



Fall 2017 Root River Weir Summary

The Root River Steelhead Facility (RRSF) was in operation for 9 processing days during the Fall 2017 fish migration. We captured and processed 5,322 fish between October 5 and November 2. Our egg-take and biological sampling goals were met, and coho health inspections were conducted. The Fall 2017 Root River effort is summarized below.

	Captured	Spawned	Eggs taken	Passed Upstream
Chinook	2,762	0	0	1,542
Coho	2,536	416	871,560	2,290
Rainbow	9	0	0	9
Brown	15	0	0	12
Totals	5,322	416	871,560	3,841

Water levels in the Root River were low in September, which pushed back the bulk of the Chinook run until mid-October. Increased flows from then on allowed for a decent coho run which peaked during the last full week of October.

Throughout the fall season, Chinooks were sampled as part of an ongoing multi-agency, lakewide study on natural reproduction. Stocked Chinooks were implanted with small coded wire tags prior to release, and tags were recovered from 696 fish at RRSF. Analysis of the tags will provide fish managers with more information on movement patterns of Chinooks 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 9th Annual Open House was held at RRSF on Saturday, October 14, and over 500 people attended the event. Turnout was lower than past years due to thunderstorms in the area. DNR staff gave tours of the facility and led discussions on aquatic invasive species and boating safety. Volunteers from Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin served as greeters to welcome visitors, provided food, displayed a Lake Michigan fishing boat, and instructed kids on how to cast a fishing rod and tie fishing knots. Additional volunteers from Southeast Wisconsin and Gary Borger Chapters of Trout Unlimited demonstrated fly tying and fly casting. Thank you to all those who participated and helped make the day a success!

Wisconsin DNR would like to acknowledge the support of Salmon Unlimited in keeping the Root River Steelhead Facility operational, and a special thank you goes out to the volunteers who opened and closed the underwater viewing window at the facility each day during the season.

We will resume operations at the weir in the spring. For the latest Lake Michigan sport and commercial fishing information, please visit our website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan>.

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