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Normandale Fish Culture Station

The Normandale Fish Culture Station is the oldest operating fish culture station in Ontario. The original main station was built in 1924 and was known as the Walsh Hatchery. The main station was rebuilt in 1964-65 and the advance-rearing building was added in 1984. The sub-station was built in 1934 nearby on Front Road and was rebuilt in 1959-60. Both facilities deteriorated over time and reached the end of their useful lives by about 2005.

With the new facilities, all production of Atlantic salmon and chinook salmon for the Lake Ontario stocking programs is being done at Normandale. MNR has rebuilt the main station and sub-station into state-of-the-art, enclosed facilities for early rearing, advanced rearing and brood stock facilities, specialized for the production of Atlantic salmon. A production-scale quarantine facility has also been built for rearing chinook salmon. Rearing space has also been provided for other fish in the salmon family such as rainbow trout.

The new facilities include:

- modern indoor facilities that improve efficiency by reusing water
- increased production capacity
- more flexibility for rearing multiple stocks

Atlantic Salmon

- Specialized rearing facilities for the production of Atlantic salmon fry, fingerlings and yearlings will help produce higher-quality fish in support of the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.
- The main station will produce 450,000 Atlantic salmon fry (less than five months old), 150,000 fall fingerlings (10 months old) and 75,000 yearlings (16-18 months old).
- The nearby sub-station has been completely rebuilt and will be home to MNR's Atlantic salmon breeding stock.

Chinook Salmon

- MNR has been raising chinook salmon for more than 30 years.
- The 1984 advanced rearing building at the main station was converted to a production-scale quarantine facility to rear chinook salmon. This production/quarantine facility reduces the risk of transferring fish diseases into the facility from wild spawn collections that provide eggs for the program.
- Production of chinook salmon was transferred to Normandale in 2011 while construction was still under way.
- Nearly 600,000 chinook salmon fry are stocked at established stocking sites throughout Lake Ontario and 10 net pen sites between St. Catharines and Prince Edward County.
- Additional chinook fry have been donated to U.S. agencies to offset their production shortfalls.

Rainbow Trout

- The new facility also includes space for the production of approximately 125,000 rainbow trout yearlings.

Other Features

- There is new production capacity for other fish species to support future stocking programs in the Golden Horseshoe area of southern Ontario.
- Wherever feasible, MNR has applied green building design and technologies for improved energy efficiency and environmental sustainability of the fish culture program.
- Energy efficiency features include recirculation systems for early rearing of Atlantic salmon fry to reduce water pumping and heating costs and geothermal systems for heating and cooling the new buildings.
- Three quarantine rooms at the main station will help MNR develop new brood stocks or produce small lots of fish for biodiversity conservation and other special programs, while minimizing the risk of introducing diseases. Effluent treatment to remove fish manure ensures that water quality in Normandale Creek is protected.
- A visitor centre will be added that will allow people to view the fish-rearing facilities and to learn more about fisheries management and fish species in Ontario.
- The new main station building is 2,520 square metres in size. The sub-station building is 1,150 square metres.
- The station is located in Norfolk County, three kilometres north of Turkey Point and 21 kilometres southwest of the Town of Simcoe.