

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Property Name: Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery Historic District

Date of Construction: 1907/1928

Address: 44645 McKenzie Highway, Leaburg, OR 97489

County: Lane

Use / Original: Fish Hatchery Current : Rental Housing and Community Center Style: Vernacular

Theme: Recreation/Fish Industry

Primary Significance: One of the oldest surviving salmon and trout hatchery complexes in Oregon.

Condition: EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED MOVED (date)



Hatchery Building. Photographed June 1994.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments:

[Handwritten Signature]
compliance officer

1.26.95

Signature of Certifying SHPO Official/Title

Date

SHPO # 3820

Old McKenzie River Fish Hatchery - Description

The Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery Historic District consists of the 17 buildings and structures used to cultivate salmon and trout (from brood fish, to eggs, to alvin, to swim-up fry, to feeding fry, to fingerlings), and the residence and associated out buildings and grounds (garden, orchard, fields) used by the managers and their family. See attached site plan with numbered resources . The district includes:

1. House (1907), a 26 by 26-foot two story wood frame Craftsman style house with a wrap around verandah (added c.1911). It was originally used by the superintendent or manager (and his family) in charge of the hatchery as a year-round residence. It is now used as a rental house.
2. Hatchery Building (1945), a 40 by 60-foot one story wood frame building. It replaced a c. 1928 building that burned December 25, 1944. The 1928 building looked like the current building but had five windows instead of four. The 1928 building replaced a c. 1907 building (refer to historic photographs) The existing building was originally used to cultivate fish by using fresh water running through long troughs and percolating it (moving it up and down) through egg baskets (which held 15,000 to 30,000 eggs each) to provide oxygen for survival. Once the eggs hatched into alvin (in 60 to 90 days depending on the type of fish) and matured to fry they were transferred into a starter tank in the hatchery and fed until they were too big for that tank. The fry were then transferred to a holding pond outside until they were large enough to be liberated or planted in lakes or rivers. The building is currently rented out by Lane County along with the house and is occasionally used as a meeting room.
3. Pond (c. 1907), original dirt and rock lined pond fed by Hatchery Creek and Finn Creek by wooden flumes. Later used as pond for the brood fish. The north side center of the pond was the original site of a water powered generator.
4. 5.& 6. Three ponds (c. 1911/1933). Originally dirt and rock lined, the ponds were lined with cement in 1933. They were used as rearing ponds for maturing fish (fingerlings) until they were 4 to 6 inches long. The fish were then liberated in Oregon streams and lakes.
7. Canal system (c. 1911/1928). A water system used to supply water to the ponds and to irrigate the landscaped grounds.
- 8.& 9. Grinder foundation and freezer plant foundation (c. 1926), ruins. Used to grind salmon, chicken and pig carcasses and livers for fish food and keep the food at a cool temperature.
10. &11. Pump houses (c. 1926, 1945), two wood frame buildings housing water pumps. Used to pump water from the creeks and McKenzie River to the ponds and hatchery buildings.
12. Garage (1947 - 1990 addition), 32 by 48-foot wood frame building with newer addition. Originally used for vehicles. The new addition was built by Lane County for the eventual use as restrooms for a visitor/information center.
13. Barn (c. 1907), 24" x 30" board and batten wood frame building. Originally used for animals. Moved to this site and now used as a tool shed.
- Small barn (c. 1925), wood frame building located near house.
15. 16. & 17. Small sheds (c. 1925), wood frame buildings located near the house.

Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery - Setting

The Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery is located north of the McKenzie River adjacent to State Highway 126 in T16S R2E Section 30 in Lane County, Oregon near the community of Leaburg. The property overlooks Leaburg Lake, the reservoir behind Leaburg Dam which is situated approximately 1600 feet (488 m) southeast. A newer hatchery (the Leaburg Fish Hatchery, 1953) is located approximately one half mile (.80km) south. Most of the 46 acre (18.62 ha) Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery site is a mixed alder/Douglas fir forest on the slopes of the McKenzie River terrace. The four acres (1.62 ha) that the buildings, ponds and canal system are built on are on the McKenzie River terrace and have been landscaped and planted with ornamental shrubs, perennials and some large trees.

The Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery Historic District boundaries include the 4 acres (1.62 ha) closest to the highway where the buildings and structures associated with the cultivation of fish are located. The district boundaries are: north to the dirt holding pond behind the buildings, east to a gravel service road, south to Highway 126, and west to a gravel service road. (See attached map)

Statement of Significance

The Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery is significant as a good example of an early fish culture facility in Oregon and was an important component of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. It represents one of the first steps toward protection and propagation of salmon and trout in Oregon. Its period of significance was from 1907 to 1953. It meets the National Register Criteria for evaluation under criteria a, b, c and d.

- a.) The district is significant because of its association with early fish culture in Oregon. Its existence and creation reflects the importance of salmon and trout as economic and recreational resources in Oregon.
- b.) The district is associated with Matt L. Ryckman, who served as the McKenzie Fish Hatchery superintendent and lived in the residence with his family between 1909 and 1921. In 1921 Mr. Ryckman became the head of the Game Commission's trout hatcheries and was transferred to Portland. While serving as the head of Oregon's trout hatcheries (1921 until his death in 1943) he wrote many technical articles on trout propagation in Oregon and lead the game commission's scientific approach to rearing trout. In a July 1951 Oregon State Game Commission Bulletin, Mr. Ryckman was referred to as the "father of trout culture in Oregon," by E.W. Goff. Mr. Goff started working at the Old McKenzie hatchery in 1914 and worked for Matt Ryckman and became the McKenzie Hatchery superintendent in 1921 when Ryckman left. Mr. Goff stayed at the McKenzie Hatchery for 26 years until he was promoted to the Oregon Fish and Game Commission in 1947.
- c.) The district embodies the distinctive characteristics of early fish culture complexes which included: the hatchery building; the tanks and ponds need to cultivate fish from egg to fingerlings; extensive water systems that brought fresh water to the site by wooden flumes from streams located up in the forest; pumps that supplied additional water from the McKenzie River; a canal system that brought water to the ponds and hatchery building; and a residence with enough land to produce the food for the superintendent and his family.

Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery

The district, when thoroughly researched and documented, will yield important information about the early techniques and systems used to propagate two of Oregon's the most important fish.

Context

The first fish hatchery on the west coast was started in 1872 on the McCloud River, a tributary of the Sacramento River in California. It was built by Livingston Stone, a Boston hatcheryman, to obtain eggs for fish production to sell on the Atlantic coast, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and 27 land bound states (Smith, 1979). In 1873, the Oregon and Washington Fish Propagation Company was organized and by 1877 they had hired Mr. Stone to build a hatchery on the Clackamas River. The first hatchery was not successful and hatchery work was not regarded as important by most cannery operators at that time. R.D. Hume, however observed the McCloud hatchery and decided to open his own hatchery on the Rogue in 1877. He conducted several experiments to determine the best methods for hatching and became successful. Very little additional hatchery development occurred until the 1890s when Washington, Oregon, and the federal government (U. S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries) began to expand the Fishing industry.

Oregon took its first step toward the propagation and protection of salmon by establishing an Oregon Fish Commissioner in 1878 as part of a cooperative effort with Washington. The commissioner's territory was the Columbia River and its tributaries. The commissioner's position was superseded by the Oregon Fish Commission in 1887 which was renamed the State Game and Fish Commission in 1893 and the Fish and Game Commission in 1895. That commission was separated into two bodies, creating the Board of Fish Commission in 1898 and Board of Fish Commissioners in 1901. They were reunited into the Board of Fish and Game Commission in 1911-20 and separated again into the Fish Commission and the Game Commission in 1921. The Fish Commission dealt solely with commercial fisheries and the Game Commission worked for the welfare of game birds and trout. The agencies merged in 1975 to become one agency responsible for both sport and commercial activities and is now called the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission which is managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Early hatcheries in Oregon were focused on increasing commercial fishing. Artificial propagation of fish was seen in the same light as sowing seeds for commercial farming, the intent being to increase the yield from year to year for economic development purposes. Later, the emphases of the propagation of indigenous fish was placed on producing game fish for sportsmen.

A hatchery site on the McKenzie River was establish as a Royal Chinook salmon collection station in 1902 because it was a natural spawning area on the river. The anadromous fish were captured in wooden racks that were placed in the river. Their spawn was collected by fish commission employees who camped along the shore of the river in the spring and summer. In 1907, a hatchery building, residence, dirt pond, flumes, and generators were constructed at what is now called the

Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery

Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery (a newer hatchery called the McKenzie Hatchery was established in 1976 near Vida). The salmon eggs were collected, and cultivated at this site until there were ready to be liberated. Some fingerlings were returned to the McKenzie River, but most were taken to other streams and lakes around Oregon.

When first constructed, water was supplied from two nearby creeks (now called Hatchery Creek and Finn Creek). The water was brought down to the hatchery by wooden flumes located above the ground and later by large wooden pipes buried underground. The fish were fed spawned salmon carcasses and chicken and pig livers which were ground and refrigerated at the hatchery site. The house was used as the residence for the manager or superintendent and his family as a year-round home. It was somewhat of a show place and landscaped with annual flowers, shrubs and a formal lawn area, as well as an orchard garden and pasture for animals. As the hatchery grew additional buildings and water were added to the complex.

The Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery was originally established as a salmon hatchery. In 1912 it operated as both a salmon and trout hatchery and from 1921, when it was taken over by the Oregon Game Commission, until 1953 it was operated as a trout hatchery only.

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife there are currently thirty-four operating publicly owned hatcheries and an undetermined number of private hatcheries in Oregon. The following table lists the hatcheries in chronological order with funding source and type of fish (S = salmon, T = trout, SH = steel head) propagated there.

Date	Hatchery Name	Location	Funding	Fish
1909	Bonneville	near Cascade Locks	NMFS 55%, COE 45%	S & T
1911	Willamette	near Oak Ridge	COE 83.75%, ODFW 16.25%	S
1913	Klaskanine	near Astoria	NMFS	S
1914	Trask	near Tillamook	ODFW	S
1915	Butte Falls	Jackson County	ODFW	T & S
1921	Oak Springs	near Maupin	ODFW	T
1922	Cedar Creek	near Hebo	ODFW	T, SH & S
1922	Willamette	near Alsea	ODFW	T
1923	Klamath	near Chiloquin	ODFW	T
1924	Roaring River	near Scio	ODFW	T & SH
1925	Bandon	Coos County	ODFW	S
1929	Fall River	near Bend	ODFW	T
1934	Alsea	Benton County	ODFW	T & SH