

Fish Hatchery Technician III Kevin Mahan
Bellvue-Watson Hatchery – Bellvue, Colorado

Education: Colorado State University, Bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management with a minor in Fishery Biology. Front Range Community College, Associate of Science degree.

Volunteer Work with the DOW or Field Related to Wildlife: Outdoor Education leader in high school.

Temporary Work with the DOW or Field Related to Wildlife: Seasonal worker at Bellvue-Watson Fish Hatchery May 2007-October 2007 and May 2008.



Advice for Students: Study hard in school. Take advantage of any opportunities to learn more about the natural resources field, even if it requires you to give your own time. Remember, education continues long after school is out. Become a volunteer or temporary worker with the Division of Wildlife to gain experience. Expect high competition but don't get discouraged, keep at it until you achieve your goal.

How I Got My "Foot in the Door": After graduating from Colorado State University, I was hired on as a six-month seasonal worker at the Bellvue-Watson Fish Hatchery. That fall, I took the exam to become a Tech III at a fish hatchery. I returned to Bellvue-Watson the following summer and began another seasonal position. A month later I was hired on full time.

Why I Enjoy My Job: I am outside doing what I love. I don't have the stress of a 9am-5pm office job. I am helping to maintain healthy fish populations across the state for people to enjoy. I get to work with great people who all have the same passion and ambition as I do.

Best Day on the Job: Seeing the looks on people's faces when I stock a body of water with fish and any time I get to interact with and educate the public.

Worst Day on the Job: Any day we lose fish due to equipment failure or loss of water flow.

Assistant Hatchery Manager Seth Firestone

Roaring Judy Hatchery - Almont, CO

Education: Western State College
Bachelor of Arts Degree, Major in
Environmental Biology with an
emphasis in Ecology

Temporary Work with the DOW or Field Related to Wildlife:

Seasonal Aquatic Technician I
assisting an aquatic biologist at the
Colorado Division of Wildlife –
Worked for two 6 month field
seasons in Gunnison.



Past Job Titles:

Fish Hatchery Technician III – Chalk Cliffs Rearing Unit, Nathrop, CO
Worldwide Flight Services, Ramp Service Clerk – Gunnison
FCI Construction, General Laborer – Gunnison

Advice for Students: Take opportunities to volunteer, work temporary jobs, or tour a hatchery and introduce yourself to the personnel. Getting your name out there and getting hands on experience is the best way to get your foot in the door. Get a four year degree in biology/wildlife so you can qualify for lots of jobs and have the freedom to take on any position you want.

How I Got My Foot in the Door: My two seasons working in Gunnison for Dan Brauch (Aquatic Biologist) as a temporary allowed me to see how the hatchery system worked, gave me some hands on experience, and allowed me to make some networking connections with hatchery employees.

Why I Enjoy My Job: I love fish, I work outside 95% of the time, and there is a certain sense of satisfaction when you finally stock the fish and see the smiling faces of fishermen.

Best Day on the Job: They get better and better all the time. The more experience I get the more rewarding the job is.

Worst Day on the Job: No one day really sticks out, but days when we have fish kills are certainly the worst. It's hard to see all your hard work go to waste.

Hatchery Manager David Davis

Glenwood Springs Hatchery - Glenwood, Colorado

Education: High School Diploma

Awards Received: A customer service award and devotion award to the Glenwood Hatchery during and after the Coal Seam Fire in 2002 that burned more than 12,000 acres and forced resident evacuations.

Professional Associations:
Colorado Fish Culture Association (CFCA)



Volunteer Work with the DOW or Field Related to Wildlife: Volunteered at both the Crystal River and Glenwood Springs Fish Hatcheries.

Temporary Work with the DOW or Field Related to Wildlife: Worked as a temporary for 4 six month terms at the Crystal River Hatchery.

Past Job Titles: Assistant Hatchery Manager - Glenwood Springs and the Roaring Judy Hatcheries, Hatchery Technician - Glenwood Springs, Crystal River and Finger Rock Hatcheries. Before CDOW; I did carpentry, operated heavy equipment, was a floor hand on oil drilling rigs, and worked for the city recreation department washing dishes.

Advice for Students: Stay in school, volunteer or work as a temporary in the field of interest or closely related field. A college degree is much more important now than it was when I got on, so I would recommend it. Being a hard worker, showing interest in what is going on in the work place, and being observant and on time for work will put you ahead of others.

How I Got My Foot in the Door: I was lucky; I grew up in the area of the Crystal River Hatchery. I continuously let the supervisor know that I was very interested in working for him at the hatchery.

Why I Enjoy My Job: I love the outdoors and wildlife.

Best Day on the Job: My first day, I couldn't believe that dreams do come true.

Worst Day on the Job: The day after I forgot to check waters flows in one of the hatchery raceways and came in to see a couple thousand dead brood fish.

Hatchery Manager Chris Hertrich

Chalk Cliffs Hatchery - Nathrop, Colorado

Education: Adams State College,
Bachelor of Arts in Biology

Professional Associations:
Colorado Fish Culturists Association
(CFCA)

Past Job Titles: Marine Corps
Infantry, various construction jobs,
Technician III, Mt. Shavano
Hatchery; Technician IV (Assistant
Hatchery Manager), Mt. Shavano Hatchery



Advice for Students: Work hard at every job you have. Learn as many different skills as you can. Try to work at a hatchery, but if it doesn't work out, get various construction experience on the way.

How I Got My Foot in the Door: I planned on going to physical therapy school so I didn't do any seasonal work. Once I applied for the Fish Hatchery Technician position I read the whole "Fish Hatchery Management" book by Piper in five days and learned all I could for the test. I was open to any position available, full or part time, at any location. I did have varied skills from past work experience and good references so that probably helped.

Why I Enjoy My Job: I like fish. We produce a tangible product which is nice. While we do have to do certain tasks every day, there is much variety and many days bring new challenges.

Best Day on the Job: There are many. I still enjoy feeding fish, and stocking fish is always a highlight. Riding along for airplane stocking of high lakes was a hoot, but I thought I was going to throw up for the next three days. I still have many days when I pause, look around where I get to work, and feel very fortunate.

Worst Day on the Job: Hearing of the crash of an airplane that was stocking high mountain lakes.