

Steelhead Reconditioning

DAVID FAST, *Yakama Nation Fisheries*

The steelhead kelt reconditioning project continued over the past year with survival results from different recovery and release strategies. To evaluate the potential benefits of reconditioning we released one test group of outmigrating kelts directly into the Yakima River at the collection station at Prosser dam to determine the in-river survival (Direct Release). A second group of fish was collected and transported below Bonneville dam (Direct Release). A third group was held for a brief period and then transported and released below Bonneville dam (Short Term Rearing). And a fourth group was held in circular tanks at the Prosser Facility and released in the fall after being reconditioned (Long Term Rearing). The long-term group was fed for about six months and examined with ultrasound to determine the status of the gametes before release. All fish in the study were given PIT tags so that they could be tracked through the Columbia and back to the Yakima for evaluation of survival.