

FY 2015

TXFWCO Activity Report: October



Directorate Visit to San Marcos

Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office

Monthly Report

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Activities

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Emphasis Areas

Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Stocking

On 13-14 October 2015, staff from the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARC), the Texas FWCO, Uvalde National Fish Hatchery, Stewart Jacks, Joy Nicholopoulos, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, stocked 227,000 Rio Grande silvery minnows (RGSM) into the Rio Grande at Dryden Crossing.

Originally, 94,500 of them were to be stocked at into the Rio Grande near Maravillas Creek, but a recent flash of the Rio Grande made the roads muddy and unnavigable, so the decision was made to also stock them at Dryden.

An additional 2,000 RGSM were stocked into Terlingua Abajo with the assistance of Marie Landis of the National Park Service and two volunteers, Becca Pachlhofer and Alexandra O'Neill. The stocking site was approximately a quarter mile from the parking area, so a large cooler was used to transport the fish to the creek.



Figure 1 Manuel Uliberri tempers the RGSM prior to stocking into the Rio Grande.

Rio Grande Report

The TXFWCO is preparing a Rio Grande Comprehensive report that will detail all activities conducted in the past 7 years since reintroductions began. The report will include analysis of the RGSM reintroduction efforts, the invertebrate community, and eco-hydrology information.

The TXFWCO is responsible for the invertebrate section and is partnering with TPWD on the fish section. Other contributors are the National Park Service and Sul Ross University. All invertebrate samples have been sorted and identified and metrics on the data are complete.

Big Cypress Bayou Environmental Flows Meeting

On 19-21 October 2015, Mike Montagne and Pete Diaz attended the Big Cypress Bayou Environmental Flows Workshop in Jefferson Texas. The workshop was to get all of the partners thinking about the upcoming flow meetings in 2016 that will decide on the flow regime for the next five years. The TXFWCO gave a presentation on the results of phase one of the Paddlefish Reintroduction Project.

The TXFWCO also conducted a site visit to the Big Cypress oxbow reconnection site with Fish Passage Engineer Wayne Stancill. Wayne collected soil samples and other measurements, and will be designing a control structure for the oxbow.



Figure 2 Wayne Stancill takes measurements at the oxbow reconnection site.

Second Annual Kids Fishing Day

On Saturday, 17 October 2015, the TXFWCO and the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center hosted the second annual Kids Fishing Day. Over 300 kids from San Marcos elementary schools attended the event. A second event was to be held in New Braunfels the following Saturday, but rain forced the postponement of the event.



Figure 3 Second annual Kids Fishing Day held at San Marcos ARC.

Directorate Visit to San Marcos

On 28 November 2015, key leaders within the USFWS, including Director Dan Ashe, toured the facilities of the San Marcos ARC and TXFWCO. The leaders were meeting in San Antonio for the National Leadership Meeting. They were given a tour of the facilities and participated in activities. They also went on the glass bottom boat tour at

Aquarena Springs, toured some habitat restoration sites, and conducted some aquatic sampling near the headwaters of the San Marcos River.



Figure 4 The USFWS National Leadership Meeting tours the San Marcos facilities.

Salado Salamander Sampling

On 14 October 2015, Pete Diaz presented his Salado Salamander monitoring results to the Clearwater Coalition. Pete presented the methods and preliminary results from the current monitoring within the Salado spring complex and the Robertson Estate. Results included; a probability of detection matrix for Big Bubbly Spring, a new locality for the salamander within the spring complex at Anderson Spring, and a new predatory diving beetle from the aquifer. Future directions for the monitoring include more detailed habitat associations, measures of surface recruitment, and habitat restoration at the Robertson Estate.

November Schedule of Activities:

2-5 November 2015: Camp Maxey Community Structure Project

9-19 November 2015: Ottine Dam Removal

19 November 2015: RGSM Stocking

30- 3 November 2015: Camp Maxey Community Structure Project

30-3 November 2015: FAC Project Leaders Meeting