

IDAHO  
WILDLIFE  
REVIEW

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# THE SANDPOINT HATCHERY

The original Sandpoint fish hatchery was constructed in 1909 on the south shore of Lake Pend Oreille near the city of Sandpoint in Bonner County. It was the third state-owned hatchery to be built by the fish and game department, the other two being the Warm River and Hayspur hatcheries.

Interested Sandpoint sportsmen contributed \$900 to the purchase of the 20-acre site on which the plant is situated, "to give proper attention to the care and propagation of fish in the northern streams and lakes of Idaho," and aided in numerous other ways in its construction.

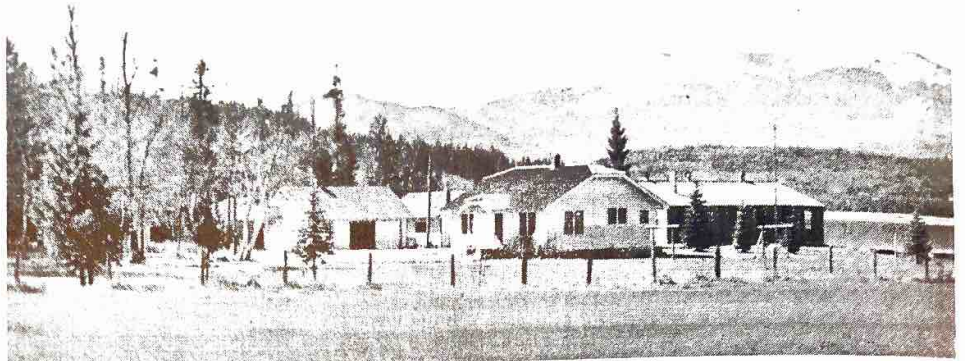
Water supply for the two large cement holding ponds for brood stock was delivered from a spring 1½ miles from the lake shore. The spring was cribbed with concrete to take advantage of the entire flow. Temperature of the spring water is approximately 42 degrees Fahrenheit.

In the 1913-1914 biennium a floating dock 125 feet in length was added to enable boats to reach the hatchery lake front in low water periods. Equipment at this time included a launch and boathouse for use of personnel.

Production of trout at the hatchery in the 1915-1916 period climbed to 4,606,500 fish. Of this number 3,219,500 were Eastern brook trout, the remainder native cutthroat. The emergency created by World War I in the 1917-1918 biennium curtailed production at all of the state's fish hatcheries, and put the Coeur d'Alene unit temporarily out of production. Total trout produced in the State in the biennium was listed at 10½ million fish, more than one-third of which came from the Sandpoint installation. In addition to the rainbow and Eastern brook trout produced, some brown trout were released to Idaho waters from this hatchery in 1916.

Whitefish were added to the production record at the Sandpoint hatchery in 1920 with installation of special hatching equipment in form of battery and hatching jars for the purpose. Production capacity for whitefish at this time was set at one million fry. Whitefish production continued until 1946.

In the early 1920's additional rearing ponds were added, the icehouse enlarged, access roads built and graveled, and the lake front cribbed to protect the installation against wave action. In this period the hatchery at Sandpoint led all other installations in



The Sandpoint fish hatchery, on the shores of Lake Pend Oreille, has been producing fish for Idaho anglers since 1910. The unit was the third installation to be built by the Idaho Fish and Game Department.

fish production. Eastern brook trout, rainbows and cutthroats were distributed to streams in 7 northern counties as far south as Nezperce county.

Because of low water temperature at this hatchery, it was found expedient to ship in eyed eggs from other sources. Spawn from the Henry's Lake station, constructed in 1924, contributed to the supply. In these years, however, some cutthroat and rainbow trout trapped in tributaries of Lake Pend Oreille were held for brook stock purposes at the Sandpoint station ponds. Meanwhile, a substation was built at Ruby Creek to handle egg and fry production under more suitable temperature conditions.

During 1929 and 1930 extensive repairs and remodeling work were done on the Sandpoint hatchery. This expansion of facilities boosted capacity to 4 million whitefish eggs, in addition to increased trout production. More than 3¼ million fingerlings—rainbow, cutthroat, Eastern brook and whitefish—were produced in these two years.

Cutthroat trout led in production in 1931. With the output from the Ruby Creek station, there were more than 9 million fish distributed from this hatchery setup, 7 million of which were whitefish. In 1934 the output of whitefish alone approached the 12½ million mark.

Between 1934 and 1938 new construction replaced the old icehouse and sheds. A new, modern dwelling, 3-car garage, and storage facilities

were added. The hatchery was reconditioned, and a two-battery whitefish hatchery of 70 million fish capacity was constructed. Six outside cement rearing ponds and two more of earth and rock construction were completed in the period. To supply brood stock, fish traps were built on Granite and Grouse creeks.

Over half a million blueback salmon eggs were taken at fish traps in 1939 for the Sandpoint station. This mark was surpassed in 1940 when 803,000 blueback eggs were received at the station. In the same year 90,000 Kamloops fingerlings were produced.

To improve water temperature conditions, facilities were installed in 1942 whereby the cold spring water could be blended with warmer lake water. In 1944 three thousand feet of 12" wooden pipeline was installed to augment the water supply from two new springs. In 1948 the concrete rearing ponds were remodeled.

The final stage of improvement at the Sandpoint station was reached this summer when a new, all metal hatchery building was erected on the same site as the original building. The old wooden building has deteriorated through moisture action and dry rot and was demolished to make room for the new structure.

The new building is forty feet by sixty-three feet in size. It contains 20 concrete rearing vats; a storage room; office space and a lavatory. It was constructed at a cost of approximately \$20,000.