



Fish Hatchery Expansion

CONSTRUCTION IS SET to begin in the coming months on a federally funded, \$5.8 million expansion to one of Kentucky's two state-owned fish hatcheries. Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery in Franklin County could increase its production by 20 percent once the project is complete.

In 2010, the hatchery produced 200,000 redear sunfish, nearly 200,000 sauger, 5

million white bass, 8 million hybrid striped bass, 130,000 blue catfish, 220,000 channel catfish and 145,000 largemouth bass. The hatchery also produced thousands of alligator gar and lake sturgeon for restoration efforts.

The expansion project includes construction of additional outside rearing ponds and a new building to house more hatchery tanks. Construction could take 1-2 years, depending on the weather.

"We'll build two ½-acre ponds, two 1-acre ponds plus a 4-acre pond," said Hatchery Manager Steve Marple. "We have 41 acres now and this will give us a total 48 acres of ponds at the hatchery."

The project also includes a new building to house a half dozen 400-gallon round hatchery tanks and eight 1,000-gallon rectangular

tanks. The new tanks will give hatchery workers space needed to accommodate current and future fish culture projects. A water recirculation system will reduce water use and allow the hatchery to isolate new fish brought into the hatchery for disease control.

Gerry Buynak, assistant director of fisheries for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, said construction should start by winter or next spring. The project could allow Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to raise all its own fish stocked for the popular Fishing in Neighborhoods program (FINs) instead of buying some of the fish from private vendors.

Buynak said the expansion will lead to better fishing and more fish diversity in Kentucky. "The sky's the limit for what we could do," he said. ■



The state-owned Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery in Franklin County will expand to include an additional 7 acres of ponds.

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