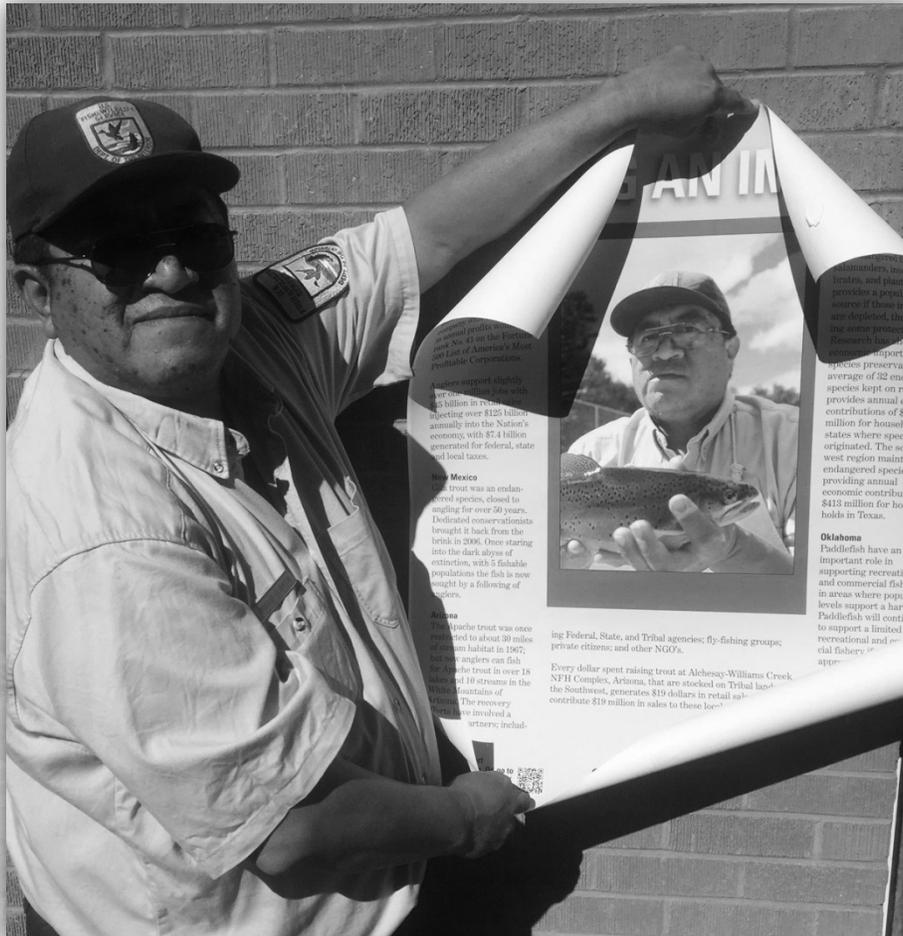




Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH Complex

Southwest Region



Conserving Aquatic Species

Apache Trout fry were put on a special, protein rich diet. Their new starter food consists of fish pellets supplemented with important vitamins, beta glucans and nucleotides. This unique formula will boost the immune system of young fish and ensure a healthy start.

Bruce Thompson is working on the 2016 Alchেসay Williams Creek Draft Annual Report. The first draft is due March 31st.

A Jensorter egg counting machine was purchased just in time for the 2016 Apache Trout spawn season. Approximately one million eggs were counted in half the time compared to the previous displacement method. Not only does the machine cut back on personnel hours it quickly and more accurately enumerates egg loading volumes.



Conserving, Restoring and Enhancing Habitats

Compulsory EPA water sampling was performed twice at both hatcheries this month for Nitrates, Ammonia and Total Phosphorus. In addition, drinking water was tested for Coliform Bacteria. All test results were within permit parameters.



Winter flows January 2016



Winter snow runoff February 2016

Quick upper elevation snow melt left Alchesay with unfavorable water conditions for rearing trout. Heavy sediment loads at both facilities resulted in stressful environments and made captive fish rearing even more difficult.

Managing Aquatic Invasive Species

The state of the art Deferred Maintenance (DM) Disinfection Station is moving along once again. Warmer temperatures enabled the crew to construct concrete forms. Concrete was also poured for the floor and walls of the station. Construction from last October was temporarily halted due to cold winter weather.



Entrance of the station



Aerial view of the station

Quality fish in Quantity numbers

Fulfilling Tribal Trust Responsibilities

Gene Okamoto and Bruce Thompson participated in a conference call with Chris Kitcheyan from New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. (NMFWCO) The main focus of this call was the BKD situation involving NM tribal waters and water conditions of available stocking sites.

The monthly Fisheries Coordination meeting among Arizona Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (AZFWCO), White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT), and Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH Complex was hosted at Alchesay hatchery.

Enhancing Recreational Fishing and Public Use of Aquatic Resources

Paul Dorman (Inks Dam NFH Project Leader) discussed summer catfish stocking with Gene Okamoto and Bruce Thompson. Inks Dam NFH, will provide fish to be stocked out on the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache lakes in August. Distribution trucks (FDUs) will meet at the San Carlos Game and Fish office. Fish will be off- loaded from the RDU (Regional Distribution Unit) into service vehicles and distributed to the lakes. A-WC and AZFWCO (Pinetop) personnel will be assisting in the off-loading and stocking.

At this point in time, A-WC's stocking schedule for spring/summer 2016 is on hold due to further BKD testing. Transfers between Alchesay and Williams Creek are also on hold until testing results are received. Feed rations have been adjusted in an effort to hold fish on site longer than expected.

Preliminary plans for the 2016 Broodstock Coordination meeting have been organized. This year's meeting will take place at the Bears Bluff NFH in Charleston, South Carolina. The event will take place the week of April 18th 2016. Russ Wood, Fish Biologist at WC will represent AWCNFH Complex and Region 2 interest. The Regional Broodstock Coordinator, Karen Eldridge is unable to attend.

Workforce Management, Training, and Scientific Capacity

The Southwestern Fish Health (SNAARC) diagnosed both Alchesay and Williams Creek Hatcheries as positive for Bacterial Kidney Disease as a causative agent of *Renibacterium salmoniarum*, more commonly known as BKD.

Complex Unit Leader Bruce Thompson participated in a coordination meeting with AZGD in Flagstaff at the AZ-NM AFS meeting.

Complex Leader, Bruce Thompson was selected to be part of a BKD committee. Team Lead of the committee is Jeremy Voeltz. (AZFWCO) Other participants of the committee are Martha Keller, (USFWS) Joe Marcino, (AZGFD) and Kirk Young also from (AZFWCO). This committee will work closely with one another and figure out the best way to proceed with positive BKD findings.

Quality fish in Quantity numbers

Workforce Management, Training, and Scientific Capacity (continued)

Isaiah Paxson attended training titled “Introduction to Fish Health.” This course was held at NCTC. Isaiah brought back new skills that will benefit both the hatchery and himself in furthering his fish culture knowledge.

Administrative Technician, Travis Taylor visited the Regional Office and attended an Administrative Workshop. Topics of the workshop were FBMS, SOPs, Excel tips and Budgets.

Several employees completed their required FISSA training for 2016.

An “All Employee Meeting” was held at the AZGD office in Phoenix on the 17th. The main focus of the meeting was new security measures that emanated from the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge incident outcome.

Carol Walker provided valuable assistance at the Williams Creek Unit. She volunteered 163.5 hours this month helping out with fish culture duties and building maintenance. Jonathon Walker provided 87.5 hours at Williams Creek toward fish culture and construction.

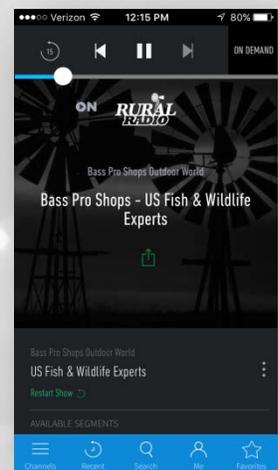
The first BKD positive test result of ovarian fluid was isolated to spawn #4. This APT lot was euthanized and removed from the Production Tank House when losses remained excessive two weeks after the first feeding.



Public Education and Engagement

Williams Creek received 15 visitors this month and Alchেসay received a total of 55 visitors. February’s warm temperatures brought out hikers and families enjoying the hatcheries parks and trails. Public visitation is expected to increase.

Apache Trout recovery work was featured on Siriusxm. Jeremy Voeltz and Nate Wiese did a great job explaining the Services conservation message and informing listeners of the important Apache and Gila trout conservation work that is ongoing in the Southwest.



Quality fish in Quantity numbers

Upcoming Events

Fish transfers and stocking

DM project construction

Completion of the First Draft of FY15 Annual Report



Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH Complex Staff



Bruce Thompson – Complex Manager

Travis Taylor- Administrative Technician

ALCHESAY UNIT

Gene Okamoto – Unit Leader

Pete Drevnick – Maintenance Worker/Motor Vehicle Operator

Jeff Cody – Motor Vehicle Operator

Joyner George – WMAT Fisheries

Chadwick “Sharkey” Amos – Volunteer

Williams Creek Unit

Bradley Clarkson-Unit Leader

Russ Wood-Fish Biologist

John Fenslage -Maintenance Worker

Mike Figueroa- Motor Vehicle Operator

Jimmy Smith- Motor Vehicle Operator

Isaiah Paxson-Animal Caretaker

Carol Walker - Volunteer

Jonathon Walker- Volunteer

