



ALCHESAY-WILLIAMS CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY COMPLEX WHITERIVER, ARIZONA



MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

July 2014

*Bruce Thompson – Complex Manager
Patti Ferlisi – Office Assistant*

ALCHESAY UNIT

*Gene Okamoto – Unit Leader
Pete Drevnick – Maintenance Worker/Motor Vehicle Operator
Jeff Cody – Motor Vehicle Operator
Joyner George – WMAT Fisheries
Andy Quay – Volunteer
Chadwick “Sharkey” Amos – Volunteer
Travis Taylor – Volunteer*

WILLIAMS CREEK UNIT

*Bradley Clarkson – Unit Leader
Russell Wood – Fish Biologist
Dan Ragen – Maintenance Specialist
Mike Figueroa – Motor Vehicle Operator
Jimmy Smith – Motor Vehicle Operator
Isaiah Paxson – Animal Caretaker
Clayton Lupe – K-INBRE Summer Intern
Kit Palmer – Youth Conservation Corps*



**An osprey makes
off with lunch at the
Alchesay Unit**



Photo sequence credit: Gene Okamoto

PARTNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- All requisite water sampling for EPA was completed for both units.
- Alchesay-Williams Creek personnel participated in the monthly Fisheries Coordination meeting between AZFWCO (Arizona Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office) and WMAT-WORD (White Mountain Apache Tribe – Wildlife and Outdoor Recreation Division).
- Bruce Thompson provided a tour of the Alchesay Unit to personnel from Salt River Project (SRP) and WMAT’s Hydrology Department. The discussion centered on recent and ongoing hatchery improvements. The Coanda weir design was of particular interest and the group consensus was the visit was very educational.
- Pete Drevnick provided a tour of both units’ domestic water chlorination system to a representative of RCAC. Discussion turned to finding a safer and lower maintenance alternative for drinking water disinfection than the chlorine gas currently being used.

AQUATIC SPECIES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT:

- Hatchery personnel drove 2,030 miles to deliver trout to the Jicarilla Apache and White Mountain Apache Tribes. A total of 56,266 rainbow trout (averaging 5” length), 28,200 brown trout (averaging 5” length) and 6,433 Apache trout (averaging 8.6” length) were released this month. Twelve different recreation areas on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) were stocked. Stocking was extremely curtailed due to poor water quality on most of the waters originally scheduled to receive fish in July. Poor hatchery rearing conditions necessitated early stocking; the rainbow and brown trout releases were fish that were originally scheduled for September distributions. Stocking trips continue to be consolidated whenever possible. Kit Palmer stocks Apache trout, *above right*.
- Chris Kitcheyan, Fish Biologist with the New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, visited the Alchesay Unit to discuss the feasibility of a propagation program for the newly listed Zuni bluehead sucker. The Zuni bluehead sucker – a small, slender, torpedo-shaped fish – is endemic to the headwaters of the Little Colorado River and the Zuni River watersheds in east-central Arizona and west-central New Mexico. The Zuni bluehead sucker is in decline due to the combined effects of the following factors: habitat destruction, modification, and degradation resulting from water withdrawal (stream drying); sedimentation; impoundments; livestock grazing; spread of non-native species; and predation by non-native species such as the green sunfish, northern crayfish and red swamp crayfish. The idea of artificial propagation of this unique species is in its infancy and could be explored further should it be deemed warranted in the future.



PUBLIC USE AND OUTREACH:

- The Alchesay Unit had approximately 243 visitors and the Williams Creek Unit had over 450 visitors.
- Gene Okamoto provided a tour of the Alchesay Unit to a group of five high school age students and their counselor from Apache Behavioral Health Services. These students, most living just down the road from the hatchery, have not had the opportunity to experience any of the great outdoors. They appeared to enjoy their time outdoors and were engaged in the discussions as evidenced by the many questions. *At right*, the debate is which is the largest fish in the raceway.
- Bradley Clarkson and Jimmy Smith teamed up to provide a unique tour of the Williams Creek Unit. Grandparents Pete and Chris Lumianski bring their grandchildren to Greer each summer for their own special outdoor experience, which they call Camp Loomie-Goomie. The week-long camp included such activities as wacky science games, building racing boats and hiking/touring local landmarks. Bradley shared some Apache historical facts with the happy campers, *below*, and Jimmy provided a tour of the facility. Goodie bags were provided for the kids, courtesy of Jennifer Johnson of AZFWCO. A great time was had by all!



- Bradley Clarkson gave a presentation about the various careers available with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to members of the White Mountain Youth Corp, *right*.



WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT:

- Andy Quay continues to provide valuable volunteer hours to the Alchesay Unit. He provided 143 hours this month performing fish culture duties as well as building and grounds maintenance.
- Clayton Lupe and Kit Palmer both finished up their summer internships with the Complex this month. Both of these young men were a huge asset to the Williams Creek Unit. Their hard work and dedication is greatly appreciated and both will be sorely missed!
- All staff has completed mandatory Federal Information Systems Security Awareness + Privacy and Records Management training.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE:

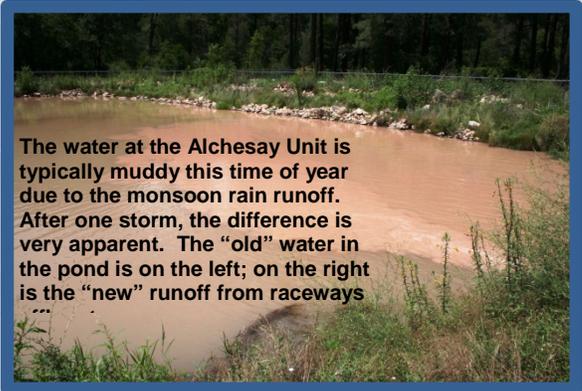
- Pete Drevnick, along with volunteer Travis Taylor, began Alchesay's Pond 3 Modification project by excavating materials, digging trenches, removing rocks and reshaping the sides of the pond, *below*.



TIDBITS:



These nine pallets of food will only feed the fish at the Alchesay Unit for about two and a half months



The water at the Alchesay Unit is typically muddy this time of year due to the monsoon rain runoff. After one storm, the difference is very apparent. The "old" water in the pond is on the left; on the right is the "new" runoff from raceways



Monsoon clouds can be very ominous



Brown trout thought to be caught in Sunrise Lake on Fort Apache Indian Reservation