



Utah FWCO Monthly Report (Feb. 2020)

Overview

The Utah FWCO in Vernal, UT assists partners with Fish Passage, the NFHP and with TWGs. Groups in partnership are Trout Unlimited, Utah's DWR, tribal governments and Universities. A big part of the office's workload is with Hill AFB near Ogden, UT. This newsletter will highlight some of the activities undertaken in collaboration with these groups in February, 2020.

Native American Tribes

Ute Tribe

Much of the assistance to the Ute tribe was in coordination and planning for 2020 projects. This is the final FY for the Myton Townsite Diversion fish passage project (on the reservation) with deadline Sept. 30. In Feb. the tribe solidified the needed match for completion. Utah's DWR is also a partner and recipient in this project and has been involved in recent coordination efforts.

We have also coordinated efforts with the Ute Tribe's fish hatchery located at Big Springs along the Uinta River. Past duties included propagation of Brown, Rainbow, CRCT and Tiger trout.



Big Springs Tribal Fish Hatchery

(Ute Tribe continued)

Daily hatchery responsibilities have been carried out solely by the FWCO, however, this level of assistance has been contingent upon hiring seasonal FWCO employees. This year the tribe is expecting less assistance based on this position not being filled.

We also attended the Colorado River Fisheries Project researchers meeting in Durango, CO in behalf of the tribes interest in electrofishing the Duchesne River and providing this data to the recovery program. Assistance pertaining to the preparation of this work has been intensive.

Coordinating with the Ute Tribe's bison program was another undertaking in February.



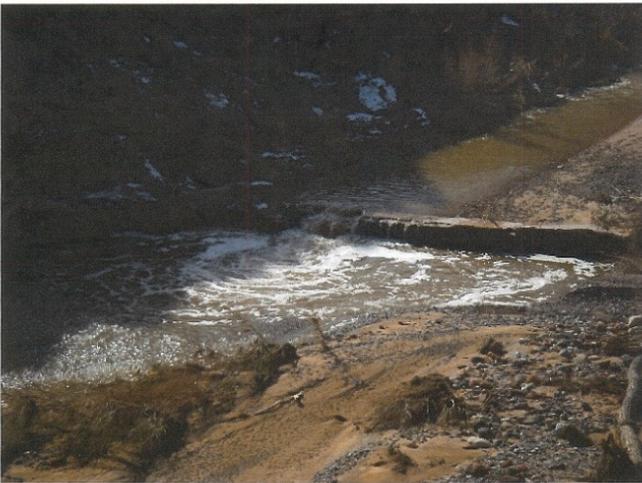
Goshute Tribe

Stream restoration in Spring Creek was the only project considered in February. Fund sourcing and possible heavy equipment use was discussed.



Paiute Tribe

The project worked in February was on the Shivwit's reservation removing tamarisk and Russian olive trees along the Santa Clara River. We also located, and are hoping to remove the fish barrier in the picture below.



Fish Passage

The FWCO finished a cooperative agreement in Feb with Trout Unlimited to replace a culvert in Dalton Creek which is in the Weber River Drainage.

Additionally, three barriers in Zion National Park were visited with Park Service employee Robyn Henderek. We evaluated each while considering impacts to both native and non-native species in the event that the barriers are removed.

State Assistance

The FWCO in partner with the UDWR worked on a proposal (SOW) for the Virgin River Recovery Program controlling beaver along the Santa Clara River, and includes working with the Shivwits Band of the Paiute Indian Tribe.

I also worked on collecting permits for AIS samples from Jones Hole Creek in Dinosaur National Monument, and for the Escalante River project – target species are the three initiative species and razorback sucker.

Hill Air Force Base

The FWCO partnered up with Hill AFB in Ogden, Utah to work on budgets, and to hire a seasonal employee. The new employee's duty station will be on the Air force Base working with FWS biologist Nick Brown on various wildlife projects in Utah's West Desert.

American Fisheries Society

The FWCO participated in the Utah Chapter of the AFS. I presented National Fish Passage Program accomplishments in Utah since 2007. Specific projects were highlighted.

Outlook

The Utah FWCO plans to continue collaboration with both the state of Utah, TU and Native American Tribes.

Our priorities at Hill Air Force Base are strong and will continue, as will our emphasis on fish passage in streams where fish habitat is fragmented by barriers. Lastly, as the Escalante River is such a unique and remote river, the FWCO plans to further pursue sampling in the depths of the canyon where our findings show isolated populations of native species.