



Monthly Accomplishments

August 2014

Fisheries Activities

With the assistance from New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center, and Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), Bobby Duran and Ernest Teller completed the last two of three nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring trips on the San Juan River between Hogback Diversion to Shiprock, New Mexico.

No salvage was necessary for the month of August, although the salvage crew continues to be on stand-by. As of 31 July 2014 crews salvaged RGSM from 20.1 unique river miles of the Rio Grande, all within the San Acacia Reach, which lies between the south boundary of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and near Brown's Arroyo. To date, no drying has occurred in the Isleta Reach of the Rio Grande.

Staff assisted NMDGF with quarterly fish community monitoring at seven sites on the Canadian River east of Tucumcari, New Mexico. Data from these monitoring efforts are used to determine the status of the fish community, with

emphasis on the federally listed Arkansas River shiner.

Chris Kitcheyan assisted NMDGF, U.S. Forest Service and Pueblo of Zuni with annual Zuni bluehead sucker monitoring. The Zuni bluehead sucker was listed in August 2014.



Figure 1. The endangered Zuni bluehead sucker.

Dustin Myers assisted Cochiti Department of Natural Resources and Conservation with the release of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep. The NMDGF and volunteers conducted a capture operation near Wheeler Peak in the Carson National Forest. The sheep were released in the treeless burned area of Cochiti Canyon located in the Jemez Mountains. The burn areas were created by the Las Conchas Fire in 2011, making ideal bighorn sheep habitat.



Figure 2. Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, radio-collared and ready for release into the Jemez Mountains.

Staff continues to house Colorado pikeminnow for an ongoing isotopic fractionation study. The study, in collaboration with University of New Mexico (UNM) and NMDGF, intends to explain trophic relationships among Colorado pikeminnow and their potential prey in the San Juan River. After the collection of this month's samples, we expect the study to continue for another four months.



Figure 3. Federally endangered Colorado pikeminnow.

In cooperation with Pueblo of Isleta and Pueblo of Sandia,

Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring completed monthly monitoring for Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM). Monitoring determines presence/absence of visible implant elastomer tagged fish from augmentation and research efforts.

Chris Kitcheyan, in cooperation with Navajo Nation DFW completed a site evaluation for a possible chemical treatment to remove green sunfish below Tsaille Dam. In addition, the crews completed five site visits to potential fish passage project locations.

Meetings and Trainings

Jason Davis participated in the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRRIP) – Biology Committee conference call. Participants discussed 2015 Scopes of Work.

Jason Davis participated in the Landscape Conservation Cooperative Strategic Planning conference call.

Thomas Archdeacon and Jason Davis participated in the Minnow Action Team meeting. Participants met to finalize the 2013 Recommendation Report and the 2013 Implementation Report.

Jason Davis participated in the SJRRIP Razorback Stocking Meeting. Participants, including Navajo Nation DFW, UNM, and USFWS-Colorado River, discussed razorback stocking protocols for the fall of 2014.

Thomas Sinclair and Jason Davis visited the Los Lunas RGSM Refugium. Alison Hutson and Douglas Tave of the Refugium described past and current efforts the culture RGSM and provided a detailed tour of all the facilities.

Angela James participated in the Middle Rio Grande – Advancing Youth Environmental Education and Employment Workshop hosted by Bosque School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The consortium of participants now refers to the assemblage as the MRG E³ which stands for Middle Rio Grande - Environment, Education, and Employment.

Thomas Archdeacon attended a RGSM Catch per Unit Effort Workshop planning meeting. Participants included Bureau of Reclamation, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, and Interstate Stream Commission.

Thomas Sinclair and Thomas Archdeacon participated in the RGSM Captive Propagation and Genetics Workgroup bi-annual meeting. Topics of discussion included station updates, fish tagging schedules, stocking dates, and fish health sampling for 2014.

Thomas Sinclair, Jason Davis, Chris Kitcheyan, Steve Davenport, Angela James, participated in the 28th Annual Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS) Southwest Regional Conference, hosted by Pueblo of Isleta. Chris, Steve, and Angela presented

information on field office activities to assist Tribes, providing outreach and education, and promoting of participation in fish passage on Tribal lands.

Chris Kitcheyan, Thomas Sinclair, and Jason Davis participated in the quarterly meeting of the Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission held at Pueblo of Isleta during the NAFWS Southwest Regional Conference. Chris provided updates in regards to hatchery stockings, Zuni bluehead sucker endangered species listing and the impending decision to list the Rio Grande cutthroat trout (decision expected December 2014).

Thomas Archdeacon completed the *Introduction to “R” for Biologist – Programming Environment for Data Analysis and Graphing* training held at the NAFWS Southwest Regional Conference, Pueblo of Isleta.

Angela James completed the *National Fishing in Schools Program (NFSP) Level One Teacher Certification* course held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. With the “Cast A Fly, Catch A Student” motto, the NFSP program is an environmental education program that uses fly fishing to engage youth with the outdoors.

Weston Furr conducted a Safety Brown Bag session on winching and vehicle recovery techniques for the NMFWCO staff.

Chris Kitcheyan, Thomas Archdeacon, Tristan Austring, Kjetil Henderson, Rebecca Cook and Angela Carrillo completed CPR/First Aid/AED training led by American Red Cross.

Education and Outreach

Andy Dean, Dustin Myers, Tristan Austring, Kjetil Henderson, and Rebecca Cook assisted with the NAFWS Youth Education Seminar held during the Southwest Regional Conference. Six youth from various surrounding Pueblos participated in the field day. Activities included setting gill nets and hoop nets, electrofishing, collection of macroinvertebrates, and collection of water quality samples.



Figure 4. Tristan Austring demonstrating the use of a hoop net.



Figure 5. Staff and youth working up a gill net.

Tristan Austring and Angela James participated in the Santa Ana Environmental Fair hosted by the Pueblo of Santa Ana. Approximately 280 people attended the fair. The NMFWCO booth consisted of two portable aquariums with fish of the Rio Grande, interactive activities, and handouts (pamphlets and coloring books). Staff used activities such as “What River Am I”, “Bucket O’ Fish”, and “Make a Fish” to engage the public.



Figure 6. A community member tests their knowledge of the rivers of New Mexico.



Figure 7. Tristan Austring demonstrated how to measure a fish with the “Bucket O’ Fish” activity.

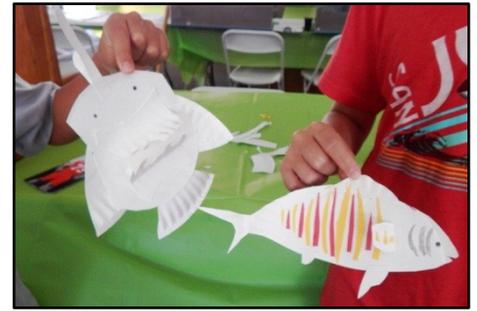


Figure 8. Youth display their “Make a Fish” creations.

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



New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office
3800 Commons Avenue NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109
Phone 505/342-9900
<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/nmfwco/index.html>

Current staff members

Thomas Sinclair	Project Leader
Jason Davis	Assistant Project Leader
Angela Carrillo.....	Administrative Officer
Kimberly Flowers.....	Office Assistant
Stephen Davenport	Supervisory Fish Biologist
Chris Kitcheyan	Supervisory Fish Biologist
Weston Furr	Fish Biologist
Thomas Archdeacon.....	Fish Biologist
Dustin Myers.....	Fish Biologist
Angela Palacios James.....	Fish Biologist
Bobby Duran	Fish Biologist
Andy Dean.....	Fish Biologist
Kjetil Henderson	Fish Biologist
Rebecca Cook.....	Fish Biologist
Ernest Teller Sr.	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring	STEP Student