

April 2, 2019

## Pelton Round Butte Fish and Wildlife Newsletter — April 2019



Record-breaking snowfall in February caused an unusual March at the Pelton Round Butte Project. Screw trap installation, which typically occurs this time of year, has been delayed by the weather. Fish passage at the Selective Water Withdrawal closed for several days as well. Despite these setbacks, we're hopeful that the snow will lead to higher flows and lower summer temperatures — conditions which will benefit fish. Other research and fieldwork has continued as planned, including the release of tagged fish into Lake Billy Chinook to test survival rates. Meanwhile, the snow hasn't stopped anglers from enjoying the reservoir as well, celebrating their catches through our Bull Trout Blowout photo contest. It feels like spring is just around the corner!

This newsletter and past issues can be found at [PortlandGeneral.com/DeschutesUpdates](http://PortlandGeneral.com/DeschutesUpdates).



### The Plain Facts

#### The Plain Facts

*What's happening on  
the Deschutes River*



Like thousands of anglers, environmentalists and residents of Central Oregon, PGE and the Tribes care deeply about the Deschutes and pay close attention to conditions in the basin. Apparent changes on the river — some good, some troubling — have raised questions among river users in the region. A few years ago, we produced the Plain Facts document to address some of the most common questions and rumors we hear. We recently updated this document to include the latest information and a few additional questions that have come up over time.

#### What is addressed in the Plain Facts?

Common misconceptions that “you may have heard” are followed by “the plain facts” — information we know to be true based on robust and high quality scientific evidence. The document includes questions on management of the project, water quality, fish and wildlife. Water quality is only briefly addressed, as substantial information will become available in early summer 2019 when our multi-year water quality study is released.

#### Where can I find the document?

The new version of the Plain Facts can be downloaded from our [website](#), and excerpts will appear in upcoming issues of this newsletter. As always, if you have questions, please send us an [email](#).

### Bull Trout Blowout Photo Contest

#### Don't forget to enter our photo contest this month for a chance to win exciting prizes!

Catch a bull trout in Lake Billy Chinook, snap a photo and send it our way. Join the contest in three easy steps:

1. **Join us** on [Facebook](#) or send us an [email](#).
2. **Post your photo** to the Facebook group (or if you email us, we'll post it). Use the hashtag [#myLBCcatch](#).
3. **Check out** the other great photos that have been submitted.

Please handle fish with care. If practicing catch-and-release, keep fish in the water, avoid poking the gills, and fully support the fish's body weight by holding it horizontally. **Complete contest rules and prize descriptions can be found on our [website](#).**

### Staff Feature: Terry Shrader

Terry Shrader, a senior biologist at Pelton Round Butte, may be newer to PGE, but he brings a wealth of experience from decades in the fisheries field. Prior to his first year with our company, Terry left his home state of Oregon to work for numerous state and federal agencies in Wyoming, Utah and Alaska. Terry eventually returned to the Beaver State to work as a Warmwater Fisheries Biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife — a position he held for 23 years. When Terry transitioned to the Pelton-Round Butte Mitigation Coordinator position, he began working closely with the stakeholders involved in the Deschutes reintroduction effort. In 2018, Terry left ODFW after 28 years, and found a similar position with PGE. When asked about his favorite parts of the job, Terry says, “There are two things I really enjoy. The first is all of the great people I get to work and interact with. The second is the challenge in taking what is known from other reintroduction efforts and ‘melding’ this knowledge with the particular conditions and issues we’re facing here at Pelton-Round Butte.”



## Juvenile Fish Update

Juvenile Species	Feb. 2019	Yearly Total (through Feb. 2019)
<b>Chinook</b>	335	921
<b>Sockeye</b>	260	260
<b>Bull Trout</b>	0	3
<b>Brown Trout</b>	2	4

- In February, 690 fish from four species of salmonids were processed at the Fish Transfer Facility. Of the total, 335 Chinook and 260 sockeye were marked, transported and released downstream into the Deschutes River.
- Heavy snow shut down fish capture at the SWW for the last six days of February.

## Adult Fish Update

Adult Species	March 2019	Yearly Total (hatchery, wild and upper basin)
<b>Summer Steelhead</b>	154	1,592 (Sep 2018 - May 2019)
<b>Fall Chinook</b>	0	4 (through March 2019)

- In March, four summer steelhead collected at the Pelton Trap were released above Round Butte Dam.
- 35 have been released in total above Round Butte Dam this migration season. 34 are radio-tagged, allowing us to track their movements through the reservoir and into the upper tributaries.
- Complete daily fish counts (including identifying tags and hatchery vs. wild origin) can be [found online](#).

## Announcements, News, and Events

- Recent snowfall in Central Oregon broke records, restoring the snowpack for the Deschutes and Crooked river basins to 111% of normal. Read the article in the [Bend Bulletin](#).
- Heavy snow in February helped improve Central Oregon's snowpack, but parts of the state and Pacific Northwest region are still at risk of drought. Learn more at [OPB](#).
- Central Oregon irrigators and collaborating partners recently celebrated the allocation of \$50 million in federal funding to modernize irrigation in the region. Read more at [OPB](#).
- Watch a [new video](#) from the Central Oregon Irrigation District on the modernization of irrigation canals to improve water conservation in Central Oregon.
- A new package of public lands bills, passed with bipartisan support, was signed into law in March. Impacts in Oregon include the creation of the Devil's Staircase Wilderness, protection for more than 250 miles of Oregon rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, fire protection for Crooked River Ranch, and the prioritization of fish habitat in the North Umpqua Canyon. Read the details in the [Statesman's Journal](#).

### Did you know?

1. Bull trout are not actually trout, but members of the char family.
2. These fish need cold, clean water to survive. Their populations have declined throughout much of the US and they're listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.
3. Dolly Varden (a coastal char species) were once considered the same species as bull trout. The two fish varieties were determined to be distinct in the late '70s.
4. Young bull trout eat insects, while adults are voracious predators of smaller fish.



Photo submitted by Joshua Kent.

## Thank you for reading our April 2019 newsletter!

Visit our [website](#) to find more information about the Deschutes, including informative videos, fact sheets, and reports.

- ◇ Have suggestions for what you'd like to see in the next newsletter? Want to schedule a tour? Please contact us at [deschutes.passage@pgn.com](mailto:deschutes.passage@pgn.com).
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