



Utah Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Monthly Report (Nov. & Dec. 2020)

Overview

The Utah Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in Vernal, Utah assists partners with Fish Passage, National Fish Habitat Partnerships and Tribal Wildlife Grants. Agreements are held with Trout Unlimited, Utah's Department of Wildlife Resources, Tribal governments and Universities (Brigham Young University, Utah State University). A major role of the office is with Hill Air Force Base near Ogden, Utah. This newsletter will highlight some of our activities with these groups during the months of November and December 2020.

Riparian Restoration

The FWCO teamed up with the Paiute Tribe's resource specialist to conduct stream restoration in the Santa Clara River. Nonnative tamarisk and Russian olive trees were cut and treated along the stream's shorelines. The area was in a tributary to the river within the borders of the Shivwits Band reservation. The visit included



Tributary to the Santa Clara River where cut and removed.

coordination with the UDWR for beaver control in the same reach of river.

Fish Passage

Progress was made in pre-construction, planning and design for fish passage in the Virgin River in Zion's National Park. William Rice teamed up with the Utah FWCO in a meeting that included employees from Zion National Park and FishOne Inc. engineers to finalize design for four barriers in the Park. Further consultation with the DWR was accomplished during November's visit to southern Utah.



The Ute Tribe and DWR are wrapping up the work on a FP structure at the Myton Townsite Diversion. Funding is being moved from the DWR to the Tribe for modifications needed to improve the structure's fish collection methods. We hope to have this transaction completed by 30 December 2020.

The Paiute Native American Tribe

The Shivwits Band of the Tribe requested assistance to survey endangered desert tortoises found on the reservation. Last year 6 tortoises were located, and we made plans to participate in 2021 Spring surveys.

At present, the FWCO has been solicited to participate in several activities in this area, they include riparian restoration in the Santa Clara River, beaver control and desert tortoise surveys.



The Northern Ute Native American Tribe

We coordinated the transfer of fish passage funds from the DWR to the tribe for design work completed by the tribe.

Plans were made for the tribe to consider stocking larger CRCT in Cedar View Reservoir. Intentions are to have the reservoir support CRCT brood for the tribes Big Springs Fish Hatchery

Hill Airforce Base

Nick Brown and Jase Taylor have been busy doing restoration work on the UTRN. We are pushing as far as we can before weather hits. The FWS purchased 630 acres worth of seed for the project this year, and we have Air Force, BYU, and FWS planting and seeding the range every day. We probably have around 500 acres done, and as usual are hoping for a wet winter, spring and summer. We are also testing out a new prototype seed drill to hopefully improve our seeding efforts in the West Desert. We will compare seed drill results in the spring when plants start to germinate and grow. The data should tell us which method to use and help us reclaim more ground more effectively.

We had the C-130s spray about 500 acres of Imazapic herbicide, and about 1700 acres sprayed by a helicopter to compare methods. We mixed in other herbicides on a few passes to control Russian Thistle.

Deer Hunt: The base 2020 deer hunt results are 8 bucks and 23 does harvested by hunters. It was a successful year with many new hunters participating and enjoying the hunt.



Successful hunter with at Hill AFB.

Guzzlers: The FWCO and Hill AFB Natural Resource manager, Russ Lawrence continued the work to install two new water guzzlers on the south bombing range.

Pollinator Garden: The kiosk was completed by Holli Holmes; it now provides information about the wood ducks that live in the nearby pond.



1700 acres sprayed with herbicide this month.

December Overview

Most of December's accomplishments were administrative and included a lot of Team's meetings and trainings. To name a few there were the Colorado CRCT meetings, the Bonneville cutthroat conservation team meeting, the Air Force and Army coordination meeting, the Duchesne River IBAT meeting, the Three Species Initiative meeting (Utah) and many more. We are hopeful to return to a field season that at least resembles a normal year.

COVID-19 cases in Utah continue to spike in correspondence to the holidays. Fortunately, no one in our office complex tested positive for the virus during this time. We are continuing to practice preventative measures to stay clear of this raspy virus.

December was a time to reflect on the year's many accomplishments. Even in the presence of COVID-19 many projects were worked on and accomplished, many proposals for 2021 projects were made and we continued to plan for a productive 2021 field season. We are preparing for another round of agreements and permit applications for the 2021 field season.

A lot of annual leave was used during the holidays; everyone enjoyed some time off and seems ready to get another year underway.