

THE CLARK FORK HATCHERY

Editor's Note: This is the ninth in a series of articles on Idaho fish hatcheries.

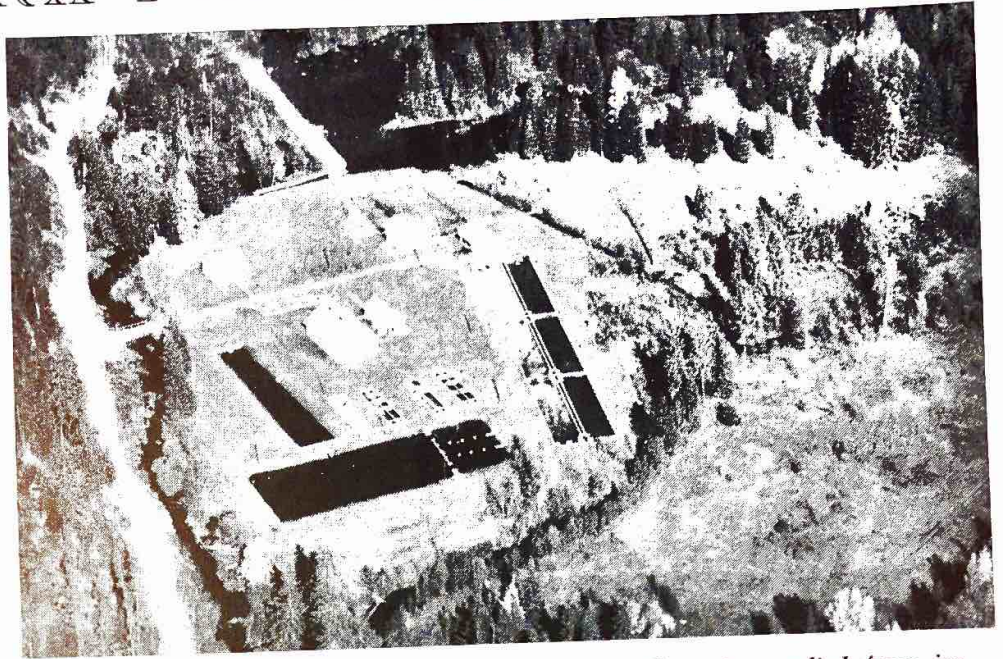
The Clark Fork hatchery is situated on one of the most picturesque sections of Idaho, a few miles northeast of the junction of the Clark Fork River with Lake Pend Oreille. The site occupies about 40 acres on Spring Creek, a tributary of Lightning Creek north of the town of Clark Fork.

Constructed between 1934 and 1938 in cooperation with the Works Progress Administration, the station consisted of a main hatchery building measuring 38 x 62 feet, a five-room dwelling, and a two-car garage. Eight concrete raceways, aligned outside, and ten concrete vats inside the hatchery building completed the main ensemble. Waters of Spring Creek were diverted to supply the plant through 1600 feet of pipeline.

Construction of the station was effected through an agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries which undertook to operate the hatchery and distribute the fish at the plant into waters of the ten northern counties. It was the third hatchery to be put into operation in Bonner county. At that time there were 13 state-operated fish hatcheries.

Addition in 1946, of eight new concrete raceways 50' x 6', and six others 117' x 24' doubled the potential output at the plant. By 1948 the take of Kamloops trout eggs at Clark Fork was in excess of 60,000 annually.

Twenty-eight thousand pounds



Aerial view of the Clark Fork hatchery site. Water is supplied from impoundment at upper center.

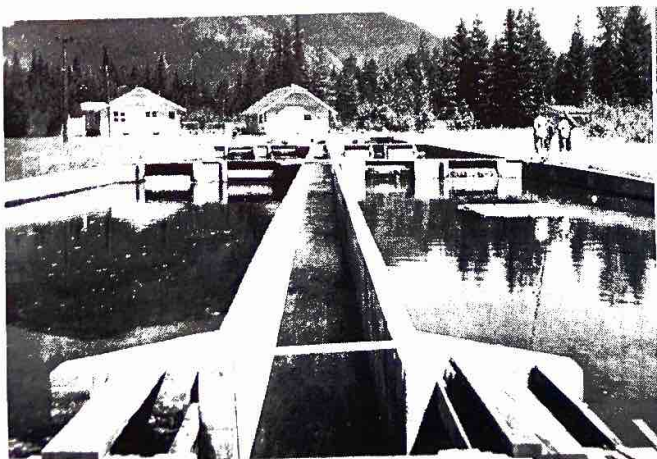
of fish, mostly rainbow trout, were produced and distributed from this station in the 1947-1948 biennium.

During the period new construction included a dwelling for the hatchery assistant, a cold storage plant, and a long pond for the retention of brood stock. The main hatchery building now houses 40 troughs and ten tanks to take the eggs held for hatching. Productive capacity of the plant is approximately 11½ million fry and legal sized fish. Last year, streams in Bonner and Boundary counties received 700,000 cutthroat fry from Clark Fork. In the current biennium 900,000 kokanee fingerlings

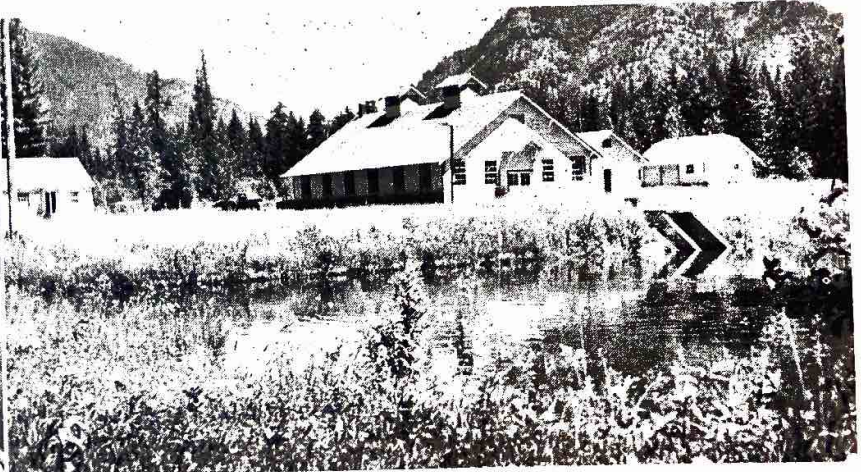
were released in North Idaho lakes from the station, chiefly to Lake Coeur d'Alene.

The eggs hatched at Clark Fork are supplied in part from the local brood ponds where adult Kamloops trout are held for the purpose. Approximately 500,000 eggs of this species were taken at the hatchery this year. Cutthroat trout eggs come from Henry's Lake region, and the annual supply of Eastern brook trout eggs also is shipped in. The kokanee spawn is taken from the nearby Clark Fork river.

Allan Clark is superintendent of the station, with Maurice Harding serving as assistant.



View of main holding ponds looking north toward superintendents quarters.



Brood stock pond now used to rear Kamloops trout is shown in foreground.