

GEORGIA TROUT FISHERY AND ROLE OF HATCHERIES



Trout fishing is an important part of the state's fishery resource in terms of the outstanding recreation provided and significant economic benefits.

The economic impact of trout fishing in Georgia has been estimated to exceed \$172 million annually. The American Sportfishing Association also determined that trout fishing in Georgia generates \$3.4 million in state sales tax and \$2 million in state income tax. More than 100,000 trout fishing licenses are sold each year generating additional state revenue.

The trout fishery in Georgia is largely dependent upon stocking. More than 1 million catchable (ten-inch) trout are stocked into Georgia waterbodies annually to support this recreational activity and its associated economic impacts.

Georgia's quality trout program has been the result of a successful state/federal partnership. Trout are first obtained as eggs or four-inch fish and then grown to catchable size at three state hatcheries and one federal hatchery prior to stocking.

Program success is heavily dependent on the supply of eggs and fish provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Fish Hatchery (NFH) System. Specifically:

- Chattahoochee Forest NFH (GA) produces 314,000 (29%) of the 1.1 million catchable trout stocked annually. Total economic output for trout production at Chattahoochee Forest NFH amounts to \$28.8 million annually.
- Federal hatcheries (Chattahoochee Forest (GA) and Dale Hollow (TN)) provide 510,000 (43%) of the 1.19 million fingerling fish needed by Georgia state hatcheries annually for grow-out;
- Federal hatcheries (Ennis (MT) and Erwin (TN)) supply 900,000 (75%) of the 1.2 million eggs needed for Georgia state hatcheries to produce fingerlings and catchable trout.

The continuation of operations at our NFH partner facilities is vital to Georgia trout program success.