



Monthly Accomplishments

May 2014

Fisheries Activities

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.

In collaboration with Cochiti Pueblo and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), Chris Kitcheyan and Andy Dean completed spring lakes surveys with emphasis on smallmouth bass.

Chris Kitcheyan assisted NMDGF with seasonal monitoring of the fish community in the Canadian River east of Tucumcari, New Mexico. Principal objective of this monitoring is to collect baseline data on the presence/absence of the federally listed Arkansas River shiner.

In collaboration with Navajo Nation and NMDGF, Chris Kitcheyan completed presence/absences surveys for bluehead sucker on various streams located on Navajo Nation. In addition, the crew completed monitoring surveys in

attempts to re-locate bluehead suckers that were passive integrated transponder tagged in fall 2013 to assess growth and movement.



Figure 1. Electroshocking with Navajo Nation.

At the request of the Pueblo of Nambe, Chris Kitcheyan, Andy Dean, and Tristan Austring completed post-fire fish assessments at Nambe Reservoir.



Figure 2. Nambe Reservoir

Steve Davenport, Andy Dean and Chris Kitcheyan completed Pecos River fish community monitoring

at two sites near Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Data from these monitoring efforts were used to define the status of the fish community, with emphasis on Pecos bluntnose shiner.

Steve Davenport assisted Midwest Biological Inventory on an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded Pecos River project.

In cooperation with PNG (EPA Contractor), Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring completed habitat and fish assessments on the Rio Grande. The two sites, Los Chavez (between Los Lunas and Belen) and La Joya (south of Bernardo) are part of an EPA Environmental Monitoring Program.

In collaboration with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and NMDGF, Dustin Myers and Thomas Archdeacon completed post-fire monitoring and nonnative fish removal of Spruce Creek, Big Dry Creek, and South Fork White Water Creek, Gila National Forest. Crews followed protocols established by the Gila Trout Recovery Team.

In collaboration with USFS and NMDGF, Dustin Myers completed post-fire monitoring and nonnative fish removal on West Fork Mogollon and Rain

Creek, Gila National Forest. Based on fire severity maps, crews were expecting the streams to be fishless; however, rainbow trout hybrids were collected from both streams. Crews followed protocols established by the Gila Trout Recovery Team.



Figure 3. Upper waterfall on West Fork Mogollon Creek

Thomas Archdeacon and Tristan Austring, in addition to SWCA Environmental Consultants and Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, aided the Albuquerque BioPark with wild egg collection of RGSM. The RGSM began spawning during a deliberate release of water from Cochiti Dam. Eggs will be used for broodstock and to meet augmentation needs for fall 2014.

Meetings and Trainings

Jason Davis attended Project Leader Academy sponsored by National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

Jason Davis, Bobby Duran, and Weston Furr participated in the

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program's (SJRRIP) Biology Committee meeting and the SJRRIP annual joint meeting of the Coordination and Biology Committees in Durango, Colorado. Staff reported results from 2013 projects during the joint committee meeting. Specifically, Bobby Duran presented Endangered Fish Monitoring and Nonnative Species Monitoring and Control in Upper/Middle San Juan River 2013. Weston Furr presented Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker Augmentation in the San Juan River 2013.

Thomas Archdeacon attended a RGSM Catch Per Unit Effort Workshop. Participants included Bureau of Reclamation, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and Interstate Stream Commission.

Education and Outreach

Angela Palacios James presented *Fiction Mimicking Reality* to two fifth-grade classes (50-5th graders) from Emerson and Mountain View Elementary Schools. The presentation tied together points from the fictional book *The Case of the Missing Cutthroats: An Eco Mystery* and work that field biologists do with native fish. Issues discussed in the book included native ranges of cutthroats, macroinvertebrate sampling, fish tagging and monitoring, and impacts of humans. The book is now a component of the Native Fish in the Classroom (NFIC) project

originating from an Emerson Elementary teachers reading assignment in 2013.

Finalists of NMFWCO's Time to Say Good-bye Writing Contest enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the Albuquerque Aquarium and its Rio Grande silvery minnow facilities. The tour provided an opportunity for the students to compare their in-class systems to the large-scale aquariums and re-circulation systems of a professional establishment. The writing contest was a new component of the NFIC project, sponsored by NMFWCO. The contest was open to 5th-grade students participating in the NFIC project. One finalist was selected from each class. Congratulations to Jazmin Llanes, Leslie Alejos, & Yahir Canales of Emerson Elementary, Jocelynn Jaramillo & Lauren Pankretz of Governor Bent Elementary, Arden Burkett, Ella Strickland, & Zoe Crouch of Monte Vista Elementary, Alexis Garcia & Kaitlyn Kapuscinski of Mountain View Elementary, and Dionysia Gutierrez & Kevin Hernandez of Valle Vista Elementary.



Figure 4. NFIC students touring the pumps and system of the Albuquerque Aquarium.

The NMFWCO sponsored the 2014 NFIC - Releasing the Natives Field Day (Field Day) held on the Orilla Verde Recreation Area near Pilar, New Mexico. Thirty students representing Emerson and Monte Vista Elementary schools participated in the event. The students released 61 Rio Grande cutthroat trout that were raised in their classrooms since January 2014. Students participated in multiple learning stations led by NMDGF, USFWS Hydrology, and NMFWCO.



Figure 5. Students learning about aquatic invertebrates during NFIC Field Day in Pilar, New Mexico.



Figure 6. Students learning to cast a fishing pole during the NFIC Field Day.



Figure 7. Student releasing a Rio Grande cutthroat trout during the NFIC Field Day.



Figure 8. Student releasing a fish during the NFIC Field Day in Albuquerque.

The NMFWCO sponsored the 2014 NFIC- Releasing the Natives Field Day held in Albuquerque, New Mexico hosted by the Bosque School. Approximately 174 students representing Governor Bent, Mountain View, and Valle Vista Elementary Schools participated in the event. The students released 178 fish of the Rio Grande (i.e. flathead chub, longnose dace, red shiners) that were raised in their classrooms since January 2014. Students participated in multiple learning stations that were provided by the Bosque School and Bosque Ecology Monitoring Program (BEMP), NMDGF, USFS, USFS-Rocky Mountain Research Station, USFWS Partners for Wildlife, and Valle del Oro National Wildlife .



Figure 9. Students reading a good-bye poem to say farewell to their fish.



Figure 10. Students learning about invasive bugs during NFIC Field Day.

The NFIC Field Days marked the end of the 3rd year for the NFIC program. Approximately 319 students from six schools participated during the 2013-2014 school year.

The NFIC project was a great success with the help of several agencies and organizations. A big thank you goes out to the Albert I. Pierce Foundation and the Friends of Valle del Oro NWR Group for providing funding for student transportation, which allowed students to attend the NFIC Field Days. We also want to thank the NMDGF for providing Rio Grande cutthroat trout for the classrooms. We

thank the staff at the Albuquerque Aquarium for providing a tour for our contest winners. And last, but not least, a thank you to all the groups who came out to provide engaging and educational learning stations for our students. This included NMDGF, USFWS Hydrology, BEMP, NMDGF, USFS, USFS- Rocky Mountain Research Station, and Valle del Oro National Wildlife Refuge

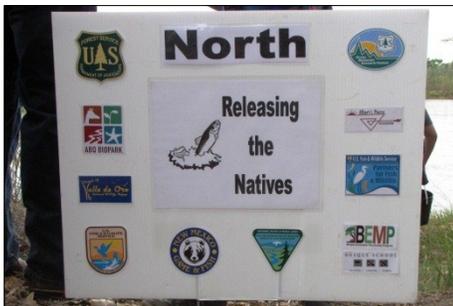


Figure 11. NFIC Sponsors.

Personnel

Thomas Sinclair will be the new Project Leader for New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. Thomas is coming from Region 4 where he is currently the Assistant Regional Director for Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation. The NMFWCO staff looks forward to his arrival in mid-June 2014.

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

Vacant	Project Leader
Jason Davis	Acting 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