

2023 Minnesota Fish Hatchery System Needs



Aging hatcheries need investments

Many state hatcheries were constructed in the 1950s and are still operating with original equipment. Feasibility studies completed in 2018 and 2019 indicated that more than \$58 million was needed to address critical issues related to biosecurity, aging infrastructure, and safety. Those estimated costs have only increased since then. The most pressing needs include:

- A new hatchery building and significant improvements to fish ponds at the Waterville State Fish Hatchery
- Replacements for water supply lines, raceways (flow-through tanks that hold trout), and hatchery building at Crystal Springs Hatchery

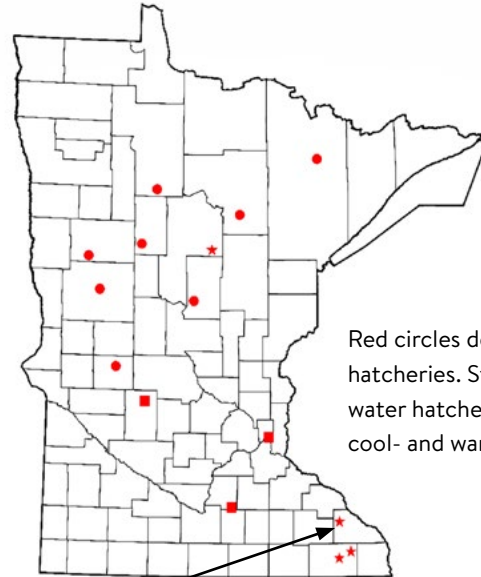
Other needed hatchery improvements include:

- Upgrades to dikes, ponds, raceways, water and power supply
- Repairs to enhance staff safety such as slip-proof surfaces, railings, and mechanical aids to moving heavy materials

In 2018, fish raised at state hatcheries supported the \$4.4 billion contribution anglers made to the state's economy (Southwick Associates).

The locations of the 15 state hatcheries were selected due to local resources like cold-water springs and access to wild fish. Each hatchery contributes to a stocking program that serves the needs of the state.

Minnesota Fish Hatchery Locations



Red circles designate cool-water hatcheries. Stars designate cold-water hatcheries. Squares designate cool- and warm-water hatcheries.

Example: Aging water lines and raceways have started to collapse at Crystal Springs Hatchery. Structural failure jeopardizes live trout valued at nearly \$1 million, including the state's steelhead production program.

For more information on the Minnesota fish hatcheries, visit dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/hatcheries.

2022 High Priority Hatchery Investments

DNR's highest priority fish hatchery repairs and improvements include:

- **Waterville** - Construction of a new hatchery building, water delivery and filtration system modernization, and re-design of the ponds to maximize walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge production (Waterville pond photo middle right).
- **Crystal Springs (Altura, MN)** - New hatchery building construction and replacement of degraded raceways and water lines to support more than 250,000 trout raised at the facility annually.
- **New London and Spire Valley** - Complete biosecurity and pond improvements to support production of trout, walleye, and muskellunge.

Since 2012, DNR has requested \$7.5 million specifically for fish hatchery infrastructure projects and has received \$7.2 million, including a capital investment at the Lanesboro Hatchery. Over the same period, DNR has invested \$6.3 million of Natural Resources Asset Preservation funds appropriated to the agency into hatchery projects.

Investment Ensures a Viable Hatchery for Decades to Come

A \$5.2 million capital investment project at the Lanesboro Hatchery was completed in 2021. Highlights include a new nursery and office building (replacing 1950s-era structures); equipment to remove radon from groundwater used for fish-rearing; and an electronic monitoring system to quickly alert staff to any operational problems. Yet more investments are needed.

For more information contact:

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The crumbling spring pool wall (shown above) at Lanesboro Hatchery and the failing pond dike at Waterville Hatchery (shown below) are just two examples of aging infrastructure that threatens production of walleye, muskellunge, and trout across the state's hatchery system.



Walleye eggs (shown below) are collected from wild walleye and start the process of raising walleye for future fishing memories.



This information can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, braille, or audio tape by emailing info.dnr@state.mn.us or calling 651-259-5016.