

Hatchery Production and Compliance

Meeting legal obligations at Washington's hatchery facilities



Additional hatchery production funding will help WDFW:

- Maintain compliance with Hydraulic Project Approval regulations.
- Conduct its hatchery operations in compliance with the ESA.
- Maintain safety and operational standards at hatchery facilities.

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WDFW operates dozens of fish hatcheries across Washington. In recent years, increased permitting costs and staffing challenges have raised concerns about possible disruptions in hatchery production and the department's ability to fulfill legal obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

The Department is required by law to "mark" all hatchery Chinook and coho by removing the adipose fin. In 2021, finding staff to conduct this essential work was extremely challenging. WDFW is requesting funding to improve staffing in its automatic marking trailers, which mark hatchery fish much more efficiently than fully manual trailers and require less overall labor.

This request will also:

- Fund the hiring of one staff person to help maintain necessary state and federal permitting for annual dredging activities at its hatcheries. Dredging is required to maintain water delivery systems at a number of hatcheries, each with a unique set of options and challenges for completing this work.
- Allow a staff position to move from part-time to full-time to meet additional requirements under a new five-year NPDES permit. Beginning in 2022, WDFW will be required to further monitor and analyze water quality at certain hatcheries, and this funding will help WDFW remain compliant.

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