



# Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



## Monthly Accomplishments

November 2014

### Fisheries Activities

All FY14 production Channel catfish have been stocked into their over-wintering ponds except one additional pond. All of the brood fish have been placed into their over-wintering ponds.

Currently there are 71,531 FY14 Channel catfish averaging 8.79 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.37 inches in total length. Earlier ponded fish from this year class are ranging from seven to eight inches in total length. A total of two mortalities were recorded for the month but many of the migratory, piscivorous birds have been having a field day with the ponded fish.

Incoming water quality continues to improve but water temperatures have dropped for the second straight month. Incoming dissolved oxygen averaged 6.31 ppm (increase of 4.9 ppm from last month) and an average temperature of 16.0°C (decrease of 8°C from last month). This means that although the dissolved oxygen has improved for increased feeding and growth the temperature has fallen so low that the fish have all but stopped feeding.

Currently there are 3,952 FY13 channel catfish averaging 2.20 fpp and 11.80 inches in total length. These fish will be used for future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. Additional production also includes 1,855 FY12 averaging 0.67 fpp and 17.16 inches in total length.

These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY15 and future Fort Hood Reimbursable contract fish. Only two mortalities were recorded for the month.

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for two full years. There are now only 28 originally trapped fish which have been on station for four years. Eight mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. All mortalities were female and no external parasites or disease signs were observed in any of the mortalities. Hatchery staff is now separating the males from these females and see if this decreases the amount of mortality. Mortality more than likely is due to attempts at spawning or normal life expectancy.

The FY 14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation due to the detection of Asian Tapeworm in samples sent in prior to bringing the new population to Inks Dam NFH now number 159 fish. A total of twelve mortalities occurred during the month. These individuals in the refugium population have adapted to the feeding regimes and aquarium life.

Facility staff has been working with two new feeding regimes. One is a flake food and the other is a frozen copepod that will aide in the nutritional balance of the gambusia diet. Although early in the experimentation, staff has

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Daniel Huston comes to us via the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center where he was a SCEP employee.

Daniel's main focus during his time with the USFWS and has worked with endangered plants, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates. He will continue in that same arena at Inks Dam NFH.



Jerry Crouch is a 15 year veteran with the Air Force and comes to Inks Dam NFH via Aransas Pass NWR where he spent the last four years.

Jerry Crouch will bring a wealth of knowledge to Inks Dam in the fields of heavy equipment operation, CDL driving, carpentry, welding, plumbing and minor electrical. Both individuals will aide in this facility skill and knowledge base to take on more and new challenges for Region 2.

noticed that both types are becoming preferred prey items.

Hatchery staff has also been testing the light intensity into the tanks, from the light control, to determine if these fish are getting enough light to stimulate spawning behaviors. The new staff has ties to universities and a greater influx of scientific literature has been very helpful to date. Staff has also been working with the NCTC library to obtain documents, which in the past, we have been unable to acquire.

## Personnel

Inks Dam NFH is pleased to introduce Daniel Huston (Fisheries Biologist) and Jerry Crouch (Maintenance Mechanic) as our two new additions to our growing staff list this month.

Daniel comes to us from San Marcos ARC as a STEP and has both a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and an M.S. in Biology from Texas State University. He originally was brought on as a STEP at the San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center (SMARC) to perform research on an exotic species of parasites, and finished as a SCEP during his Master's. Endangered species culture has been Daniel's main focus during his time with the USFWS and has worked with endangered plants, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates.

Jerry comes to us via the Aransas Pass NWR and has spent his entire (4 yrs.) career with refuges. Jerry is also a fifteen year veteran with the Air Force and brings a wealth of knowledge to Inks Dam in the fields of heavy equipment operation, CDL driving, carpentry, welding, plumbing and minor electrical. Both

employees will make a significant contribution to the facility and production here at Inks Dam NFH.

## Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Staff has been cleaning and grading ponds to prepare them for production next year. Annual vehicle and heavy equipment maintenance started last month and should continue through fall.

Hatchery staff started on repairs at the end of the month on lateral line 4 due to break in line. This line is like many of the "old" incoming and drain lines found at this facility and probably has not seen the light of day, until now, since it was installed almost 75 years ago. Repairs will take several weeks since fitting old pipe into new fitting requires special ordered parts.



The broken incoming water lateral line for ponds 8,9,10, 13A and 13B was probably caused by recent rains saturating the soil and causing the ground to shift.

## Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had a total of 205 visitors for the month of November. Approximately half of those visitors came during the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend. Of course the weather was much warmer, during that time frame, than the 30-plus degrees for the first three weeks of November.

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 84 hours for the month of November. The FOIDNFH membership provided tours for two Cub Scout Packs. The first was Cub Scout Pack 12, from Austin, Texas and the second Scout Pack was Pack 343 from Selma, Texas. Both arrived on the same day but the FOIDNFH and other volunteers provided Interpretive hikes along the Ashe Juniper Trail and Overlook



Scouts, siblings and parents make the trek up the Overlook Trail to learn about the varied habitats along the way.

Trails. A tour of the Holding House, along with a discussion on facility production, and then a "lively" Master Caster Class ended the day. Total number of scouts, siblings, and parents for the day-long event was 183 and many, many "Thank You" has been received by the FOIDNFH from Pack and den leaders, as well as, parents.

The Intermediate Sanction Facility (ISF) came out again this month and spent a day mowing and weed whipping. They did the Park/Picnic area, along the river, around the Visitor Center and the old Meager Fish Camp area by the filter. The 7 man crew put in a total of 36 hours and greatly assisted the hatchery staff in keeping the facility looking presentable.

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
Scott Walker .....	Assistant Project Leader
Vacant .....	Environmental Education Specialist
Julie Burks.....	Administrative Technician
Gregory Landry .....	Fisheries Biologist
Daniel Huston .....	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant .....	Animal Caretaker (Term)
Larry Guerro .....	Motor Vehicle Operator
Jerry Simmons .....	Maintenance Worker
Jerry Crouch .....	Maintenance Worker