



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

May 2014

Fisheries Activities

Currently there are 34,264 FY13 channel catfish averaging 4.57 fpp and 8.54 inches in total length. Staff has increased feeding to everyday with the increasing pond temperatures and good growth has occurred during the month. A minor health issue was noted by staff, and twenty five mortalities were recorded for the month, from one pond. After treatment no mortalities were recorded through the end of the month.

Staff has noticed that several production fish are showing up with "bite" marks. No mortalities have occurred from these mysterious marks but the consensus is that perhaps a Red fox mother has learned how to "fish". The Red fox has been seen multiple times around the ponds but no factual evidence has been recorded...yet.

Staff stocked a total of 25,888 FY13 channel catfish during the month. The Navajo Nation at the beginning of next month received a total of 18,103 and Zuni and Zia Pueblos received 7,785 fish. The fish delivered to the Navajo nation averaged 6.88 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.85 inches in total length. Zuni and Zia Pueblos fish averaged 2.84 fpp and 10.53 inches in total length.

With limited staff, Inks Dam NFH has relied on the assistance of volunteers, assistance from San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center (SMARC) staff, and Friends Group membership to

harvest these ponds. Retired USFWS staff Jim Sutton and Marc Jackson also participated in the pond harvesting activities. With these two volunteers on station many comments were noted about "Old Home Week" since both have worked here in the past. Everyone's help was deeply appreciated and the success of harvesting these ponds goes to those that assisted.

Channel catfish brood stocks were ponded by the beginning of May for the FY15 spawning season by hatchery staff. A total of 294 four year-old and 380 three year-old brood stock were placed into separate ponds by staff with aide from volunteers and Friends Group membership. By months end a total of 128,200 eggs were collected. Average hatching success for these three spawns was 94.79%. Staff will select groups of these fry and future spawns to preserve genetics/spawn timing to fill late FY14 and all of the FY15 Tribal requests.

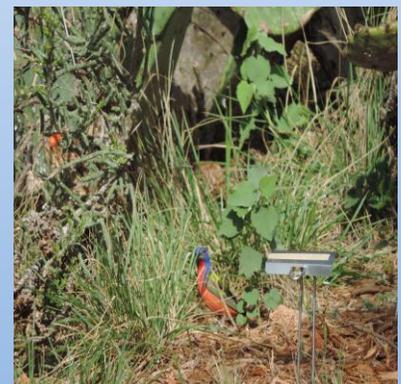
Staff and volunteers collected FY12 channel catfish for the Fort Hood reimbursable agreement stocking in May. Fort Hood received 802 and a total of 718 pounds for the May request. These fish averaged 1.12 fish per pound and 14.40 inches in total length.

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for two full

Birding was one of many activities that 4th and 5th grade students got to do during the Annual Hatchery Outdoor Program or HOP during the month of May at Inks Dam NFH. The group below was guided by several instructors from the Friends of Inks Dam NFH.



The bird blind on the Ashe-Juniper Trail provided many interesting birds for the kids to view. Below is a Painted Bunting male that made his presence known for many of the kids and parents.



years. The 70 remaining fish have now been on station for almost four years. Nine mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. All of mortalities have come from either the pure males or the remaining hybrid females. No external parasites or diseases were observed in any of the mortalities and probably due to normal life expectancy since they have been on station this long. Hatchery staff put males and female Clear Creek gambusia back together for the first since last year attempts at spawning. This took place on the third week in May. To date no fertilization has taken place or observed by staff.

Personnel

Julie Burks attended the Administrative Conference call and entered all FBMS data for months end. Julie also assisted Paul Dorman, Project Leader, with the Annual Inventory and Certification.

Gregory Landry performed the May Safety Meeting for the hatchery staff. He also went to the Clear Creek site to download water quality data from the sonde.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Most of the monthly maintenance effort was spent prepping the RDU for the first deliveries of the year to our Tribal partners and maintaining vital infrastructure equipment.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had a busy month with Outreach and Outdoor Education as well. The

hatchery had 200 visitors for the month of May. Many of these visitors were new to the hatchery and remarked how enjoyable it was to see fish, fish in the river, hike, bird, and just enjoy the outdoors. Visitation is still up for the year and many are first time visitors.

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 527.5 hours for the month of May. Most of the FOIDNFH hours were for the Annual Hatchery Outdoor Program or HOP. This annual program is for 4th and 5th grade kids to learn about the outdoors, fun things to do and observe in the wild, what the hatchery and USFWS does and why. This year's program consisted of: Solar Printing wildflowers, Fish morphology and fish production, Master Caster Class, Birding and Native Plants on the Ashe-Juniper Trail, and the hike up the Overlook Trail (plants, animals and geology) found on the trail.

The tours included:

5/16 Lampasas Elementary 70 kids + 7 adults

5/20 R.J.Richey Elementary Burnet 176 kids + 10 adults

5/21 Packsaddle Elementary, Kingsland 80 kids + 9 adults

5/27 Llano Elementary 64 kids + 6 adults

All of the tours had great participation and many "kudos" goes out to the FOIDNFH for all their hard work and efforts to again make this a successful program and fun for the kids. The number one program again this year was the Master Caster Class which shows not only how competitive everyone gets but

that these young kids enjoy fishing, even if it's at targets!

The ISF crew and staff spent one day on the facility weed eating and mowing. The crew of six provided 40 hours of work and assisted staff with making the facility presentable for visitors.



Students designing their solar prints not only learn about how the paper works in the sun but also about the native wildflowers as well.



Students again enjoyed participating in the Master Caster Class and attempting to get their lure into three PVC rings.



Students learned about the hatchery and what it does, why and how things have changed over the years. Here they examine catfish eggs.

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Southwest Region
Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation



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Current staff members

Paul Dorman	Project Leader
Vacant	Assistant Project Leader
Vacant	Environmental Education Specialist
Julie Burks.....	Administrative Technician
Gregory Landry	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant	Animal Caretaker (Term)
Larry Guerro	Motor Vehicle Operator
Vacant	Maintenance Worker
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