

# Inks Dam NFH

Paul Dorman, Project Leader

December

December 2012

## Monthly Accomplishments

### Fisheries Activities

All FY 2012 channel catfish are currently being cultured in eleven over-wintering production ponds at Inks Dam NFH for the FY 2013 tribal stocking requests. Density levels for all the over-wintering ponds are approximately 7,000 fish per acre. Currently there are 55,424 FY 2012 channel catfish averaging 6.40 fpp and 8.03 inches in total length. Staff recorded one mortality for the month.

With several cold fronts moving through in December, Inks Lake now has a large concentration of migrating Double Crested cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) and American White pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) in the local area. Fortunately, landing on the ponds or predation is very limited. This has been accomplished due to staff diligence, ongoing construction, and perhaps the blue dye but most likely, a combination of all these

activities. As usual, the hatchery activities have had little to no effect on the migrating waterfowl and shorebirds that have taken up residence at the facility.

The original (FY2010) gambusia refugium population moved over to the recirculation tanks in March of 2012 is still doing very well. The 134 fish have now been on station for more than two years. Four male mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. No disease or parasites were found during examination of the mortalities.

The new FY2012 population collected in partnership with TPWD and the Texas FWCO are doing well. The new fish have been separated by sex, quarantined, and will remain that way for the



Last month, Inks Dam NFH ran this photograph asking if anyone could identify this pair of migrating waterfowl so we could more accurately name these visitors. It just so happens that a reader has identified this pair as (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*) or Egyptian Geese. These geese are native to Africa, south of the Sahara and the Nile Valley, and have been introduced to parts of Western Europe. It is thought that they have escaped from a zoo or game farm and now use Inks Dam NFH as part of their migration route to warmer temperatures.

180-day quarantine requirement. Inks Dam NFH has a total of 50 females and 18 males in refuge from the

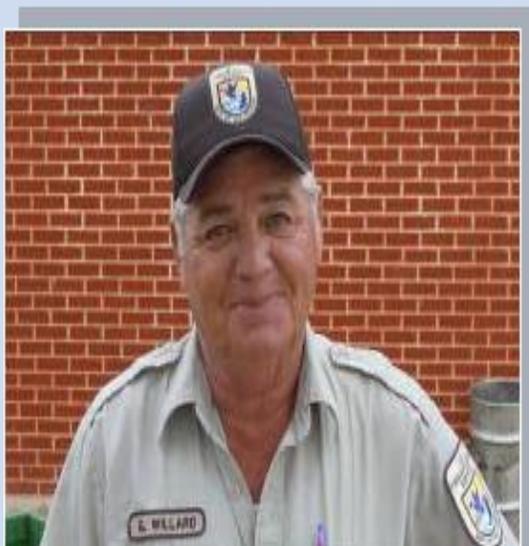
2012 population. No mortalities were recorded in the FY2012 population during the month.

## Personnel

December events for staff were both joyful and sad. The month started out with Mark Yost II, Assistant Project Leader, and his wife having their first baby boy to complement their daughter of several years. Both parents have not confirmed that Mark Yost III will be joining the USFWS in the near future but mother and baby were doing well by the Holidays.

On a sad note, Gary Willard, recently retired Wage Grade maintenance worker of twenty years at the Inks Dam NFH, passed away after a brief hospital stay earlier in the month. Gary was a decorated Vietnam War veteran, father of five children, a great friend and an extremely dedicated

USFWS employee. Still today,



Buildings like the Regional Distribution Unit (RDU) shop is a reminder of Gary's dedication to the USFWS and Inks Dam NFH.

many of Gary's early construction accomplishments are utilized at Inks Dam NFH

and a great reminder of his commitment to the USFWS.

Staff continued with their required or voluntary training. No monthly safety meeting was conducted due to the holidays but all staff completed their Google Email and Shared or Essential Calendar email training for the new Bison Connect. Supervisory staff and several other staff completed the Annual Ethics Training for DOI. Julie Burks completed her FBMS General Ledger Field Budget Accountant Course and later in the month headed up the monthly Administrative Conference call.

## Maintenance

Staff performed facility maintenance by expanding the levee between Ponds 13A and 18 to increase pond free board and provide a wider road base for safety. Residence #1 had a new hot water heater installed. The facility had the remaining LP/Propane water heaters checked for safety issues and several improvements need to

be implemented for each of the two remaining residences.

The 2012 Deferred Maintenance (DM) kettle work on Ponds 10 and 7C continues. Concrete was poured to complete the kettles, steps, and skirting around the kettles. The kettles and retaining walls have also been backfilled most of the way but

a large amount of finish work still needs to be done before signing off on the project. The 2012 Deferred Maintenance (DM) for the new phone system should be finalized the first week in January. Routine equipment maintenance was performed during the month. Volunteers from the Friends of Inks Dam NFH have finished the

restoration of wood signs around the facility. The volunteers have completely restored thirty, wooden signs by scraping off old paint, repainting the signs and letters and then repainting or replacing the wooden posts as well.

### *Visitors, Education and Outreach*

Although there were no special activities planned for the month, a total of 128 visitors passed through the hatchery during December. Many of these visitors were camping at the Inks Lake State Park or visiting the area for the holidays. Friends of Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery spent most of December planning and sponsoring a raptor show by Doris Mager, the “Eagle Lady”. The event will be at the hatchery on January 5, 2013 and hopefully we can expect a larger crowd than last year when over 70 people attended.

For December, the Friends Group and volunteers spent a total of 41.5 hours helping around the hatchery.



Kettle work for ponds 7C (shown above) and Pond 10 are coming closer to finishing with only concrete repairs, backfilling and grating tasks remain.