



A PFW funded project that will provide habitat for roundtail chub and other native fishes.

AZFWCO Staff

Flagstaff

- Jess Newton, Project Leader
- Kirk Young, Project Coordinator
- Randy Van Haverbeke, Senior Fish Biologist
- Dennis Stone, Fish Biologist
- Mike Pillow, Fish Biologist
- Jim Walters, Biological Technician
- Rick Deshler, Biological Technician

Pinetop

- Vacant, Assistant Project Leader
- Jeremy Voeltz, Project Coordinator
- Dominic Barrett, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologist
- Jennifer Johnson, Fish Biologist
- Kayla Barrett, Fish and Wildlife Biologist
- Karla McGhan, Administrative Officer
- Vacant, Office Assistant

Parker

- Mitch Thorson, Fish Biologist
- Tammy Knecht, Fish Biologist
- John Naugle, Biological Technician



Apache Trout Crew

- Dan Aguilera, 1040 Seasonal
- Zebediah Buck, 1040 Seasonal
- John Orona, Pathways
- Briana Thorson, Pathways
- Hunter Falco, Pathways
- Will Lubenau, Pathways

Partnerships and Accountability

Dominic Barrett met with Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) Native Fish and Invertebrates Program, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, and a private landowner to discuss a potential pond project (Marijilda Wash Native Fish Project) near Safford. The proposed pond project will provide approximately 7 acres of aquatic habitat for Gila topminnow (*Poeciliopsis occidentalis*), desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius*), native reptiles and amphibians, wading birds, and waterfowl. Water level of the proposed pond will be maintained by an artesian well.

Mitch Thorson attended the Lake Havasu Fisheries Improvement Partnership meeting. Action items included reviewing the draft Memorandum of Understanding between multiple groups: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Arizona and California State Agencies, and Anglers United.

The group discussed creel surveys and lake management plans.

Dennis Stone and Mike Pillow collated and transferred electronic and hard-copy data files to our USGS partners at the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (GCMRC). This data was collected in spring 2010 during a humpback chub monitoring trip to the Little Colorado River (LCR).

Mitch Thorson met with Linda Miller, acting manager for both Havasu and Bill Williams National Wildlife Refuges. They discussed issues and concerns regarding the Anglers United creel survey that will take place on both of these refuges.

Jeremy Voeltz met with staff from the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office (AESO), Arizona Game and Fish Department, University of Arizona and Trout Unlimited (national and local chapters) to discuss short and long term research needs for Apache and Gila trout

recovery in Arizona.

Dominic Barrett applied for financial assistance from the AGFD Landowner Relations Program for a proposed grassland restoration project south of Winslow. Dominic also reviewed the Southern Navajo County Grassland Restoration Initiative conservation implementation strategy (plan).

Kayla Barrett facilitated and coordinated the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership (DFHP) bimonthly teleconference. Topics discussed were: coordination w/ potential farm bill project in Upper Gila (a possible endorsement project for DFHP), DFHP's strategic plan/framework update, DFHP's upcoming annual meeting, and a summary of the Virgin River Gorge rotenone treatment. Kayla provided notes to DFHP members and partners.

Kayla Barrett participated in the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP) teleconference.

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Kirk Young and Randy VanHaverbeke participated on an 18-day humpback chub monitoring survey in the Colorado River, Grand Canyon. Randy served as the co-principle investigator. The effort focused on areas of the Grand Canyon that had not been surveyed for humpback chub for many years (decades in some cases). The trip was successful in that humpback chub were captured at nearly all locations sampled. Highlights included the capture of about 35 adult humpback chub near some springs in Marble Canyon (~RM34)

and young chub in the 40mm range in lower Grand Canyon (~RM240).

Jennifer Johnson and the Apache trout crew completed one barrier evaluation and four nonnative trout removals on Apache trout recovery streams. The crew covered 13.0 miles of stream and removed 2,032 nonnative trout while collecting 1,389 Apache trout.

Mitch Thorson, Tammy Knecht, and John Naugle completed this year's 4-month field season tracking the survival and movement of

razorback sucker in portions of the lower Colorado River. The study is part of a multi-year grant agreement with BOR under the Multi Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The study began in April with the tagging of 60 razorback sucker surgically implanted with sonic tags and released into the Colorado River at two locations between Parker Dam and Palo Verde Dam. Mobile tracking was conducted regularly over the four-month period. In addition, data was collected by fixed-location PIT tag scanners deployed in off-channel habitats that are

Aquatic Species Conservation and Management (*continued*)

connected to the river by a small channel or culvert.



Kirk Young met with DFP (Directors Fellows Program) recipient Amy Chandos and cooperators David Ward (USGS) and Matt O’Niell (AZGFD) to support/facilitate the DFP project. Amy’s study focuses on metabolic demand and swimming ability of native fish, as affected by water temperature. Amy has completed her study design, modified and tested the swim chamber, conducted test runs, acclimated study fish, and started her experimental

treatments. Due to the new strict 11-week time limit for the program (originally a longer time frame was acceptable) and fish availability, we have economized the study from two experiments involving up to four species to one experiment involving a single species.

Randy VanHaverbeke analyzed data from the spring Little Colorado River humpback chub monitoring trips and incorporated into an upcoming annual report. Dennis Stone wrote the 2014 trip report for monitoring efforts of humpback chub in our translocation reaches of the LCR. Mike Pillow wrote the spring 2014 LCR trip report. The document describes the methods and findings of our two (April and May) spring humpback chub monitoring trips. The report is titled: “Spring 2014 Monitoring of Humpback Chub (*Gila cypha*) and

Other Fishes in the Lower 13.57 km of the Little Colorado River, Arizona.” Of the 8,857 fish captured over two trips, most (98.7%) were native to the LCR. Humpback chub made up most of the captures (n=4,340), followed by bluehead sucker (*Catostomus discobolus*, n=2,936). Following the finalization of the report, Mike submitted all trip reports, data sheets, and data files to our USGS partners for filing.

Jeremy Voeltz provided comments to the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office for the draft Gila chub recovery plan.

Jeremy Voeltz is working with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to apply for funding for 2015 activities related to the Apache Trout Keystone Initiative.

Public Use

Jeremy Voeltz and Kayla Barrett gave presentations about career opportunities in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ~15 youth working this summer for the White Mountain Youth Corps.

Mike Pillow continued working with a team from the Regional Office, led by Stewart Jacks, to produce a video that highlights the Southwest

Region’s Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation program.

Did you know AZFWCO had a Facebook page? We post information on our staff, upcoming projects, educational events, and volunteer opportunities across the state. We currently have 480 “likes” from 20 countries. Check us out at www.facebook.com/AZFWCO.

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Check out DFHP’s Facebook page. We post information on projects, request for proposals, pictures, steering committee news, and much more. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Desert-Fish-Habitat-Partnership/193053497376208>

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Cooperation with Native Americans

Jeremy Voeltz and staff from White Mountain Apache Tribe—Wildlife & Outdoor Recreation Division (WMAT-WORD) visited a recent burn area near Carrizo Creek on the Fort Apache Indian

Reservation. Some ash and sediment has flushed into a small section of the stream, but fish were observed in areas upstream and downstream of this area.

Mitch Thorson consulted with the Chemehuevi Tribal EPA director, Steven Escobar, on a biological survey within areas of concern for future tribal projects.

Cooperation with Native Americans (*continued*)

Conservation Office collaborated with Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife staff to salvage as many fish as possible from Asaayi Lake before post-fire flooding occurs and ash and debris eradicate aquatic species. Salvage efforts took place during the week of July 7, 2014, removing approximately 700 fish from the lake. Rainbow trout was transported



to Wheatfields Lake, AZ via Navajo Nation distribution trucks.

Jeremy Voeltz participated in a conference call with Regional Office permitting staff and the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office to discuss a proposed project with WMAT-WORD. The group discussed what Endangered Species Act permitting would be required to move threatened or endangered fish off the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Law Enforcement and Solicitor's Office will continue to provide opinion/guidance on the matter.

Jennifer Johnson taught an American Heart Association First Aid / CPR course for the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Game and Fish Department.

AZFWCO staff participated in the monthly Fishery Coordination meeting among AZFWCO, A-WC NFH (Alchey-Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery), & WMAT-WORD.

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Dominic Barrett met with a private landowner along the Blue River to discuss livestock management and a possible offsite drinker project.

Dominic Barrett met with a private landowner to discuss the Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW)-funded Smooth Knoll Livestock Management Project. The project will increase livestock management and reduce impacts resulting from limited livestock distribution.

Dominic Barrett completed a project notification letter for the Arizona State Historical Preservation Office. The letter described a potential PFW-project, Marijilda Wash Native Fish Project, near Safford.

Dominic Barrett met with a private landowner to mark property boundaries for the PFW-funded Pierce Wash Livestock Management Project.

Dominic Barrett organized cultural resource surveys in support of PFW-funded Pierce Wash Livestock Management Project, Smooth Knoll Livestock Management Project, and the West Pigeon Creek Riparian Enhancement and Upland Restoration Project. All three



cultural resource surveys were completed by a contractor in July.

Kayla Barrett participated in DFHP's strategic plan update teleconference.

Dominic Barrett met with a private landowner and a contractor to verify completion of the PFW-funded Blue River Native Fish Project. The

contractor removed approximately 4,734 yds³ of alluvial material from a livestock tank and increased water depth by approximately 6.5 ft. The landowner and contractor also installed habitat features (spawning shelf, boulder clusters) in the livestock tank. Dominic Barrett seeded disturbed areas with native grasses. The livestock tank will



provide habitat for roundtail chub (*Gila robusta*) and other native fishes.

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management (*continued*)

Kayla Barrett submitted DFHP accomplishment reports for the Fisheries Information System (FIS). She also updated the DFHP plans in FIS.

Kayla Barrett coordinated with state leads on the DFHP steering committee

regarding their respective state's State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) and native fish.

Tammy Knecht completed Alamo Lake water quality sampling and data entry for the month of July.

John Naugle conducted water quality sampling at Three Fingers Lake, High Levee Pond, Needles Golf Course, Emerald Canyon Golf Course, Office Cove Pond, Parker Dam Pond and Topock Marsh.

Leadership in Science and Technology

Kirk Young and Bill Persons of USGS deployed portable PIT tag antennas during surveys of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon to assess the technology. The remote PIT tag antennas worked well and we are evaluating the scientific

value of their use by assessing detections in relationship to fish captured by traditional methods.

Dennis Stone continued work on his draft manuscript concerning the translocation of humpback chub

above Chute Falls in the LCR, including conducting new analyses and updating figures.

Workforce Management

AZFWCO-Pinetop hosted an end-of-summer BBQ for the Apache Trout Crew. The four college students (John Orona, Brianna Thorson, Will Lubenau, and Hunter Falco) will be heading back to school in the next several weeks. The two seasonals (Zeb Buck and Dan Aguilera) will

continue working until mid-October.

Jess Newton completed the Service's 11-month Advanced Leadership Development Program.

Staff completed various trainings, including supervisory courses (EEO

& Diversity), driver safety, and Information Technology certifications.

