



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



## MONTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

May 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*

**General store and fishing pier at Hawley Lake on Fort Apache Indian Reservation**



*Photo credit: Jefferson Cody*



## ***PARTNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY:***

- All requisite water sampling for EPA was completed for both units.
- Alchesay-Williams Creek hosted 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).
- Jennifer Johnson, Collateral Duty Safety Office for AZFWCO, completed the annual safety inspection at both units. There were 10 safety hazards listed as needing an abatement plan of corrective actions. The majority of these centered around training needs and safety plan development.
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fort Apache Agency, implemented modified Stage 2 Fire Restrictions on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) effective May 23, 2014. The restrictions are in place until further notice and specifically prohibit campfires or charcoal devices between the hours of 7:00am to 7:00pm (no fires at all during red flag conditions); smoking except inside a vehicle or building; operating an internal combustion engine other than a motor vehicle in forest and woodland areas; and welding or operating an acetylene torch or other open flame in forest and woodland areas. Other industrial restrictions are also in place.
- Fire safety, precautions and alternate evacuation routes and procedures have been discussed at each unit should a wildland fire impede normal exit route(s). Other safety topics discussed at the Williams Creek Unit are rattlesnakes and indigenous poisonous plants.
- As mentioned last month, Alchesay Unit's Pond 5 and Williams Creek Unit's Pond 3 have been made available to serve as "dipping ponds" to assist in wildland firefighting efforts during the 2014 fire season should it become necessary. In preparation, Jeff Cody, Pete Drevnick and Andy Quay dismantled the bird wires from Alchesay's Pond 5 and the pond was then filled with water. Williams Creek Unit's Pond 3 is readily accessible as it is not utilized for fish production.
- Dan Ragen provided a tour of the Williams Creek Unit to five members of the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Hydrology Department. Hydrologist Cheryl Pailzote and four coworkers were shown the domestic water service including the well, pumps and storage tank.

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

- Hatchery personnel drove 4,241 miles in 28 trips to deliver 67,055 rainbow trout at 8 to 9 inches in length; 24,054 rainbow trout at 6 inches in length; and 7,742 Apache trout at 8 to 17 inches in length. These fish were stocked in the waters of eight separate tribal reservations including 26 different recreation areas on the FAIR. Stocking trips continue to be consolidated whenever possible.

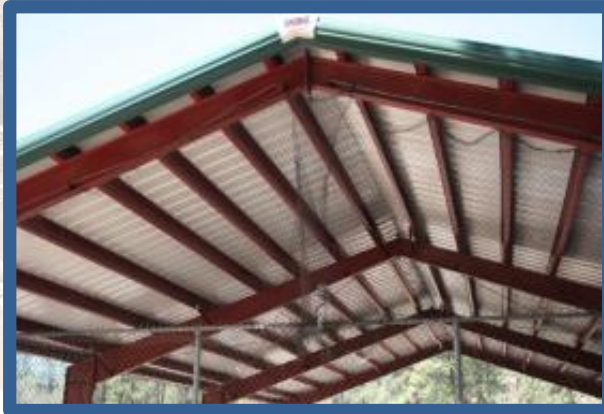


Fish transfers from the Williams Creek Unit to the Alchesay Unit consisted of 123,605 4 to 6 inch rainbow trout fingerling.

As one of several changes made to the stocking program this year, a greater number of incentive Apache trout were stocked into rivers/streams on the FAIR, *right*. This was incorporated as a means to “make fishing better” before the drought conditions restrict/disallow mid-summer stocking operations.



- The newly constructed A-Bank awning has significantly improved hatchery production. Brown trout growth while under cover in A-bank has averaged 0.70” to 0.75” per month since they were transferred to this facility in late April. Previously recorded growth rates for this species in uncovered raceways averaged less than 0.50” per month. These brown trout should be ready to stock by early August depending on receiving water conditions.
- It seems the drought conditions are having an adverse effect on some of the wildlife around both units. Great Blue Herons are becoming uncharacteristically bold at the Alchesay Unit.



Netting was installed on the gable ends of the A-bank raceway cover, *left*. The previously installed monofilament lines were proving to be no match against the voracious birds. The birds are also getting into E- and F-bank raceways at the Williams Creek Unit.

Raccoons are also finding their way into some of the raceways at the Williams Creek Unit. The cover over C-Bank raceways, which hold the Apache trout broodstock, continues to exclude predators.

A bear wreaked havoc on the trash bin at the Alchesay Unit, completely demolishing one side of the cover. Staff spent quite a bit of time rounding up the trash that was strewn about after the nighttime raid. Natural forage is in short supply this year due to lack of moisture.

- The Williams Creek Unit experienced another outbreak of Bacterial Coldwater Disease in the Production Tankhouse. TM200 medicated feed will be mixed into the regular feed to treat this outbreak in the rainbow trout fry. The Apache trout fry have remained healthy after last month’s 10-day treatment with AquaFlor medicated feed.

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

- An Alchesay Head Start class (of approximately 75 students) enjoyed a picnic at the park adjacent to the Alchesay Unit, *right*.





- Approximately 140 graduating seniors from Alchesay High School's Class of 2014 also enjoyed their Senior Day picnic at the Alchesay Unit, *below*.



- Mike Figueroa conducted a tour of the Williams Creek Unit for 10 staff members of Indian Health Services.
- Mike also conducted a tour of the Williams Creek Unit for 28 students and 2 adults from Valley High School in Sanders, AZ, *right*.
- Total visitors to the Alchesay Unit were 452; the Williams Creek Unit received a total of 159 visitors.
- K-INBRE Scholar Award recipient, Clayton Lupe, began his summer internship at the Williams Creek Unit this month. Clayton has been assisting with a variety of hatchery duties, including loading fish, *right*. Along with working with native Apache trout, his area of interest is water quality/chemistry so he has also been measuring and recording data such as dissolved oxygen, temperature and total gas saturation.



### **WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT:**

- 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.
- The waiver request to hire five temporary intermittent laborers was approved. The positions were announced and interviews will begin early next month. These laborers will assist Pete Drevnick with the Pond 3 Modification project later this summer.



- Gene Okamoto, Collateral Duty Safety Officer for the Complex, completed the annual safety inspection at AZFWCO's Whiteriver office.
- Dan Ragen announced that he has accepted a position with Grand Canyon National Park. An exact departure date has yet to be determined. While we wish Dan all the best on his new adventure, he leaves some mighty big shoes to fill. The waiver request to fill his vacated wage grade Maintenance Worker position is being processed.

### ***FACILITY MAINTENANCE:***

- Pete Drevnick repaired a leak in the domestic water line to the Alchesay Unit's service buildings.

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

- The new liquid oxygen system was completed at the Williams Creek Unit. This new system will replace the labor-intensive oxygen generator, which will become the backup system. Highlights of the process are pictured *below*.

