



Monthly Accomplishments

June 2014

Fisheries Activities

Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring, with the assistance of various personnel from the Bureau of Reclamation and NMFWCO, began salvage efforts for the Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM). As of 30 June 2014 crews salvaged RGSM from 19.3 unique river miles of the Rio Grande, all within the San Acacia Reach (south boundary of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge and near Brown's Arroyo). No drying occurred in the Rio Grande in the Isleta Reach during this time. We collected 455 RGSM > 30 mm standard length (SL). Of these, 405 (385 hatchery marked fish) were found alive and rescued. There were 50 RGSM > 30 mm SL (49 hatchery marked) found dead during this time. In addition, 12 RGSM died during transport. These mortalities do not count towards incidental take of RGSM > 30 mm SL. Salvage efforts are ongoing.



Figure 1. Thomas Archdeacon releasing salvaged RGSM into flowing river.

Stephen Davenport, Andy Dean, and Tristan Austring completed Pecos River fish community monitoring at twelve sites near Roswell, New Mexico. Data from these monitoring efforts are used to define the status of the fish community, with emphasis on Pecos bluntnose shiner.

In cooperation with PNG (EPA Contractor), Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring completed habitat and fish assessments on the Rio Grande. The Los Chavez site (between Los Lunas and Belen) is part of an EPA Environmental Monitoring Program. In addition, Ernest Tellier assisted with similar efforts on the San Juan River.

In collaboration with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), Dustin Myers completed nonnative fish removal and Gila chub monitoring on Turkey Creek (Sycamore to Miller Springs Cabin), Gila National Forest. Hybrid trout and Gila chub were collected. In addition, crews completed post-fire monitoring on Manzanita creek (tributary to Turkey Creek with a waterfall barrier). Manzanita Creek is being considered as a potential Gila trout re-introduction site. No fish were collected. Crews followed post-fire protocols established by the Gila Trout Recovery Team. The system is

recovering from the Whitewater Baldy Complex fire that occurred in 2012.

Andy Dean, Stephen Davenport, and Angela James completed baseline fish community monitoring at five sites on the Rio Hondo, near Roswell, New Mexico. Stream habitat restoration activities are scheduled to be completed on the Rio Hondo in the near future.



Figure 2. Crew measuring a Pecos pupfish from the Rio Hondo.

Angela James, USFS, and Kansas State University assisted NMDGF to complete annual monitoring and nonnative fish removal (e.g. flathead catfish, bullhead, largemouth bass, and bull frogs) on the West Fork Gila River near the Heart Bar Ranch in the Gila National Forest. Although the data has not been analyzed, it is presumed fewer nonnative fish were collected compared to previous years. Crews were also optimistic after collecting fish specimens comprising of the known native

fish community for the river, including various native young-of-year fishes, as well as adult threatened or endangered Gila trout, loachminnow, spikedace, and headwater chub. The system is recovering from two fire events; the Miller fire in 2011 and the Whitewater Baldy Complex fire in 2012.



Figure 3. Crews sampling for fish on the West Fork Gila River.



Figure 4. A federally endangered loach minnow.

Jason Davis and Weston Furr assisted USFWS Grand Junction (Region 6) with the second of four nonnative fish removal and endangered species monitoring trips on the San Juan River between Shiprock, New Mexico and Mexican Hat, Utah.

In cooperation with Ecological Service Field Office and Zuni Fish and Wildlife Department, Chris Kitcheyan completed a

reconnaissance to assess habitat and water availability for the Zuni bluehead sucker.

Angela James, USFS, and Kansas State University assisted NMDGF complete fish community monitoring and nonnative fish removal on Middle Fork Gila River above the West Fork Gila River confluence.



Figure 5. Crews measuring fish on the Middle Fork Gila River.

Meetings and Trainings

Jason Davis and 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.

Jason Davis and Thomas Archdeacon participated in the Executive Committee meeting of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative program (MRGESCP).

Jason Davis participated in the MRGESCP's Minnow Action Team meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Thomas Sinclair, Jason Davis, Stephen Davenport, Weston Furr, Andy Dean, Angela James, Dustin Myers, Bobby Duran, and Kimberly Flowers completed CPR/First Aid/AED training led by American Red Cross.



Figure 6. Andy Dean learning the process of CPR with use of an AED.

Education and Outreach

Chris Kitcheyan completed orientation for the Tribal Youth Conservation Corps (TYCC) group sponsored by USFWS-NMFWCO. The Cochiti TYCC, comprising of four high school students, will be working on various natural resource projects located on Cochiti Pueblo. The TYCC program aims to expose native youth to the various subjects within natural resources and potential careers.

Chris Kitcheyan and Angela James participated in the Tribal Youth Environment Summer Camp (TYESC) sponsored by the Eight Northern Pueblos and hosted by the Pueblo of Taos.

The Youth Camp hosted 28 students from the northern Pueblos. Staff demonstrated backpack electroshocking sampling on Rio Pueblo de Taos. Students rotated through each task associated with sampling including netting, weighing and measuring fish, and data recording.



Figure 7. Students work together to weigh and measure fish after an electrofishing demonstration.

In cooperation with Cochiti Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Chris Kitcheyan demonstrated seining for small-bodied fish to the Cochiti TYCC on the Rio Grande.

Personnel

Thomas Sinclair began his appointment as Project Leader for New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. Thomas came from Region 4 where he was the Assistant Regional Director for Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation.



Figure 8. Thomas Sinclair conducting a Gulf sturgeon survey.

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



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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
Ernest Tellier Sr.	Biological Science Technician
Tristan Austring	STEP Student