

Walleye Restoration Update

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The restoration of the New River walleye fishery has been an ongoing project since the late 1990's. During that time, a strain of walleye native to the New River was identified during a cooperative research project with personnel from Virginia Tech. Since then, walleye management has concentrated on hatchery production of the native strain. Adults are collected during the late-winter spawning run and only those walleye that genetically test as New River strain are used for egg collection and subsequent fingerling stockings. Fingerlings are now reared at our Buller Fish Cultural Station and in West Virginia hatcheries through a cooperative agreement with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources.

Although thousands of walleye have been stocked, the proof of the success of these stockings has been the tremendous increase in the number of walleye collected between Claytor Lake and Fries Dam during spring electrofishing samples. Anglers have also reported catching many walleye during their fishing trips in these areas. An angler survey being conducted February through April will support these reports. Following is a summary of the number of New River fingerling walleye stocked through 2006 between Allisonia (Claytor Lake) and Fields Dam (Mouth of Wilson).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number Stocked</u>
2001	10,000
2002	0
2003	51,840
2004	156,200
2005	90,080
2006	106,000
Total	414,200