

UPDATE
September 1994

A. Population Status:

<u>Species</u>	<u>River</u>		
	<u>Green</u>	<u>Yampa</u>	<u>Colorado</u>
Colorado squawfish	Stable/Increasing?	Stable	Decreasing?/Small
Humpback chub	Stable?/ Small	Stable?/ Small	Healthy
Razorback sucker	Critical--Few adults--Little/No Recruitment--All Rivers		
Bonytail chub	Critical--Very rare -- No Recruitment -- All Rivers		

B. Program Management

Goal: Ensure effective implementation and coordination of the Recovery Program

Status: *FY 95 work plan has been developed; funding appears secure.
*The Organization, Mission and Staffing Plan has been revised to improve Program effectiveness.
*Congressman George Miller has drafted legislation to provide long term funding for the Program.
*Reclamation is developing a cost sharing proposal for FY 96.
*The Recovery Action Plan (RIPRAP) was revised to address the listing of critical habitat.

C. Habitat Management (Instream Flows)

Goal: To protect sufficient instream flows to support self-sustaining populations of the fishes

Status: oThe change in the Steamboat Lake (Yampa River) decree to allow for reservoir releases for instream flows is being challenged in water court.

- o The Colorado Water Conservation Board application in water court for a 581 cfs instream flow right in the 15-Mile Reach (July-September) is still being challenged.
- o An independent review of instream flow studies in the Recovery Program will be conducted this fall.
- o The CWCB has finalized a policy regarding the appropriation of instream flows for the endangered fish
- o The FWS, BR and CWCB are negotiating a contract to legally protect research flows from the Aspinall Unit.
- o The CWCB and the Colorado River Water Conservation District signed a MOU re: water development and flow protection plan for the Yampa River basin. They will seek Program acceptance of the plan in FY 95.

D. Habitat Development and Maintenance

Goal: To provide or enhance habitat for the rare fishes through habitat development or management measures such as:

- o fish passageways
- o restoration of flooded bottomland habitats.

Status: o NEPA and final design of the fish passageway at Redlands Dam (Gunnison River) has been initiated. There is some vocal public opposition to the fish ladder in the Grand Junction area.

o A water and predatory fish control structure was installed at the Old Charlie Wash wetland, near Ouray Utah. The wetland was stocked with young razorback suckers this spring and is now being evaluated.

o Management Plans were developed for 5 flooded bottomlands sites. Three of these sites have been put on temporary hold due to contaminant and other problems. A total of 20 sites are now being screened. Construction and/or acquisition of several new sites is anticipated in FY 95.

E. Stocking Native Fishes

Goal: A. Produce a sufficient supply of hatchery reared fish to support research and recovery activities.

B. Conserve the genetic diversity present in the wild.

Status: o 40 adult razorbacks were implanted with radio tags and stocked in the Upper Colorado River and the Gunnison River and are now being monitored.

o The Service's hatchery/research facility at Ouray, Utah, is being expanded.

o Design of additional refuge ponds is being initiated in Craig, Colorado. Expansion of the Waway State fish hatchery is being evaluated.

oGenetics Management Guidelines were finalized and the Genetics Management Plan is in the final review stages.

F. Nonnative Fishes and Sportfishing

Goal: Minimize the impacts of nonnative fishes and incidental take associated with sport fishing on the endangered fishes.

Status: * Interim Procedures for Stocking of Non Native Fishes were finalized by the States and Service and are now being evaluated.

G. Information and Education

Goal: To promote public understanding, appreciation, and support for efforts to recover the endangered fish.

Status: opublic interest in the Recovery Program has increased as a result of implementation of the several capital projects.
* a review and evaluation of the I&E program has been completed.
*survey of public attitudes about the endangered fish has been completed.
*plan for involving outside interest groups in the Program has been developed.
o public meetings were held in the Gunnison River Basin to identify public concerns related to Aspinall releases, the Redlands fish ladder and flow protection in the Gunnison River.
o work group established to address issues related to Flaming Gorge dam operations.

H. Section 7 Consultation

Goal: To allow water development to proceed in the Upper Colorado River Basin in compliance with the ESA.

Status: * FWS is discussing with Federal agencies the need for reinitiation of Section 7 consultation on existing projects as a result of critical habitat listing.
*FWS has completed an intra-Service Section 7 consultation which waives payment of the depletion charge for projects less than 100 acre feet.
*156 projects with a potential to deplete about 185,000 acre feet have received favorable biological opinions since the inception of the Recovery Program in 1988.

I. Other Items

*The Service has finalized the designation of critical habitat for the endangered fishes on March 20, 1994.