



Over the first three months of 2009 the Jim Collins Net Pen Facility staff has been very active in distributing rainbow trout throughout the states southern trout waters. During Jan., Feb., and March we stocked approximately 118,000 rainbow trout.



During our trout growing season we stayed busy hand feeding and transporting the fish from our facility here at Mount Ida to our usual stocking sites of Blakely Mtn. Dam, Carpenter Dam, Rammel Dam, Albert Pike Rec. Area on the upper Little Missouri River, and the Narrows Dam Tailwater area.

Our growing season went pretty much as planned with the exception of a few losses due to predatory nuisance blue catfish which hang around our net pens during the winter months wanting a free meal.



Hole in net caused by blue catfish chewing into the net.

The hole in the net pictured above is approx. the size of a basketball and allowed probably 4,000 rainbow trout to escape, and in turn let four large blue catfish take up residence inside our net pen. These nuisance fish were harvested out of our pen and given to the Aquatic Resources Education program to be used for display in the mobile aquariums.



60+ lb. blue catfish in net pen.

We are currently harvesting channel catfish from our pens and preparing to restock our empty pens with yearling channel catfish from the Joe Hogan Hatchery. We will begin feeding them to raise them up to a catchable size by this fall. We plan on a very busy summer with over 200,000 channel catfish to raise.