

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is whirling disease (WD)?

A: WD is the result of a parasite that attacks the cartilage in young trout causing deformations and a “tail chasing” behavior.

Q: Does Mt. Shavano have whirling disease?

A: No. Due to extensive clean-up efforts, Mt. Shavano has been certified WD negative.

Q: How much feed is used?

A: 500–900 pounds a day.

Q: Why are so many ponds and raceways dry?

A: As part of the WD clean-up, the hatchery was changed from river and spring water to just spring water, resulting in a loss of water flow.

Q: Where are the big fish?

A: Mt. Shavano used to have a show fish pond, but because bigger fish are more likely to have diseases, hatcheries are no longer allowed to have them. However, there are several hatcheries around the state with brood fish.

Q: Where do you get the fish eggs raised at Mt. Shavano?

A: Most of our eggs come from our brood fish hatcheries, Crystal River Hatchery and Poudre Rearing Unit. We also receive some eggs from private and federal hatcheries as far away as West Virginia and from wild spawns.

Q: What are the different ages/sizes of fish called?

A: Fry — Just hatched, less than inch. A nutritious yolk sack is attached to newly hatched fry.
Swim-up fry — At about one month, fry swim to the surface and begin to eat mashed feed.
Fingerling — About two or three inches long and three or four months old.
Subcatchable — Three to eight inches; four to ten months old.
Catchable—10–12 inches or more; 12–14 months old.

Q: Are tours available?

A: Yes. Free guided tours are given daily during the summer, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. For large groups, contact the hatchery at 719-539-6877. Visitors are welcome year-round.



Chalk Cliffs Rearing Unit
22605 County Road 287
Nathrop, CO 81236
719-395-2378

Salida Area Office
7405 Highway 50
Salida, CO 81201
719-530-5520

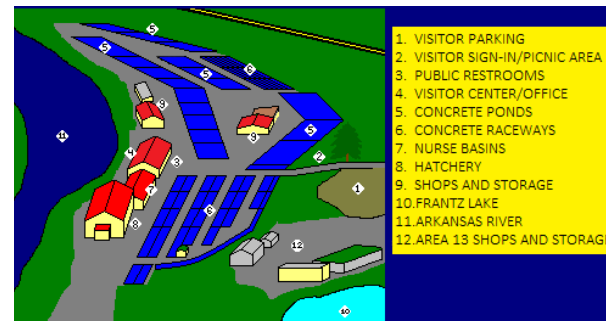
Fishing/stocking information: cpw.state.co.us/fish



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CPW FISHING APP



Mt. Shavano State Fish Hatchery

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Mt. Shavano Hatchery



Egg jars

Purchased in 1956, the Mt. Shavano Hatchery is one of the largest trout units in the state. Mt. Shavano produces approximately 500,000 whirling-disease-negative, catchable (10-inch) trout and about 2 million subcatchable fish (2–5 inches) per year. Species such as rainbow, Snake River cutthroat, cutthroat-rainbow crosses and kokanee salmon are raised at the unit.

Fish receive high-protein, vitamin-rich pellet feed, 2–10 times daily, depending on the size of the fish. It takes 12–14 months of intensive culture to produce a 10-inch trout.

Fish are loaded into 1,000-gallon tanks on flatbed diesel trucks. These fish are planted in lakes, reservoirs



Feeding fish

and rivers throughout Colorado. Water for the raceways, ponds and hatchery troughs is supplied from large underground springs. The water temperature varies little, with a seasonal average of 50 degrees F.



Salida Isolation Unit



Salida Isolation Unit

Built in 2002, the Salida Isolation Unit consists of four rooms with troughs and circular tanks for raising fish. The unit is classified as an isolation building because the water is not reused and must be treated by passing through an ultra-violet (UV) filter before being released into the environment.

Currently the isolation building is being used to propagate greenback cutthroat trout, one of three Colorado native subspecies of cutthroat trout. In 2008, sixty-six adult greenback cutthroat trout were removed from Bear Creek and brought into the Salida Isolation Unit with the goal of developing a broodstock and to aid in the reintroduction of these cutthroat into their native waters.

Since this time a broodstock has existed at several Colorado State Hatcheries, Leadville National Fish Hatchery and at Zimmerman Lake. Each year fertilized eggs from these broodstocks are brought into the Salida Isolation Unit where they are hatched and raised.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife airplane stocking a high mountain lake.

Cutthroats from the Salida Isolation Unit are planted at 1–2 inches in the fall by foot, horseback and airplane into high mountain lakes within their native ranges. Approximately 200 high mountain lakes and streams are stocked each year.

Mt. Ouray Hatchery

Acquired in 1990, the Mt. Ouray Hatchery, with 24 troughs and six small raceways, is an extension and supplement to the Mt. Shavano Hatchery. Currently it produces 700,000 subcatchable rainbow trout and kokanee salmon, and is operated by the Mt. Shavano staff.



Today, Mt. Shavano, Mt. Ouray and the Salida Isolation Unit work together with the other 17 hatcheries operated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife to breed, hatch, rear and stock over 90 million fish per year. Many of the fish produced are to enhance angling opportunities, while others serve a critical role in native species recovery efforts. Colorado fish hatcheries support our angling pastime, which annually contributes 1.9 billion dollars to our state's economy!



Greenback cutthroat