

Utah's Aquatic Animal Health and Research Center

About the center

Located in Logan, the Aquatic Animal Health and Research Center plays a unique, critical role in protecting and expanding Utah's aquatic animal populations. Formerly known as the Fisheries Experiment Station, the center is part of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Its teams conduct innovative research and provide a variety of aquatic animal health-related services — coordinating with their DWR colleagues and various agency partners — related to fish health, fish production and fisheries management throughout Utah and the western United States.



Fish culture



Reservoir monitoring

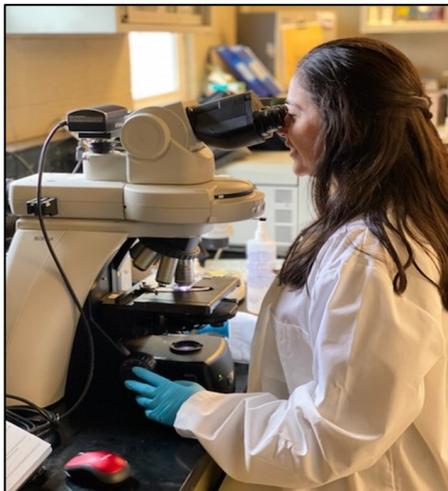
Conducting important research

When the center opened in the early 1960s, its research team mainly focused on improving fish-health protocols and evaluating new ways to grow fish for widespread stocking. Now, center personnel work closely with other DWR staff, as well as regional and national partners, to protect Utah's aquatic resources and expand angling opportunities. The following objectives guide the center's research efforts:

- Increasing angler satisfaction and quality of life for Utah residents
- Conserving sportfish and non-game native fish species (to prevent federal intervention and listings under the Endangered Species Act)
- Recruiting and retaining anglers
- Protecting habitats and ecosystem health
- Improving culture methods for a variety of warm, cool and coldwater fish species
- Safeguarding regional fish trade and any related stocking opportunities
- Managing aquatic invasive species and preventing illegal fish stocking



Currently, the center is focused on improving the production of warmwater fish species (a high priority for Utah anglers), controlling the growth and spread of nuisance fish (to ensure top-quality fishing opportunities), and modeling of aquatic food and energy requirements for reservoirs to improve the efficiency of fisheries-management strategies.



Diagnostic services



Native species conservation

Protecting aquatic animal health

The center's aquatic animal health team also works directly with DWR staff, regional and national partners to identify fisheries-management objectives. Much of this work is directed toward maintaining healthy aquatic animal populations by providing the following administrative and laboratory services:

- Importation of fish and eggs to meet sportfish and conservation objectives
- Conserving sportfish and non-game native fish species (to prevent federal intervention and listings under the Endangered Species Act)
- Research to prevent and manage prohibited pathogens
- Annual inspection and diagnostic services for DWR fish hatcheries and managed waters
- Developing national pathogen testing and laboratory quality-assurance standards
- Managing aquatic animal pathogens and diseases according to Utah policies

What is the primary role of the center?

Although it provides many services to the state of Utah, the Aquatic Animal Health and Research Center's primary role is **to ensure the good health, diversity and abundance of Utah's fish populations**. These are high priorities for the state's anglers, and the DWR is committed to listening to its customers. In addition to its recreational appeal, fishing has a substantial impact on Utah's economy, generating roughly \$1.1 billion annually and benefiting many communities statewide.