



# ALCHESAY-WILLIAMS CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY COMPLEX WHITERIVER, ARIZONA



## MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

JUNE 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*

### 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*

Our own Jimmy Smith and Isaiah Paxson enjoy the annual Bog Tank Kids Fishing Derby on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation

Three generations of the Smith family enjoyed the fishing derby. Jimmy, along with his wife and daughter, showed granddaughter, Kyla, some of the finer points of fishing, *right*. Jimmy participates in fishing tournaments against fishing guides and other experts so Kyla is very lucky she’s got such an experienced teacher!



*Photo credit: Gene Okamoto*



Isaiah proves he’s ambidextrous by showing his son, Caiokee, how to hold the rod and reel and take a quick snap with his camera phone at the same time, *left*.

## ***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).
- As a requisite part of his internship duties, Clayton Lupe, with assistance from Jimmy Smith, collected water quality data on some of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) waters.
- Russ Wood, Isaiah Paxson, Pete Drevnick and Joyner George attended CPR certification training provided by Jennifer Johnson of AZFWCO.

## ***AQUATIC SPECIES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT:***

- Hatchery personnel drove 835 miles to deliver 2,000 Apache trout (8-17” in length) and 125,000 rainbow trout (averaging 5-6” in length) to ten different recreation areas on the FAIR. Five of these trips were classified as emergency stocking due to deteriorating water quality at the Alchesay Unit caused by the ongoing drought. The 6” rainbow trout are considered sub-catchable size and were stocked out as part of the September sub-catchable requests for the FAIR. Hopefully, traditional monsoon rains will arrive by the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Meanwhile, fish health, flows and water quality are being closely monitored at both units.
- As noted above, the Complex continues to battle poor water quality, increased temperatures and decreased water flows. The Alchesay Unit lost approximately 15,000 rainbow trout due to these less than optimum water conditions. Losses would have been much greater if not for the quick actions of the entire Complex staff.

While a combination of problems is likely the culprit, salt treatment and medicated feed were initiated when it was determined that the fish were suffering from severe stress. Environmental internal and external bacteria were taking their toll on the fishes’ overtaxed immune system. Plywood covers were placed over portions of the raceways to provide the fish with shade and a place to “hide” in an effort to reduce stress levels, *above*. One radial flow settler was bypassed and raceway water levels were lowered to increase flows through all of the fish.





This all began on June 5<sup>th</sup>. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, a drawdown of Hawley Lake (for dam repairs), which is located upstream of the Alchesay Unit, increased water flow with a surge of very murky water. At that time the fish were not clearly visible and were once again “stressing out”. The silt and detritus eventually cleared up and the increased flows ended up being very beneficial. The photos above show the before drawdown, *above left*, and after drawdown, *above right*, water levels.

Currently, the 180,000 fish remaining at the Alchesay Unit are doing well.

#### ***PUBLIC USE AND OUTREACH:***

- Alchesay had approximately 450 visitors this month. This includes a reception hosted by the local college, Northland Pioneer College, and TERO (Tribal Employment Rights Office) for the graduating construction/carpentry class and their families (approximately 75 people), *below left*, and approximately 35 children and adults from the WMAT’s Summer Program. After the tour, the Summer Program children were treated to a wade in the river, *below right*.



- The Alchesay Unit provided 3,500 rainbow trout for the WMAT's annual Bog Tank Kids Fishing Derby. According to the local newspaper, the event drew a crowd of approximately 2,000 people.

Jeff Cody unloaded and Dan Ragen placed the fish in the troughs. Dan periodically checked water quality throughout the day, *near right*.



The derby is a colossal hit again this year and drew a big crowd, *right*.



- The Williams Creek Unit had approximately 435 visitors this month, including the San Carlos Apache Young Warriors Youth Group. Russ Wood provided the tour for this group of 27 youth and 19 counselors, *below*.



- Eleven members of the Arizona Conservation Corp spent two days volunteering at the Williams Creek Unit. These young men and women provided invaluable assistance with nature trail maintenance, perimeter fence mending/repair and general grounds maintenance.



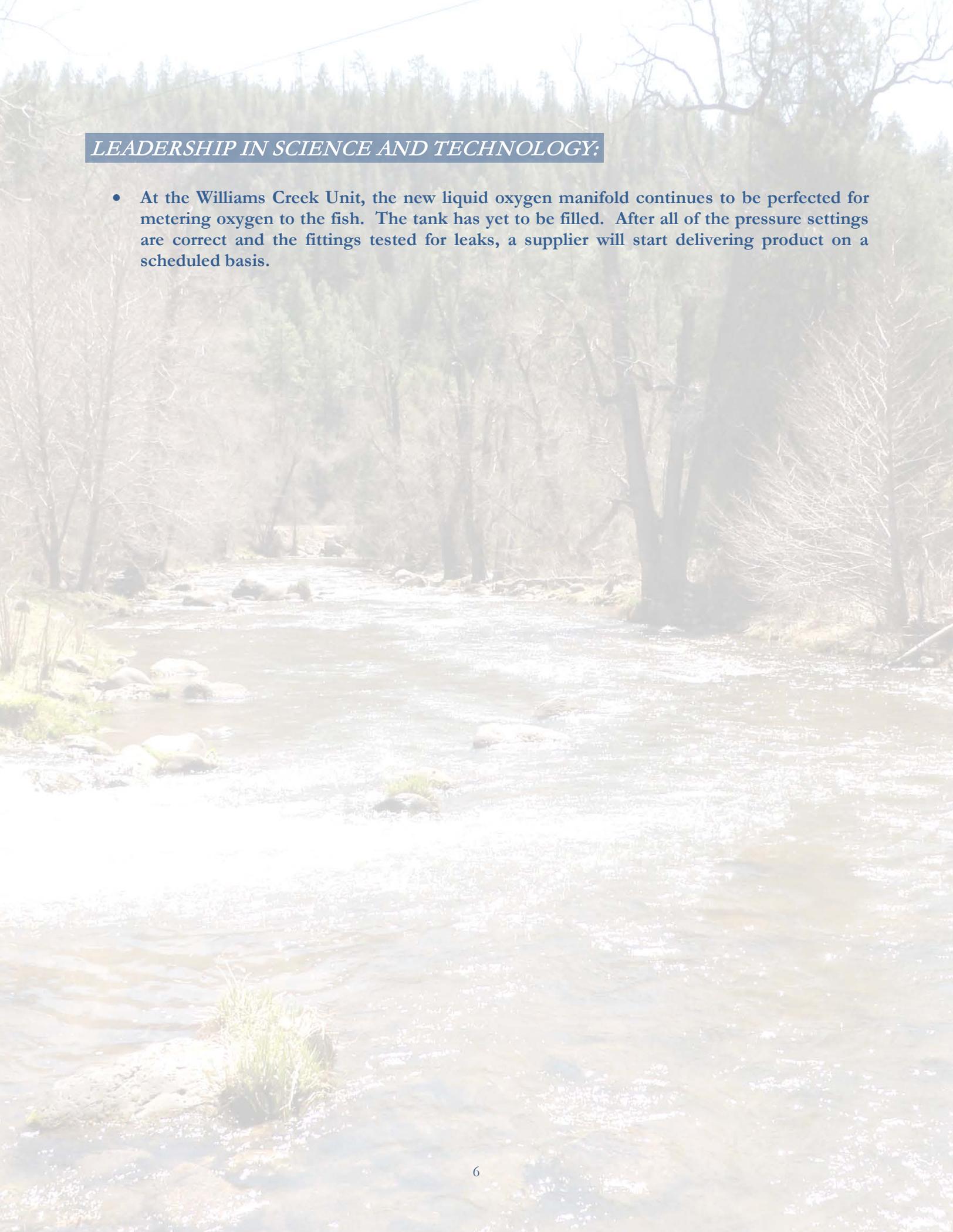
### WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT:

- Kit Palmer joined the Williams Creek Unit on June 2 as part of the Service's YCC (Youth Conservation Corps) program. Kit got right to work assisting with loading fish for distribution, *right*.
- Andy Quay continues to provide valuable volunteer hours to the Alchesay Unit. He provided 126.5 hours this month performing fish culture duties as well as building and grounds maintenance.



- Dan Ragen, *below in center*, after almost ten years of dedicated service to the hatchery Complex, left us for his new position with Grand Canyon National Park. At his request, just a simple send-off luncheon was given in his honor. Dan will be sorely missed but we wish him all the best in his new assignment.





***LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:***

- At the Williams Creek Unit, the new liquid oxygen manifold continues to be perfected for metering oxygen to the fish. The tank has yet to be filled. After all of the pressure settings are correct and the fittings tested for leaks, a supplier will start delivering product on a scheduled basis.