Humptulips Fish Hatchery: Volunteers Needed

Local News

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Humptulips, WA - The Humptulips fish hatchery is looking for weekend volunteers to help with the mass marking of a million chinook and coho fry. Ken Isaksson with the Department of Fish and Wildlife tells us severe budget cuts at the fishery have limited their ability to fund the mass marking, which is the removal of the adipose fin from each hatchery fish. Volunteers are working against time, as the markings have to be completed before water temperatures reach 60 degrees.Again thank you very much for your time and efforts in accomplishing this task. I look forward to seeing you at Humptulips Hatchery, helping Joe S. , Jeremy, Dan and myself. - Ken Isaksson, FHS4

Each spring, starting in the first part of may, we begin our mass marking. Mass marking is removing the adipose fin from each hatchery fish, after the fish are anestitised, using small scissors. The Chinook will be approximately 125 – 150 fish pre pound, about 2 inches long. Once we are done with the Chinook, we move on to the Coho fry, they will be approximately 175 fish per pound, or 1 3/4 inches long. The schedule in the spring is driven by our water temperatures. We need to mark the program before the water temps reach the low to mid 60’s. Marking and handling fish in this manner when to water is too warm can cause fish loss or raise disease issues. We usually have 5 to 6 weeks from the time the fish are large enough to mark until the water is too warm, and we must stop our clipping. This spring, we have 500,000 chinook and 500,000 coho fry to mass mark. We can accomplish this if we mark an average of 35,000 fish per day, 5 days a week, for 5 to 6 weeks.As you can see this is quite an undertaking. Our mass marking trailer can hold 12 to 14 people each day. It is my task to co-ordinate you folks so that we have a full trailer, fish ready to mark, and hatchery staff on-site to get the job done. What I am asking from you is the days that you would be available to clip fins , and any alternate days you might have in order to keep the trailer full of clippers and allow for last minute vacancies.