



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

JUNE 2016

Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH Complex

Southwest Region



Cedar Creek Fire started mid-June on the Fort Apache Reservation. It grew to over 45,000 acres in two weeks before monsoon rains helped put it out.

MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

Conserving Aquatic Endangered Species

With the ongoing fish health issues of Bacterial Kidney Disease (BKD) and Bacterial Coldwater Water Disease affecting the Apache Trout (APT) fry, we decided to test the main spring at Williams Creek NFH and the water inflow into the APT tank house building. The goal of this testing is to establish a baseline bacterial level for the spring source water and/or subsequent areas of bacterial colonization's within the hatchery water supply lines. Water samples were taken and shipped to the lab for testing. We hope that the test results will identify some quantitative bacterial levels at given locations that can help explain the ongoing bacterial fish health issues being encountered at Williams Creek NFH.

Conserving, Restoring and Enhancing Habitats

Compulsory EPA water sampling was performed twice at both hatcheries for the month of June. Both facilities were tested this month for total suspended solids and water pH. All test results were within permit parameters.

Fulfilling Tribal Trust Responsibilities

A determination was made by the State of New Mexico to not allow stocking trucks from Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH to cross state lines based on the current Complex fish health status (BKD+). All New Mexico Tribal fish requests have been stocked into Tribal waters within the State of Arizona who are not prohibiting stocking. Due to the fish health status of this Complex; New Mexico Tribal egg requests will be cut from the rearing program for at least the next two years. The Complex stocking program is undergoing significant alterations due to this new fish health status which is unalterable for at least two years.

Arizona Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (AZFWCO) hosted the monthly coordination meeting attended by Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH (AWC-NFH) and White Mountain Apache Tribal Game and Fish Department (WMAT) personnel.

The Salt River Indian Community is building a freshwater aquarium and contacted the Complex inquiring about the use of Apache Trout in their exhibit. Their request is 10-20 ~6-8" APT for their show case. WMAT and USFWS personnel will be working out the details of this proposed exchange.



Trout in raceways

Enhancing Recreational Fishing and Public Use of Aquatic Resources

Alchesay-Williams Creek NFH Complex personnel stocked a total of 47,411 pounds of trout into Fort Apache Indian Reservation and San Carlos Apache Tribal waters during the month of June. Total fish stocked for the month was just shy of 402,638 trout.

Williams Creek transferred 140,000 four inch rainbow trout to Alchesay. The trout will grow out to the requested size before being stocked into Arizona Tribal waters.

Alchesay's raceways started to show signs of stress this month as anticipated. High water temperatures and poor water quality are all contributing factors to the stress. A semi-truck load of salt was delivered previously. Prophylactic salt treatments were started with three blocks per raceway. This should reduce some of the stress by lowering osmotic pressure, calming the fish, as well as helping to clean the gills filaments, and allow the trout to slough off external pathogens.



Loading fish

Workforce Management, Training, and Scientific Capacity

Two samplings of trout were sent to the fish health unit at the Southwestern Native Aquatic Resources and Recovery Center (SNARRC). Live APT were packaged and prepared for delivery to fish health personnel. John Fenslage transported the fish to Socorro, NM to meet with one of the fish health personnel for them to receive and deliver to Dexter for testing. This is approximately the half way point for both parties to meet up and reduce the cost of shipping through FedEx. This also was an attempt to help mitigate the stress level on these sample fish enroute to their "final" destination.

Both samples of fish tested positive for BKD. As per fish health policy, two separate lots of BKD positive Apache trout were depopulated. Currently disinfection of all rearing incubators, tanks, raceways, and all associated fish culture equipment is undergoing sterilization disinfection utilizing Virkon, Chlorine, and/or Steam disinfection techniques.

Public Education and Engagement

Williams Creek received 135 visitors this month and Alchesay received a total of 110 visitors. June was very hot with near record temperatures for the area. Fisherman, picnickers, and tourists all enjoyed the hatcheries' grounds and picnic areas.

Carol Walker, our volunteer at Williams Creek worked 90.5 hours this month mostly focusing on fish culture related duties. She was also able to find several hours to work on her pollinator garden at Alchesay as well.



Staff giving a tour to visitors

Jonathon Walker volunteered 106.5 hours this month at the Williams Creek Unit. Fish Culture and maintenance were Jonathon's main focus for the month of June.

The Complex made their summer Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) selections. Twelve applications were received before the May 27th deadline and two were selected early June. Rosella Altaha and Jake Gregg, students from Alchey High School; started June 15th. They were just in time for the R2 FAC Youth and Seasonal Employee Conference call hosted by Stewart Jacks. The YCC hires will be with us for six weeks and will learn about fish culture, facility maintenance, and general employment skills.

Asset Protection and Management

Pete Drevnick is working on the disinfection station prepping the surface of the walls. Additional hatchery Complex staff was utilized on this project to help expedite progress towards finishing the concrete walls. After this phase is completed; steel and aluminum will be cut, roof beams will be welded together, and aluminum roofing panels will be installed. The plan is to have these final tasks accomplished with MAT team help.

The Complex' 1800 gallon Fish Distribution Unit is getting a complete "look-over" examination. The oxygen delivery system was completely overhauled. There are nine aerators that are utilized on the fish tank with three aerators per tank. Operating two aerators per tank is sufficient and having the third as a backup is the best option for this truck with three 600 gallon tank compartments. This truck along with the rest of the fleet will be parked inside storage garages out of the elements especially during inclement weather.



Fish transfers

Williams Creek is scheduled to have demolitions of Quarters 1 and Quarters 3 in the fall of 2016. These buildings have been slated for demolition for a quite some time. They both are over 30 years old and in need of extensive repairs. Funds have recently been secured to complete these projects. Complex staff decided to leave the detached garages standing and to not have them part of the demo. The garages are still in good shape and will be utilized for additional needed secure storage of hatchery vehicles, construction materials, and equipment.

Upcoming Events

Continue Deferred Maintenance construction projects

Coordination meeting in early July hosted by AZFWCO

Apache Trout tank house renovation at Williams Creek NFH

MAT team from Buenos Aires NWR will arrive on July 24th for a two week work period

YCC fish culture training

AWC-NFHC safety inspection August 3rd

NetDMR training for electronic reporting

Travis Taylor, the Administrative Technician for the Complex; will be transferring to Region 1 (He will be sorely missed.) Good luck Travis!

Hatchery Complex Personnel

Bruce Thompson, Complex Project Leader

Travis Taylor, Administrative Tech

Gene Okamoto, Alchesay Unit Leader

Pete Drevnick, Maintenance/Motor Vehicle Operator

Jeff Cody, Motor Vehicle Operator

Joyner George, WMAT Fisheries

Chadwick "Sharkey" Amos, Volunteer

Jimmy Smith, Motor Vehicle Operator

Bradley Clarkson, Williams Creek Unit Leader

Russ Wood, Fish Biologist

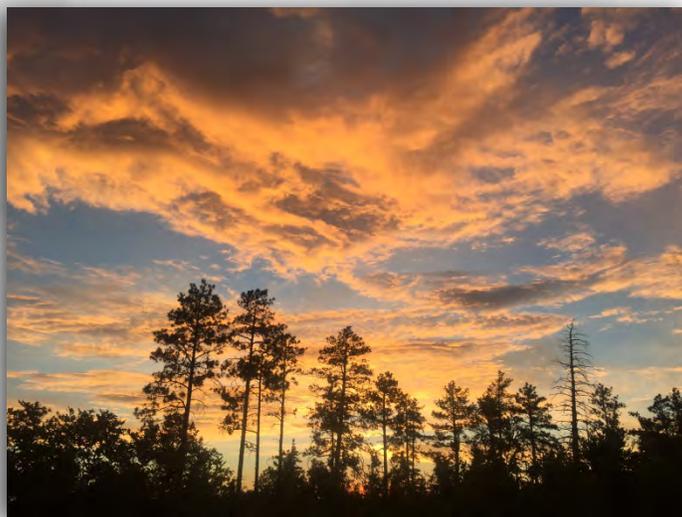
John Fenslage, Maintenance

Mike Figueroa, Motor Vehicle Operator

Isaiah Paxson, Animal Caretaker

Carol Walker, Volunteer

Jonathon Walker, Volunteer



Sunset over Alchesay NFH