

Industry Promotion Important At Big Brown Fish Hatchery

(Continued from Page E14)

amounts of fish long distances—the core of their business.

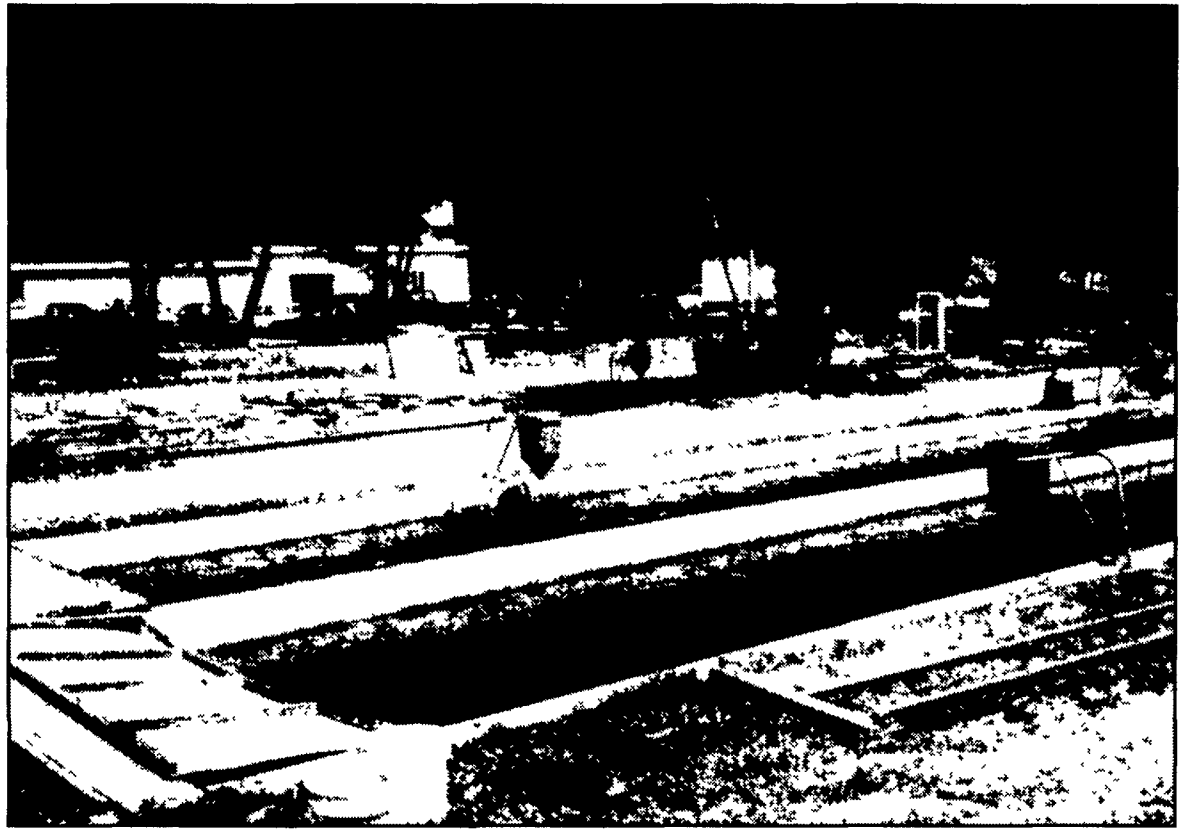
With a strong steady customer base at the pay lake from nearby New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey, the lake is busiest from July 4 through Labor Day. Many that come to the pay lake prefer the quality and size of the catch as opposed to taking their chances in natural streams. Fish in a hatchery are raised under controlled conditions and are actually healthier than those from natural streams, where they are exposed to varied environmental conditions.

Fish from hatcheries are the healthiest food for those trying to avoid mercury. Most people don't realize how healthy trout is for you. Pay lake customers also often don't want to deal with obtaining a state fishing license and appreciate the fact that no license is required at Big Brown.

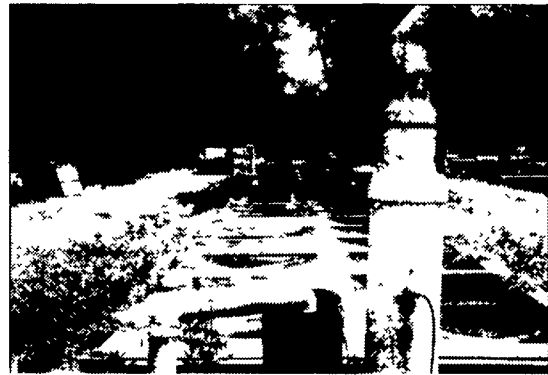
Another means of marketing his product is the Pocono Mountain

Fish and Seafood store Conklin started in 1999 on the property. Seafood retail sales, smoked fish, and processing of trout as well as sales at farmers' markets helped Conklin promote aquaculture products.

Many people from New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey would plan a day trip to the area and stop at the retail store to purchase fresh fish and seafood. An area that has seen tremendous residential growth in part because of its close proximity to the large cities has brought many customers to the store and even the pay lake. Consumers who were accustomed to going to the local fish market to purchase their fish found that convenience close



Big Brown Fish Hatchery raises trout and bass for sale as live stocking fish and for use in their fish and pay lakes. Seen are two of their concrete raceways and self-feeders. Photos courtesy of Chas. A. Conklin II.



Concrete raceways are seen with the smaller divisions in foreground used to hold orders of stocking fish that Big Brown Fish Hatchery will deliver to their customers. The netting over the raceways is to keep birds from filling their own "orders" with the great blue heron being the greatest cause for loss at the business.

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to their homes.

The retail store had a successful start with sales increasing each year by 15 to 20 percent, until last year when business fell because of the condition of the economy. "Fresh fish and seafood tends to be a luxury purchase, and

when the economy drops, this is one of the first items people postpone buying," said Conklin.

Conklin has decided to discontinue the farmers' market sales, restaurant

sales, and retail store operation and concentrate on the core business—the hatchery and pay lakes. He does believe, however, there is a great potential for sales. He knows he is only one person and can't pay his full attention to both entities. The retail store business is for sale or lease. Conklin believes that it can be very successful for someone who can devote their full attention to running the store.

Conklin has been actively involved in state and national aquaculture associations as well as serving on

(Turn to Page E19)

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