Examples of evaluation and research activities include lake-wide creel surveys, species and strain evaluations (tagging and marking studies), development of management plans (annual stocking plans, species plans, long-term plans) and annual propagation planning.

Propagation activities include hatchery operation costs (electricity, labor, fish food, waders, etc.), acquisition of fertilized eggs, egg incubation, fish rearing and transportation of fish to stocking sites. Propagation activities also include purchasing, maintaining and repairing the physical facilities that support the stocking program.

Those facilities include raceways, rearing ponds, hatchery grounds, generators, pumps, water supply systems, vehicles, aerators, automatic fish feeders, land, engineering plans and incubators.



Revenue Summaries

SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR THE SALMON STAMP ACCOUNT

The Salmon Stamp account pays for about half of the Great Lakes trout and salmon program (Table 1). As summarized in Table 2, fishing license fees and other sources also support the program.

Table 1. Total expenditures from all sources for work described in this report. The first row is taken directly from Table 3. The Segregated Fund receives money from the sale of various fish and wildlife licenses and stamps. The second row shows expenditures from the Segregated Fund, excluding Salmon Stamp expenditures reported in Table 3. General Purpose Revenues are from income and other taxes.

	2016	2017
Salmon Stamp	1,855,772.61	2,015,222.62
Segregated Fund (not Salmon Stamp)	2,540,783.13	2,532,337.88
TOTAL	4,396,555.74	4,547,560.50

Table 2. License-year sales of cards, licenses, and stamps supporting the Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp account for 2016-2017. License reporting categories have changed over reporting years. For this report, categories of license sales for Patron Cards include regular resident Patron Cards, junior, purple heart, and recruiter card sales. Two-Day Licenses include two-day Great Lakes fishing licenses and two-day Great Lakes fishing licenses issued on charter boats. Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamps contain recorded sales from that category only.

YEAR	PATRON CARDS	TWO-DAY LICENSES	GREAT LAKES TROUT AND SALMON STAMPS
2016	50,231	39,751	132,604
2017	51,889	37,837	132,168

All receipts from the sale of Salmon Stamps are placed in the DNR Fish & Wildlife Segregated Account and reserved for eligible Salmon Stamp activities. These funds are referred to as the Salmon Stamp account. Interest earned on these funds accrues to the Fish & Wildlife Segregated Account. Some revenues from the sales of Patron Licenses, two-day sport fishing licenses and collector stamps also contribute to the account.

The price of license to the consumer includes the base price of the license plus a fee that goes to the vendor. The vendor's fee is 75 cents for the two-day license and the Patron Card; it is 25 cents for the Salmon Stamp. Revenue and expenditure figures in this report exclude the vendors' fees.

Funding for the Salmon Stamp account has changed over time from its initial price of \$3 in 1982. In 1984, the Wisconsin State Legislature approved a \$6 one-day fishing license for the Great Lakes. This inexpensive license allowed anglers to spend one day fishing for trout and

salmon on the Great Lakes without being required to buy an annual Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Stamp. One-half of the revenues from the license supported Great Lakes salmon and trout projects to prevent a sharp reduction in funding for the salmon and trout program.

In 1988, the Legislature changed the one-day license by allowing inland fishing. Revenues from the new one-day license were split among Great Lakes salmon projects, inland trout habitat projects and general fisheries work. In 1992, the Legislature replaced the one-day license with a \$7.25 two-day license, valid for the Great Lakes only, and in 1997, the two-day license fee increased to \$9.25.

One-half of those revenues are placed in the Salmon Stamp account. Also, in 1992 the Salmon Stamp fee was increased from \$3 to \$7. In 2004, the Salmon Stamp fee increased to \$10, and the two-day license fee increased to \$14.

In recent years, the allocation from each Patron License has exceeded \$3, totaling \$169,037 in the fiscal year 2016 and \$171,620 in the fiscal year 2017. Patron license revenue not deposited to dedicated stamp accounts is deposited to the larger fish and wildlife account and spent for various conservation purposes. Collectors can purchase souvenir Salmon Stamps from previous years. All revenues from these sales contribute to the Salmon Stamp account.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Findings of evaluation and research activities are included in annual reports that are posted on the DNR's [Lake Michigan](#) and [Lake Superior](#) webpages. Stocking data are available in the [online fish stocking database](#). In 2016, the accounting software for the State of Wisconsin changed from WiSMART to PeopleSoft, resulting in new budget categories for projects and activities. As a result of this change the project categories for this report may be different from categories presented in previous Salmon Stamp reports.

Table 3. Salmon Stamp account revenues and expenditures in fiscal years 2016-2017. Revenues in the 'Other' category include miscellaneous environmental fees and revenues, non-realized revenue, and salmon stamp collector revenue. Revenue category 'Conversion from WiSMART' is carries revenue from conversion between the former WiSMART accounting software to PeopleSoft accounting software. Expenditures for individual projects include supplies and limited-term employee (LTE) wages. Individual projects are described briefly in the body of this report. Permanent staff positions made possible by Salmon Stamp include 3.5 positions total, supporting or partially supporting five staff. There were two fisheries technician positions on Lake Michigan (split over three positions; 1.5 positions in Milwaukee and 0.5 position in Sturgeon Bay) and one-half of a fisheries biologist position and one fisheries technician on Lake Superior.

	2016	2017
Beginning Cash Balance	\$2,780,088.76	\$2,764,409.76
Revenues	\$1,840,093.61	\$1,791,694.53
Stamp Sales	\$1,262,369.95	\$1,342,678.25
Two-Day License Sales	\$328,548.04	\$277,548.55
Patron License Sales	\$169,037.00	\$171,620.00
Conversion from WiSMART	\$79,787.25	-
Other	\$351.37	(\$152.27)
Total Available Funds	\$4,620,182.37	\$4,556,104.29
Expenditures	\$1,855,772.61	\$2,015,222.62
<u>Evaluation and Research Projects</u>		
Creel Surveys	\$196,821.64	\$206,148.35
Data Analysis and Reporting	\$11,071.44	\$16,251.66
Sea Lamprey Barriers	\$29,049.18	\$4,452.25
Coho, Chinook, and Steelhead at Root River, Besadny, and Strawberry Creek	\$43,695.64	\$42,973.82
Lake Trout Surveys and Research	\$53,938.19	\$68,264.41
Trout and Salmon Natural Reproduction Research	-	\$49,651.57
<u>Propagation</u>		
Trout (Brown Trout, Lake Trout, Rainbow Trout, Splake)	\$427,883.07	\$553,324.78
Salmon (Chinook, Coho)	\$154,629.97	\$245,268.05
<u>Propagation: Hatchery Operations & Maintenance</u>		
General Hatchery Operations and Maintenance	\$518,199.91	\$338,124.11
Hatchery Capital Development	\$108,283.57	\$178,798.67
<u>Other</u>		
Permanent Salaries	\$143,500.00	\$143,500.00
Fringe	\$168,700.00	\$168,464.95
Closing Cash Balance	\$2,764,409.76	\$2,540,881.67

EVALUATION & RESEARCH PROJECTS

CREEL SURVEYS

Contacts: Laura Schmidt, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee; Dray Carl, Fisheries Biologist, Bayfield

Angler Creel Surveys are conducted at major ports on Lake Superior and Lake Michigan to monitor sport harvest of salmon and trout and harvest information on other sport caught fishes. Data are collected on angler effort, catch, and harvest when creel clerks randomly survey anglers at boat landings throughout the year.

When combined with information about commercial and charter harvests, the creel data helps estimate population size, evaluate and develop stocking strategies and decide how to best manage the Lake Superior and Lake Michigan fisheries. Activities funded under this project include moored boat surveys conducted in Green Bay to collect registration numbers, count moored fishing boats on Green Bay and collect biological information on harvested fish during fishing contests in Lake Michigan.

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Contact: Laura Schmidt, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee

This project fund supports trout and salmon data analyses and analyses conducted to inform management recommendations. These analyses support the popular and important Lake Michigan trout and salmon fishery including the administration and management of the charter licensing and reporting program. Trout and salmon data are analyzed to assess appropriate management actions (e.g. stocking rates, stocking locations, stocking techniques), conduct predator-prey analyses, and prepare data summaries and reports.

SEA LAMPREY BARRIERS

Contact: Paul Piszczek, Fisheries Biologist, Superior

The [Bois Brule River](#) sea lamprey barrier is one of three concrete barriers (others are on the Middle and Iron rivers) that control Sea Lamprey by blocking upstream migration to spawning areas and therefore limit Sea Lamprey reproduction and recruitment. However, the Bois Brule River barrier is the only barrier to have a companion concrete fish ladder (with adjustable gates) and concrete Sea Lamprey trap.

The fish ladder facilitates upstream passage of recreationally important Lake Superior migratory salmonid species such as Steelhead, Brown Trout and Coho Salmon. The fish ladder and lamprey trap are operated, inspected, and maintained throughout the year, although inspections are only periodically made from December through March due to snow and ice cover. The Bois Brule River barrier's fish ladder is convertible from step-pool to vertical-slot configuration during spring and fall to accommodate salmonid passage and Sea Lamprey trapping seasons.

The DNR converts the fish ladder, whereas the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) conducts trapping operations, including sorting bycatch. The agencies maintain an ongoing partnership toward improving Sea Lamprey trapping and fish passage efficiency through various design changes within the fish ladder. The agencies also discuss repairs needed for

all barriers, the Bois Brule River fish ladder, and Bois Brule River Sea Lamprey trap. The upstream end of the fish ladder is adjoined by a viewing chamber, an observation window, and video recording equipment to monitor lake-run salmon and trout. The window and video equipment are inspected and maintained regularly throughout the fish migration seasons, primarily spring and fall.

The DNR reviews video records after the conclusions of the migration seasons, identifies, measures, and counts fish, then produces semi-annual reports of relative abundances and size structures of salmonid populations. Each of the three barriers are accessible via gravel roads, which are inspected, maintained, and repaired if necessary, throughout the year.

COHO, CHINOOK, AND STEELHEAD AT ROOT RIVER, BESADNY, AND STRAWBERRY CREEK

Contacts: Laura Schmidt, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee; Nick Legler, NR Region Team Supervisor, Sturgeon Bay

Trout and salmon are major components of Wisconsin's Lake Michigan sport fishery, supporting charter fishing and other fishing-related industries. Proper management of these species in Lake Michigan requires biological information on the performance of these species, including data on age, growth, survival, return rate to the brood rivers, return to creel and condition of returning fish.

The Root River is the main brood river in southern Lake Michigan waters, stocked with two salmon and two trout species. The DNR uses different combinations of markings to identify the species' year class and strain. Egg collection and obtaining biological data are key aspects of this program that supports the enhancement and management of a tremendous salmonid sport fishery in the Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan.

For this project category, the following tasks and activities were completed. The Root River Steelhead Facility was used to capture coho, chinook, and steelhead for broodstock and obtain biological data, such as length, weight, sex, maturity condition and fin clip from subsamples of returning fish. Root River creel survey operations were conducted. Chinook Salmon heads were collected and scanned for coded wire tags to determine straying rates of stocked salmon. Surveys were conducted and data collected to study salmon movement rates, estimate natural reproduction, and estimate biological parameters to improve salmon stocking and management. Weirs at Strawberry Creek and Besadny Anadromous Fish Facility were monitored.

LAKE TROUT SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

Lake Superior

Contacts: Brad Ray, NR Region Team Supervisor, Bayfield; Dray Carl, Fisheries Biologist, Bayfield

Lake Superior Lake Trout restoration and management addresses two critical factors regulating Lake Trout populations – harvest levels and sea lamprey-related fish mortality. The controls on harvest include constraints on commercial and sport fishing. Wild Lake Trout abundance has increased steadily due to these regulations.

In the Ashland-Bayfield area, approximately 34% of the Lake Trout harvested in 1985 were wild fish. By 2006, the percentage had risen to over 90%. Consequently, stocking in the Apostle Islands area was discontinued. However, sea lamprey-related fish mortality remains an obstacle to complete rehabilitation.

This project covers the cost associated with the spring and fall Lake Trout assessments. It evaluates the long-term trends in the Lake Trout population, including distribution, abundance, growth and mortality rates. Data collected from these assessments and commercial and sport harvest are incorporated into computer models that help determine safe harvest levels for Lake Trout.

[For more information on the Lake Superior fishery visit the webpage here.](#)

Lake Michigan

Contact: Laura Schmidt, DNR Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee

The Lake Michigan Lake Trout restoration and management program has two main components: 1) annual spring lake-wide assessment protocol (LWAP) done in conjunction with other state, federal and tribal agencies; and 2) Fall spawning reef surveys.

The Wisconsin portion of LWAP is conducted to assess trends in the abundance of Lake Trout at the mid-lake reef complex (MLRC), trends in the prevalence of sea lamprey wounds and scars, Lake Trout strain performance and presence of naturally reproduced (unmarked) Lake Trout.

Fall Lake Trout spawning reef surveys are conducted in the MLRC and nearshore near Milwaukee. The surveys assess the abundance and age composition of mature spawning Lake Trout, determine trends in the prevalence of sea lamprey wounds and scars, evaluate natural reproduction and collect eggs to measure thiamine concentration. Thiamine deficiency can negatively affect fish trout and salmon survival.

[For more information on the Lake Michigan fishery visit the webpage here.](#)

TROUT AND SALMON RESEARCH

Contact: Cheryl Masterson, NR Region Team Supervisor, Milwaukee

Natural reproduction is becoming more important in trout and salmon species. While Wisconsin streams support some natural reproduction documented by DNR surveys, the extent and amount of natural reproduction are unknown.

This project research examines Lake Michigan streams for the potential for natural reproduction of trout and salmon by evaluating the extent of natural reproduction of Great Lakes trout and salmon in Lake Michigan tributaries and the habitat factors relating to the presence/absence of natural reproduction. [Preliminary work on the natural reproduction study can be found at the webpage here,](#) and a paper by Wegleitner et. al (2021; citation below), was produced.

Wegleitner, Eric, Joshua Raabe, Daniel Dembkowski, Nicolas Legler, and Daniel Isermann. 2021. Wild juvenile salmonid abundance in Wisconsin tributaries indicates limited contributions to Lake Michigan fisheries. *Journal of Great Lakes Research*. 47(6): 1824-1853.

PROPAGATION, MANAGEMENT & PROJECTS

Table 4 details stocking numbers by species for Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. For all species except Chinook Salmon, fingerlings are stocked in the fall after about one year of hatchery rearing and yearlings are stocked the following spring after 18 months of hatchery rearing. Chinooks are stocked as spring fingerlings after only one winter of hatchery rearing. Rainbow Trout includes both steelhead and non-migratory strains.

Table 4. Production summary. Lake Trout stocked by the USFWS in Lake Michigan are not included in the table. Stocking numbers are for calendar years.

		LAKE MICHIGAN			LAKE SUPERIOR		
		Fingerlings	Yearlings	LM Total	Fingerlings	Yearlings	LS Total
2016	Lake Trout	-	-	-	-	91,576	91,576
	Brown Trout	431,694	589,158	1,020,852	81,355	159,743	241,098
	Chinook Salmon	812,270	-	812,270	-	-	-
	Coho Salmon	105,017	352,867	457,884	-	-	-
	Rainbow Trout	-	397,162	397,162	-	-	-
	Splake	-	-	-	38,908	41,217	80,125
2017	Lake Trout	-	-	-	-	76,294	76,294
	Brown Trout	41,397	327,036	368,433	-	181,393	181,393
	Chinook Salmon	813,386	-	813,386	-	-	-
	Coho Salmon	126,620	319,194	445,814	-	-	-
	Rainbow Trout	-	423,843	423,843	-	-	-
	Splake	-	-	-	16,234	37,611	53,845

TROUT (BROWN TROUT, LAKE TROUT, RAINBOW TROUT, SPLAKE)

Contacts: David Giehtbrock NR Program Manager, Madison; Jesse Landwehr, Operations Supervisor, Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery; Darren Miller, Operations Supervisor, Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery; Andrew Hron, Operations Supervisor, Kettle Moraine Springs State Fish Hatchery; Harry (Bob) Hoodie, NR Region Team Supervisor, Asylum Bay; Steve Merson, NR Region Team

Supervisor, Fitchburg; Tammie Paoli, Fisheries Biologist, Peshtigo; Aaron Schiller, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee

The Besadny Anadromous Fisheries Facility, the Root River Steelhead Facility, and the Strawberry Creek Weir are key to Wisconsin's salmon and trout stocking programs. Salmon Stamp funds are used to collect broodstock and eggs for fertilization and maintain/operate these facilities. These funds cover production costs associated with trout rearing, distribution, and weir operations. This includes work at hatcheries and rearing stations and is separate from basic hatchery operations and maintenance.

Typical expenses include fish food, electricity, pond and raceway maintenance and aerators to increase oxygen levels and reduce the ice cover. Funds are also used to inventory, load and deliver fish to designated sites, including disinfecting and maintaining equipment.

SALMON (CHINOOK, COHO)

Contacts: Aaron Schiller, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee; Laura Schmidt, Fisheries Biologist, Milwaukee; Nick Legler, NR Region Team Supervisor, Sturgeon Bay

The Besadny Anadromous Fisheries Facility, the Root River Steelhead Facility, and the Strawberry Creek Weir are key to Wisconsin's salmon and trout stocking programs. Salmon Stamp funds are used to collect broodstock and eggs for fertilization and maintain/operate these facilities. This project covers production costs associated with salmon rearing, distribution, weir operations and cooperative net pens. This includes work at hatcheries and rearing stations and is separate from basic hatchery operations and maintenance.

Typical expenses include fish food, electricity, pond and raceway maintenance and aerators to increase oxygen levels and reduce the ice cover. Funds are also used to inventory, load and deliver fish to designated sites, including disinfecting and maintaining equipment.

HATCHERY OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE & CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Contacts: Michael Aquino, NR Operations Supervisor, Nevin State Fish Hatchery; Darren Miller, NR Operations Supervisor, Les Voigt State Fish Hatchery; Andy Hron, NR Operations Supervisor, Kettle Moraine State Fish Hatchery; Jesse Landwehr, NR Operations Supervisor, Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery

Funds for hatchery operations and maintenance cover basic support services for hatchery operations are not directly associated with fish rearing at Les Voigt, Kettle Moraine Springs, Wild Rose and Lake Mills state fish hatcheries, and the Besadny, Strawberry Creek and Root River weirs. Specific activities include conducting hatchery tours, outreach, educational events, general maintenance of facilities and grounds, operational expenses (i.e. telephone, electricity, supplies) and staff attendance meetings with clubs and other organizations.

Capital development project expenditures include upgrades to the UV disinfection system at Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery and pre-design, well drilling design, and a groundwater study for Kettle Moraine Springs State Fish Hatchery.

OTHER

LAKE MICHIGAN

Permanent employee salaries for fisheries technicians at the Great Lakes Research Facility for work on Lake Trout assessments, managing operations at the Root River Steelhead Facility, conducting surveys and evaluations, collecting data, and managing databases.

LAKE SUPERIOR

Permanent employee salaries for a fisheries biologist and a fisheries technician on Lake Superior. The fisheries biologist conducts evaluations and research to support the fish stocking program for the Lake Superior watershed. The primary responsibilities of the fisheries technician are to conduct creel surveys and monitor the harvest of Lake Trout by commercial fishers.

CONTACT LIST

For questions about the report, please contact the staff identified in the contact list. Staff and positions change over time, so for general inquiries or to be connected with current staff please email FishHabitat.Protection@wisconsin.gov with your inquiry.

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