

**COLORADO RIVER RECOVERY PROGRAM
FY 2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

PROJECT NUMBER: PIP 12H

I. Project Title: Interpretive Signs and Exhibits about the Endangered Fishes of the Upper Colorado River Basin

II. Principal Investigator:

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III. Project Summary: Interpretive signs and exhibits at museums and visitor centers are key tools used to educate the general public. Numerous opportunities exist for the Recovery Program to partner with public and private organizations to develop signs and exhibits that will explain the importance of recovering the endangered fishes of the Upper Colorado River Basin and some of the actions taking place to accomplish this. Priority for placement of interpretive signs and exhibits is given to geographic locations where the majority of Recovery Program efforts are taking place, including Vernal, Utah; Grand Junction, Colorado; and Page, Arizona.

IV. Study Schedule:

Initial year: FY 2001
Final year: Ongoing

V. Relationship to RIPRAP:

VI. INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND SUPPORT FOR THE ENDANGERED FISHES AND THE RECOVERY PROGRAM.

VI. Accomplishment of FY 2009 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

Tasks: The following new projects were approved in FY 08 and carried forward to FY 09. Due to other priorities, they were not pursued in FY 09. Funds to accomplish these tasks were carried forward to FY 2010.

- a. Price-Stubbs Fish Passage, Grand Junction, Colorado. A fish passage at the Price-Stubbs Diversion Dam on the Colorado River was completed and became operational in spring 2008. The location of Island Acres State Park, a few miles above the dam, presents an opportunity to develop interpretive signs that will provide visitors with

information about endangered fish and efforts to recover them.

- b. Interpretive Signs at Visitor Center, Jensen, Utah. The Jensen Visitor Center has high visitation and is the eastern gateway to Dinosaur National Monument and Vernal, Utah. An interpretive message at this location could promote the local Stewart Brothers' human interest story as well as encourage visitation to both Dinosaur National Monument and the Ouray National Fish Hatchery.
- c. Unawep Charolais Ranch (Butch Craig property), Whitewater, Colorado. The Bureau of Reclamation acquired this property along the Gunnison River in fee on behalf of the Recovery Program and transferred the property to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Recovery Program retains a perpetual easement for the endangered fishes. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages the site. Hikers and other recreationalists use a trail along the river. An interpretive sign placed near the razorback sucker nursery habitat would help raise awareness of recovery efforts.

Status of projects pursued under this scope of work in FY 09:

- d. Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, Utah. The Recovery Program worked with visitor services of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to approve interpretive signs about endangered fish to place at a fishing pier overlooking the Green River. The signs were installed in the spring of 2009. The Recovery Program did not contribute funds toward this project.
- e. Interpretive Signs at Elkhead Reservoir, Craig, Colorado. In FY 08, this project was moved from PIP 12H to a new scope of work, Project 152 – Elkhead Dam and Reservoir Operation and Maintenance and Interpretive Signs. The Recovery Program allocated funds to help pay for the signs to the Colorado River District in FY 2008. The project stalled in late FY 08 and early FY 09 due to consideration for expanding the project to include a large, covered kiosk. In mid-FY 09, tighter budgetary implications prohibited Colorado State Parks State from contributing to the expansion idea. At that time, the Colorado River District moved forward on the original, more simplistic structure. In late October 2009, the Colorado River District received 2 of the 4 mock-ups and was reviewing text for accuracy. The next round of reviews will be shared with the Information and Education Committee. Signs are targeted for installation in May 2010.
- f. Hatchery signs. Sixteen sets of interpretive signs were produced and distributed to hatchery facilities that raise fish for both the San Juan River and Upper Colorado recovery programs. These signs provide details about each fish species and include logos for both programs. Signs were provided to the following facilities: Dexter, Ouray, Wahweap, Grand Valley, Mumma, Uvalde, Willow Beach, and Jones Hole. Other outreach materials were also provided including the newsletter, ruler, historic accounts publication, stickers, trading cards, and bookmarks.

- g. Clifton Sanitation Aquarium Exhibit: Toward the end of the fiscal year, the Recovery Program received a request from Clifton Sanitation near Grand Junction, Colorado, to establish an aquarium featuring endangered Colorado River fishes. The Recovery Program helped Clifton apply for a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. With the help of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, an aquarium and stand (previously used at Colorado River State Park in Fruita) were provided to Clifton. Clifton had a custom cabinet built around the aquarium. The Recovery Program provided interpretive signs (described in “f” above) and is working with CDOW to provide an additional sign that will include more interpretive information. The program also purchased new filters and other needed equipment. The Grand Valley Endangered Fish Facility provided razorback sucker and food. The exhibit was up and running in time for the company’s open house, held October 6, 2009.
- h. Interpretive exhibit maintenance: Funds are budgeted each year to help maintain exhibits that the Recovery Program helped establish. No funds were needed in FY 09.

VII. Recommendations: Continue to support the organizations that have established interpretive exhibits to ensure the exhibits are well maintained. In FY 2010 and beyond, continue to seek opportunities to partner with other organizations to establish interpretive exhibits.

VIII. Project Status: On-Track and Ongoing.

IX. FY 2009 Budget Status

- A. Funds Provided: \$19,000 (\$14,000 FY 08 carryover; \$5,000 new funds)
- B. Funds Expended: \$ 3,000
- C. Difference: \$16,000 (carried over to FY 10)
- D. Percent of the FY 2009 work completed, and projected costs to complete: 10%, \$16,000
- E. Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: Not applicable.

X. Status of Data Submission (Where applicable): n/a

XI. Signed:

Debbie Felker
Information & Education Coordinator

November 23, 2009
Date