

So far, it has been a fairly typical winter at Pelton Round Butte. Juvenile fish are starting to stream through the SWW on their way to the ocean. Terrestrial biologists performed their annual reservoir bird surveys, counting raptors and waterfowl on Lake Billy Chinook, Simtustus, and the ReReg reservoir. Adult steelhead continue to return to the Pelton trap, where fish originating from the upper basin are given radio tags and transported upstream.

But there have also been a few excitements. Staff provided a tour of the hydroproject to a very special group of visitors – their children! The kids were impressed by spinning turbines seen up close, large fish collected at the adult trap and of course the dams themselves. We also launched our new lamprey fund, supporting habitat restoration and research focused on the elusive eel-like fish.

We're looking forward to spring weather, especially because Eagle Watch will take place in March this year. 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of this cherished event, and we can't wait to see you there.



15 kids and 2 PGE retirees joined us for a full day of learning all about power generation, fish and wildlife.

## Shining a Spotlight on Pacific Lamprey



Pacific lamprey are an important but sensitive species in the Pacific northwest. Like salmon and steelhead, lamprey are anadromous — migrating to and from the ocean during their lifetime. We look forward to learning more about this fascinating and delicate species.

Most Oregonians are familiar with salmon and understand the importance of restoring their habitats, protecting their waters, and advancing reintroduction efforts like ours on the Deschutes. After all, Pacific Northwest salmon species are charismatic — brightly colored, fun to catch, tasty to eat, and culturally and economically significant to the region. But there's another fish species with similar traits whose recovery tends to receive less attention. These animals also migrate from freshwater to the ocean and back again, bringing marine nutrients with them upstream. Their numbers have also declined over the decades, due in part to habitat loss and passage barriers. And they're also an important ceremonial food source for Native American tribes. That's right: we're talking about Pacific lamprey.

Lampreys can be easily identified by their distinctive sucker mouths and eel-like bodies. (Despite similarities in appearance, lampreys are not related to eels, but rather jawless fishes.) Like salmon, lamprey populations were once present throughout the Deschutes Basin but were extirpated from the upper tributaries when the Pelton Round Butte project was constructed. We don't have much information about lamprey distribution in the Deschutes today, but do know that some of these fish still reside in the tributaries of the Lower Deschutes River.

To help restore lamprey habitat and facilitate their recovery, PGE and the Tribes recently launched a new \$3 million fund, supporting both restoration and research. Applications will be reviewed bi-annually by an advisory committee made up of representatives from our collaborative partners on the fish committee.

Prior to launching the new fund, we completed a 5-step evaluation process to determine the best course of action for aiding lampreys in the Deschutes. Implementing fish passage for adults and juveniles would require massive changes to existing infrastructure, and so lamprey passage at Pelton Round Butte was determined to be an impractical first step. The decision was made to invest resources in mitigation instead, improving habitat (through the Mitigation and Enhancement Fund) and learning more about their distribution and behavior (through the Research Fund). Our first round of applications will be reviewed this June.

In addition to their cultural significance and role in transporting marine nutrients, lampreys are an alternative prey for aquatic and avian predators that might otherwise feast on salmonid smolts. The juveniles also help recycle nutrients by burrowing in sediment. We hope our new fund will help these fish flourish in the Lower Deschutes and increase awareness amongst wildlife advocates, like all of you!

Learn more and apply for funding on our [lamprey fund webpage](#).



## Juvenile & Adult Fish Passage Updates

Juvenile Species	Dec. 2019	Yearly Total (2019)	Jan. 2020
Chinook	324	37,355	78
Sockeye	0	92,099	0
Steelhead	0	11,135	0

- In total, 266,913 fish were collected at the SWW's Fish Transfer Facility in 2019, including 140,589 anadromous Chinook, sockeye, and steelhead, which were released into the lower river to continue their migration to the ocean.
- The 2019 run is up from 2018, which totaled 124,165 fish, of which 78,136 were from anadromous species.

Adult Species	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Yearly/Run Total
Steelhead	289	297	797 (Aug. 2019 - Jan. 2020)
Fall Chinook	163	19	19 (Jan. 2020)

- 13 adult steelhead with a left maxillary clip were collected at the Pelton Trap, radio-tagged and transported above Round Butte Dam in January.
- The 2019-2020 summer steelhead run is down compared to the 1,623 fish that returned in 2018-2019.
- In total, 47 steelhead have been tagged and released above Round Butte Dam. These adults are being tracked into the Crooked River and Whycus Creek.

Check out daily adult fish counts on [our website](#).

### Join us for the 25th Annual Eagle Watch A special celebration of Central Oregon's spectacular wildlife

This March, bring your family to Round Butte Overlook Park for two full days of festivities, including guided walks, birdhouse building, nature games and crafts, a cultural program by the Quartz Creek Drummers and Dancers, and, of course, raptor-spotting. Admission and parking are free, but bring cash for food or souvenirs. More information on [Facebook](#).





## Meet Lyman Jim

Fisheries program supervisor for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs



Lyman Jim – a research supervisor for the Warm Springs Fisheries program – has always enjoyed the outdoors, both in his work and personal life. As a hunter, angler, and Warm Springs tribal member who's lived nearly his entire life on the reservation, Lyman is intimately familiar with the rivers and trails of Central Oregon. After graduating from Madras High School, Lyman served four years in the U.S. Army, an experience which took him to Kentucky, Germany and Texas. When honorably discharged in 1989, Lyman returned home to the rivers and forests of the Pacific Northwest, working as a commercial fisherman on the Columbia River and a contractor for the Warm Springs Forestry Department. Lyman became a fisheries technician in 1995, researching pike minnow, bull trout, lamprey, sockeye, Chinook and steelhead. In fact, there are few Deschutes Basin fish species that Lyman hasn't studied. Over the years, he became an expert with a jet boat, navigating the river for carcass surveys and other projects. On top of his regular work, Lyman assists with the Tribes' Fire & Safety search and rescue and has acted as a resource advisor during major fires on the reservation. These days, Lyman oversees field operations and administrative duties, helping advance fisheries research for the Tribes. Despite his new supervisory role, Lyman says that he still finds on-the-ground field work to be the most fulfilling part of his job.

## Announcements & News

1. The Deschutes River Conservancy recently recognized the Tumalo Irrigation District for their watershed stewardship efforts.  
→ [KTVZ](#)
2. Kleinschmidt Associates received the Project Merit Award in Hydropower from the Environmental Business Journal for their work on the Opal Springs Fish Passage Project.  
→ [The Daily Times](#)
3. The Bend Parks and Recreation District is seeking public input on eroded areas of Deschutes riverbank.  
→ [The Bend Bulletin](#)
4. Save the date for our 26th annual Fisheries Workshop: July 22-23 in Bend.



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