

Clatsop County Fisheries Project Research

The Fisheries Project functions as a research and fish production program. Staff, with help from the fishing community, is experimenting with various methods to improve fish survival and reduce impacts on wild and endangered species.



One strategy is to release the fish from the pens at high tide after dark. Because all the pens are influenced by daily tidal currents, the fish are flushed out by the outgoing tide. Research has shown that juvenile salmon go with the flow.

Releasing the fish under the cover of darkness significantly reduces the chance of birds eating the fish on their way to the ocean. Predation by double-crested Cormorants, Caspian terns, and other birds accounts for the consumption of substantial numbers of Columbia River smolts on their route to the ocean.

In a project to reduce bird predation, project staff, in collaboration with ODFW's Gnat Creek hatchery, used a below-water feeding method to prevent fish from becoming accustomed to feeding at the surface. In another pilot project, entire net pens were floated from their estuarine site in Youngs Bay into the mainstem of the Columbia, where fish were released into deeper waters.

Continuing Research

Research projects have included:

- Fish Densities
- Release Times
- Winter Dormancy
- Avian Predation
- Size & Timing of Release
- Rearing Densities
- Subsurface Feeding
- Adult Holding in Net-Pens
- Over-summer chinook Rearing
- Acoustic Tracking of Smolts
- Enhancement of homing with artificial scent

- Captive Brood
- Release strategies to avoid conflicts

Reports and Research

All reports below are PDF documents unless otherwise noted. Clicking on the links will start the downloading process.

Supporting Documents

[Youngs Bay Benthic Invertebrate Study 2023](#) 1.83 MB

[Youngs Bay Benthic Invertebrate Study 2021](#) 643.94 KB

[Youngs Bay Benthic Invertebrate Study 2019](#) 682.6 KB

[Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project Fiscal Year 2017-19 Annual Report](#) 2.96 MB

[Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project Fiscal Year 2013-16 Annual Report](#) 2.37 MB

[Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project Fiscal Year 2010-12 Annual Report](#) 1.61 MB

[Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project Fiscal Year 2008-09 Annual Report](#) 1.03 MB

[Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project Fiscal Year 2007-08 Annual Report](#) 1.24 MB

[Columbia River Fish Working Group \(Selective Fisheries, October 2008\)](#) 18.22 KB

[Report on Reorganizational Alternatives for CEDC Fisheries Project, February 2007](#) 59.54 KB

Economic Evaluation of SAFE Fisheries, November 2006 1.23 MB

Select Area Fishery Evaluation Project 2006 Annual Report (Final Revision 1993-2005) 2.29 MB

Select Area Fishery Evaluation Project Appendix A - Environmental Monitoring 407.56 KB