



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



## MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

March 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*



This great horned owl, *left*, was rescued by a hatchery worker (see page 2 for full story)

### ***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). Chris Kitcheyan of New Mexico Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office was a guest at this meeting.

- A great horned owl was rescued from one of the raceways at the Williams Creek Unit. Mike Figueroa noticed the owl was trapped in the raceway and enlisted the help of co-worker Isaiah Paxson to free the bird. The owl was so tired from the ordeal of trying to escape, and so appreciative of Mike's assistance, that he posed for this picture, *right*, before flying off to a nearby tree branch to recuperate. We suspect the owl was hunting a small rodent(s) that was feasting on the small amount of spilled fish feed around the raceway when it became trapped.
- Gene Okamoto completed the Complex's annual safety plan. This plan, along with minutes of safety meetings, has been filed with the Region's Safety Office in Albuquerque, NM.
- The annual revalidation for Quicktime and FPPS was completed for Bruce Thompson, Patti Ferlisi, Gene Okamoto and Bradley Clarkson.



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

- The complex continues to experience drought conditions and the resulting poor water quality. In response, we continue our aggressive early stocking schedule.
- Hatchery personnel drove 3,932 miles to deliver about 115,000 rainbow trout (averaging 5" length); 55,000 rainbow trout (averaging 6-8" length); 20,000 brown trout (averaging 2.5" length); and 5,000 Apache trout (averaging 10" length) to seven reservations in Arizona and New Mexico. An additional 5,000 (averaging 10" length) Apache trout were stocked into rivers and streams on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Stocking trips continue to be consolidated whenever possible.
- In early March, there was an emergency stocking due to low dissolved oxygen levels at the Williams Creek Unit. Approximately 35,000 rainbow trout were stocked into two lakes on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation.
- In addition, 66,975 brown trout were transferred from the Williams Creek Unit to the Alchesay Unit. These fish averaged 2.5" in length and were put into four of the newly covered and enclosed A-Bank raceways.
- The Alchesay Unit continues efforts to discourage bird predation on the production ponds. Common mergansers and great blue herons seem to have an endless appetite for trout! The

draw curtains were installed on A-bank raceways. This bank of raceways, along with the adjacent radial flow settlers, is now completely enclosed with fencing/screening, *below left*.



- Formalin treatments continued for the Apache trout at the Alchesay Unit. An outbreak of external parasites has been alleviated but a secondary fungal infection set in, *above right*. This lot of excess Apache trout broodstock has had a difficult time dealing with current spring-time water quality issues at the Alchesay Unit.
- Future broodstock were selected at the Williams Creek Unit. Twelve hundred males and females were selected from this year's spawning.
- The Apache trout eggs from this season's last spawning effort are now on feed. We took a total of 1,025,888 eggs, shipped 161,492 eggs to the State of Arizona, and have 448,600 Apache trout fry currently on feed.
- The Williams Creek Unit received 385,000 rainbow trout eggs from White Sulfur Springs National Fish Hatchery in White Sulfur Springs, WV.

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

- The Complex had approximately 200 visitors this month. Several birthday celebrations were enjoyed at the park adjacent to the Alchesay Unit office. Local school tours are starting to be scheduled at the Williams Creek Unit. Youth from the McNary Wellness Center toured the Williams Creek Unit this month. The 15 youth and two adults were shown all areas of the hatchery including putting eggs down in the production tankhouse, *below left*, and C-bank raceways, *below right*.



## ***WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT:***

- Andy Quay continues to provide valuable volunteer hours to the Alchesay Unit. He provided 94.5 hours this month performing fish culture duties as well as building and grounds maintenance. Sharkey Amos was busy this month with his duties as lead ranger for the White Mountain Apache Tribe Game and Fish Department. In spite of his busy schedule, Sharkey was able to volunteer approximately 40 hours this month.
- Mario Cisneros spent a week at the Complex upgrading computers to Windows 7 and attending to a multitude of smaller issues that had been placed on the back burner due to time constraints or could not be accomplished via telephone. Mario, big kudos and a huge thank you!!
- Jeff Cody graded the road up to the spring at the Alchesay Unit. One of our infrequent rain showers caused a rock slide across the road, preventing access to that remote part of the hatchery.
- Dan Ragen picked up the repaired fish tank for the Williams Creek Unit's fish distribution truck (FDU). The manufacturer paid for half of the total repair costs. The remainder of the repair bill was charged to the FDU charge card. As an added bonus, the rear bumper was removed and reinstalled about 6" higher. The lower bumper tended to hang up or catch on the ground when traversing uneven terrain.
- Hiring waivers were submitted for skilled laborers and the administrative technician position. The laborers will assist with the Pond 3 modification project; the administrative technician position has been vacant since October 2012.

## ***FACILITY MAINTENANCE:***

- The remodel on Quarters 5 is complete and volunteer Sharkey Amos and his family has relocated from Quarters 4 to Quarters 5. Demolition of Quarters 4 is slated to begin in early April.

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

- The Alchesay Unit staff received training on the newly installed radial flow settlers. The training included how to adjust the valves to control water flows.
- A liquid oxygen system is being installed at the Williams Creek Unit. This system is much more efficient and reliable than the oxygen generator that was previously in use. The generator will be maintained as backup to the liquid oxygen system.