



KERN RIVER HATCHERY

Temporary Closure Q&A



On Dec. 1, CDFW temporarily closed the Kern River Hatchery in Kern County to complete much needed repairs including replacement of a pipeline that is more than 50 years old. In a news release announcing the closure, staff said the facility would be closed for an undetermined amount of time while CDFW secures additional funding and completes the repairs. In an effort to provide as much information as possible, staff drafted the following Q&A.

The public can email kernriverupdates@wildlife.ca.gov with additional questions and to receive updates.

Question: When will the facility reopen?

Answer: The facility will remain closed until pipeline replacement work is complete and the improvements can provide a reliable water supply. This will involve major construction that is anticipated to take a minimum of two years to complete. The timeline could be longer and will be determined once initial planning for construction is complete.

Question: What is the status of funding to rehabilitate the pipeline?

Answer: State funding has been allocated for pipeline replacement. Additional improvements are proposed for completion while the facility is closed. Funding for additional improvements has yet to be identified.

Question: Why is the facility closing again following recent improvements?

Answer: Significant improvements were made to modernize the facility, but continued deterioration of the pipeline has not been addressed. This project will resolve the critical need for a reliable water supply and will enable recent improvements to be fully utilized.

Question: What will happen to the employees working at the facility?

Answer: All regular staff working at the facility have been temporarily relocated.

Question: What are the plans for native fish reintroduction?

Answer: Recent studies carried out by CDFW show that there are unique strains of Kern River rainbow trout present in the Kern River watershed that can assist with development of a native fishery. This is an exciting opportunity that will rely upon modern fish hatchery techniques which is a major factor in closing the hatchery to ensure the facility can satisfy this need. CDFW will be developing a broodstock program to reintroduce Kern River rainbow trout into the Kern River watershed in conjunction with reopening of the Kern River Hatchery.

Question: What will happen while the facility remains closed?

Answer: All fish production will cease until the facility becomes operational. The facility will continue to be closed to the public.

Question: What will happen to fish stocking in the Kern River?

Answer: While the facility is closed, fish stocking activities will continue with the assistance of neighboring hatcheries.

Question: How will this impact the Salmonids in the Classroom Program?

Answer: The closure will not impact the ability for local teachers to participate in the Program. Please visit <https://wildlife.ca.gov/CAEP/R4> for more information.

