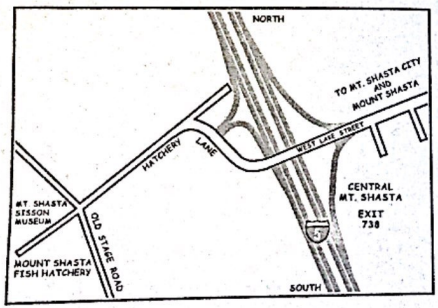
THE MOUNT SHASTA FISH HATCHERY

is operated by the
California Department
of Fish and Wildlife and
is open from
7:00 a.m. until sunset
for self guided tours.

3 North Old Stage Road
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
530-926-2215
www.dfg.ca.gov
MTSHASTA@wildlife.ca.gov

HOW TO GET THERE



Sisson Museum 2016

The Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery is the oldest operating hatchery west of the Mississippi River. It was developed from private ponds stocked by pioneer resident, Justin H. Sisson, on his land at this site. The hatchery was originally called Sisson Fish Hatchery and was opened in 1888 by the California Fish and Game Commission. The land was chosen because of its ample supply of fresh water from Big Springs Creek which originates at the springs at Mt. Shasta City Park.

Originally the hatchery propagated salmon, but later included trout and now handles only species of trout. Today, more than 50,000 visitors annually tour the hatchery grounds.

The free Kids Fishing Days with supervised fishing for kids has been postponed until further notice. Call the local office or the Redding office at 530-225-2300 for further information.

MT. SHASTA SISSON MUSEUM

is located on the Fish Hatchery Grounds, but is a separate non-profit organization. It is open from April to December and contains permanent and changing exhibits that highlight the history and culture of the Mt. Shasta area including activities for children.

1 North Old Stage Road
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
530-926-5508
www.mtshastamuseum.com
museum@mtshastamuseum.com

The 1910 building that houses the museum was originally a hatchery building. It was going to be torn down in the early 1980's but a group of Mt. Shasta residents organized and turned the building into a museum which opened on July 4, 1983. The museum has on display one of the original redwood fish hatchery troughs and an exhibition fish tank from the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

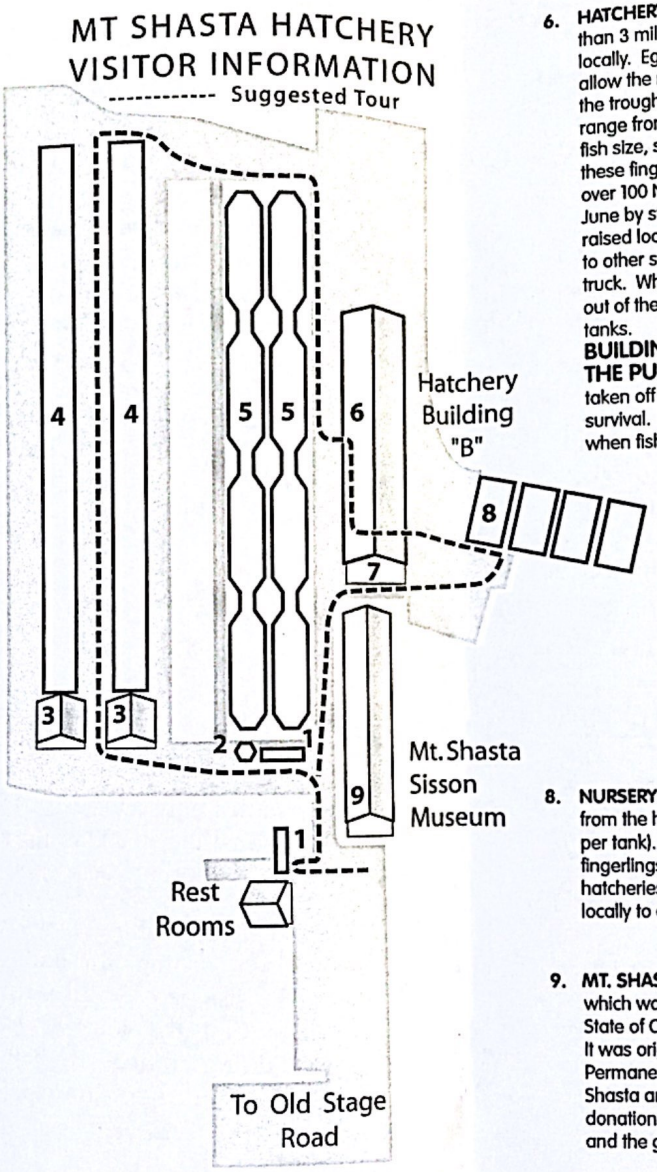
1. **INFORMATION BULLETIN BOARDS.** The latest information and press releases about the operation of the fish hatchery are posted here.

2. **FISH FOOD MACHINES.** Only feed fish in the outdoor ponds. The fish food is a pelletized high protein product consisting of fishmeal, dairy, meat, kelp and soybean products with added vitamins and minerals. It is not suitable for domestic fish or animals. Trout feed on the surface or while the food is sinking, so the fish must be fed up to 8 times daily, depending on size, to assure proper nutrition. Food left lying on the bottom will breed bacteria. **PLACE ONLY FISH FOOD FROM THE VENDING MACHINES IN THE OUTSIDE PONDS.** Anything else may harm the fish.

3. **SPAWNING HOUSES.** Adult fish are moved from the brood fish ponds into these buildings periodically from November through March. They are then artificially spawned (stripped of their eggs and sperm). The fish do not die, and visitors are welcome to view this process. Call 530-926-2215 for spawning schedules. About ¾ of the fertilized eggs are stored in cold aerated water to be shipped to other California hatcheries and other states and countries.

4. **BROOD FISH RACEWAY PONDS.** Brown, Rainbow and Eagle Lake Trout in these ponds produce 30 million eggs each year. Adult fish are spawned at 2, 3, or 4 years of age, and at 4 or 5 years are placed in nearby lakes for anglers to catch. The white patches on some fish is a fungus. It is most prevalent at spawning time. Fish with fungus usually don't survive. Removing the diseased fish will not lessen the spread of the fungus spores. There is on-going research to develop a fungicide that will dissipate without effecting downstream waters.

5. **REARING RACEWAY PONDS.** Fish are placed here to grow to planting size, 8" to 12", and are then transported by truck to roadside waters. A weekly news release lists the names of the waters that will be planted the following week. (530-225-2146) Planting begins in mid April and normally lasts into September. Catchable trout, (8 to 12 inches), are planted during the fishing season depending on fishing demand and water temperature and flow. A few lakes are planted during the winter. It costs about $4 a pound to grow a trout to catchable size. Fish can only be planted in public waters open to anyone with a valid fishing license and the hatchery cannot sell or give away fish.



6. **HATCHERY BUILDING B.** Each year more than 3 million of the eggs are hatched locally. Eggs are hatched in egg jars that allow the newly hatched fry to swim free in the trough. The number of fish per trough range from 10,000 to 25,000 depending on fish size, species and condition. Some of these fingerlings are planted from the air in over 100 Northern California alpine lakes in June by state owned aircraft. Fingerlings not raised locally to catchable size are distributed to other state hatcheries or are planted by truck. When the fish are big enough to jump out of the troughs they are moved to nursery tanks. **THE FISH IN THE HATCHERY BUILDING SHOULD NOT BE FED BY THE PUBLIC.** At times these fish are taken off feed for reasons critical to their survival. This building is closed to the public when fish are not present.

7. **HATCHERY OFFICES.** The staff consists of a manager, an assistant manager, a half-time secretary, 5 technicians and seasonal help as required. Employees are happy to answer questions. Contact the local DFW office to arrange formal hatchery tours for schools and other organized groups.

8. **NURSERY TANKS.** These tanks receive fish from the hatchery building (up to 300,000 fish per tank). Some of these fish are planted as fingerlings, some are being raised for other hatcheries and the remainder will be raised locally to catchable size in the Rearing Ponds.

9. **MT. SHASTA SISSON MUSEUM.** Building "A", which was opened in 1910, is leased from the State of California for use as a local museum. It was originally used as a hatchery building. Permanent and changing exhibits of the Mt. Shasta area are open to the public for a small donation. Hours are posted for the museum and the gift shop.