

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fall 2025 Root River Weir Summary

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The Root River Steelhead Facility in Racine County was in operation for fourteen processing days during the fall 2025 migration. Between Sept. 16 and Nov. 10 there were 9,136 fish captured and processed. Biological sampling goals were met, and fish health inspections were conducted on coho salmon. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)'s fall 2025 Root River effort is summarized below.

	CAPTURED	SPAWNED	EGGS TAKEN	PASSED UPSTREAM
Chinook Salmon	3,548	0	0	3,372
Coho Salmon	5,559	738	675,672	5,459
Steelhead	10	0	0	1
Brown Trout	17	0	0	16
Pink Salmon	2	0	0	2
Totals	9,136	738	675,672	8,850

Water levels in the Root River were low throughout the 2025 fall season. Despite higher than average water temperature to start the fall season, large numbers of fish moved upstream through early to mid-October. The 5,559 coho captured in fall 2025 was the second-highest return to the facility on record. Only the 1997 fall season captured more coho (n=7,894).

Steelhead were sampled throughout the fall season as part of an ongoing multi-agency, lake-wide study on natural reproduction and movement. Stocked steelhead were implanted with small coded wire tags before release, and tags were recovered from 9 fish at the Root River Steelhead Facility. Analysis of the tags will provide fish managers with more information on the movement patterns of steelhead, growth rates and the occurrence of "straying," which is when a mature fish returns to a different stream than the one it was originally stocked in.

The Root River Open House was held on Saturday, Oct. 11, and 647 people attended. DNR Fisheries staff gave tours of the facility and conducted fish processing and spawning demonstrations. Volunteers from Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin welcomed visitors and displayed a Lake Michigan fishing boat. The Kenosha Sportfishing & Conservation Association, Trout Unlimited, Friends of Island Park and the Root River Council also attended to promote their work and the Root River. All attendees were

able to tour the Touch of the Wild trailer sponsored by the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and the Outdoor Heritage Education Center. Thank you to all who participated and helped make the day a success!

The DNR would like to acknowledge the support of Salmon Unlimited in keeping the Root River Steelhead Facility operational. In addition, a special thank you to the volunteers for the daily opening and closing of the viewing window at the facility.

Operations at the weir will resume in spring 2026.

For additional Lake Michigan fisheries information, please visit our website:
dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan.

For fishing information, please visit
dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan/OutdoorReport.