

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Fall 2022 Root River Weir Summary

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The Root River Steelhead Facility in Racine County was in operation for eleven processing days during the fall 2022 migration. Between Sept. 26 and Oct. 31, 7,887 fish were captured and processed. Biological sampling goals were met, and fish health inspections were conducted on Coho Salmon. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)'s fall 2022 Root River effort is summarized below.

	<b>CAPTURED</b>	<b>SPAWNED</b>	<b>EGGS TAKEN</b>	<b>PASSED UPSTREAM</b>
Chinook	3,088	0	0	2,905
Coho	4,787	793	1,208,186	4,693
Steelhead	10	0	0	1
Brown Trout	2	0	0	2
Totals	7,887	793	1,208,186	7,601

Due to a lack of precipitation, water levels in the Root River were low for much of the fall season. Despite the low water levels, both Coho and Chinook Salmon moved upstream in large numbers throughout October.

Chinooks were sampled throughout the fall season as part of the DNR's ongoing net pen study. Chinook Salmon in the Kewaunee and Root rivers were differentially marked with coded wire tags from 2015-2018. Chinook stocked directly into the rivers and net pens received different coded wire tag numbers. Analysis of these tags will help evaluate whether Wisconsin's collaborative net pen projects are positively impacting post-stocking survival. Tags were recovered from 23 Chinook salmon at the Root River Steelhead Facility in 2022. This is the final year of coded wire tag collections from Chinook Salmon.

In addition, steelhead were sampled as part of an ongoing multi-agency, lake-wide study on natural reproduction and movement. Stocked steelhead were implanted with small coded wire tags before release, and tags were recovered from nine fish at the Root River Steelhead Facility. Analysis of the tags will provide fish managers with more information on the movement patterns of steelhead, growth rates and the occurrence of "straying," which is when a mature fish returns to a different stream than the one it was originally stocked in.

After a two-year hiatus, the Root River Open House was held on Saturday, Oct. 8, and 659 people attended. DNR Fisheries staff gave tours of the facility and conducted fish

processing and spawning demonstrations. DNR Law Enforcement staff displayed their Lake Michigan vessel, and US Coast Guard staff answered questions regarding safety and regulations. Volunteers from Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin welcomed visitors, provided food samples, displayed a Lake Michigan fishing boat and instructed kids on how to cast a fishing rod and tie fishing knots. Trout Unlimited and the Kenosha Sport Fishing and Conservation Association also provided volunteers to teach fly casting and fly tying. Attendees were able to tour the Touch of the Wild trailer sponsored by the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and the Outdoor Heritage Education Center. Thank you to all who participated and helped make the day a success!

The DNR would like to acknowledge the support of Salmon Unlimited in keeping the Root River Steelhead Facility operational. In addition, a special thank you to the volunteers for the daily opening and closing of the viewing window at the facility.

Operations at the weir will resume in spring 2023.

For additional Lake Michigan fisheries information, please visit our website:  
[dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan).

For fishing information, please visit  
[dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan/OutdoorReport](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan/OutdoorReport).