



Jennifer Johnson and Jeremy Voeltz were the recipients of the Gila Trout Award .

AZFWCO Staff

Flagstaff

- Jess Newton, Project Leader
- Kirk Young, Project Coordinator
- Randy Van Haverbeke, Senior Fish Biologist
- Dennis Stone, Fish Biologist
- Mike Pillow, Fish Biologist
- Jim Walters, Biological Technician
- Rick Deshler, Biological Technician
- Vic Scott, Administrative Officer

Pinetop

- Vacant, Assistant Project Leader
- Jeremy Voeltz, Project Coordinator
- Dominic Barrett, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologist
- Jennifer Johnson, Fish Biologist
- Kayla Barrett, Fish and Wildlife Biologist
- Vacant, Office Assistant

Parker

- Mitch Thorson, Fish Biologist
- John Naugle, Biological Technician



Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

Mike Pillow, Jim Walters, Rick Deshler, Dennis Stone, Jess Newton, FWS volunteers, and three Arizona Game and Fish biologists participated in the April 2015 Little Colorado River (LCR) monitoring trip. Each camp fished for nine nights, setting a total of 180 net sets per camp along the lower 13.57 km of the LCR. Mike and Dennis entered data collected during the trip. All four native fish were represented in the catch: Humpback Chub, Flannelmouth Sucker, Bluehead Sucker, and Speckled Dace. Nonnative fish captured included juvenile Channel Catfish, Fathead Minnow, Black Bullhead, and carp.



Kirk Young and Randy Van Haverbeke organized and hosted a resource biologists meeting to identify important criteria and methodology for augmenting a mainstem population of Humpback Chub. Agency participation included NPS, USGS, and the Hualapai tribe. The criteria will be used to develop a proposal for future funding.

Jeremy Voeltz coordinated with staff from the Arizona Ecological Services Field Office (AESO) and Regional Office to continue compiling information for the Species Status Assessment for Roundtail and Headwater Chubs.

Jeremy Voeltz worked with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to finalize a grant to fund Apache Trout recovery actions on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation for the 2015 and 2016 field seasons.

Jeremy Voeltz and Kayla Barrett participated in a webinar hosted by the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative focusing on desert fish and their habitats. Dr. Bonar from the University of Arizona presented on “The Rarest Fish in the World: Native Desert Fishes of the American Southwest and Their Response to a Changing Climate” as well as related activities on-going or recently completed by the USGS Coop Unit at UofA. AZFWCO works closely with the Coop Unit on many of these projects.

Jeremy Voeltz attended the 6th Annual Native and Wild Trout workshop, hosted by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Arizona Council of Trout Unlimited. Jeremy presented on AZFWCO’s efforts to mechanically remove

nonnative trouts from Apache Trout recovery streams. In addition, Jeremy accepted the “Gila Trout Distinguished Service Award” on behalf of himself and Jennifer Johnson. The award acknowledges individuals’ dedication to the conservation, protection, and restoration of native and wild trout in the Southwest.

Jeremy Voeltz met with Trout Unlimited and various partners to discuss the rollout of Trout Unlimited’s new Southwestern Native Trout Initiative – an effort to dedicate more Trout Unlimited resources to work with the partners on native trout conservation of Apache, Gila, and Rio Grande cutthroat trouts.

Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Management

Dominic Barrett met with a landowner and contractor to verify work associated with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program - funded (PFW) Milligan Valley Erosion Control Project. A contractor recently completed constructing several erosion control structures (e.g., Zuni bowls, one rock dams) throughout the project area. This project will improve watershed conditions by stopping soil erosion, capturing transported sediment in ephemeral washes, and enhancing a wet meadow.



Dominic Barrett met with a landowner to verify work associated with the PFW-funded Nutrioso Creek Riparian Restoration Project

Benefiting the Little Colorado Spinedace, New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse, and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. A contractor planted approximately 8,000 willow poles and 50 cottonwood poles. The primary goal of this project is to restore riparian habitat along Nutrioso Creek. Restored areas will provide habitat for migratory wildlife and enhance aquatic conditions for native fishes.



Dominic Barrett met with a landowner to discuss a possible PFW-funded project along the Little Colorado River in eastern Arizona.

The project would involve planting native trees along a riparian corridor. The project would complement previous restoration efforts and the PFW-funded Little Colorado River Stream and Riparian Restoration Project.



Kayla Barrett, Jeremy Voeltz, Jess Newton and the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership executive committee participated in a conference call with Stewart Jacks, Fisheries ARD, to discuss the DFHP coordinator position.

Partnerships and Accountability

Jeremy Voeltz and Jennifer Johnson were the recipients of the Gila Trout Award presented by the Arizona Department of Game and Fish and the Arizona Council of Trout Unlimited at the 6th Annual Native and Wild Trout Conference. The "Gila Trout Award" is awarded to an individual(s) for their work on conservation of native and wild trout. The following excerpt is from the award presentation ceremony:

Jeremy Voeltz and Jennifer Johnson (USFWS) have dedicated 17 years of their careers to the management and recovery of Apache trout. Jeremy's leadership has helped to secure long-

term funding and Jennifer has worked with a cadre of seasonal hires to implement many recovery projects, including mechanical brown trout removal from several recovery populations on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. One highlight is Crooked Creek (one of the 14 remaining natural Apache trout populations) where their efforts have resulted in more than a 600% increase in Apache trout. Now after 8 years of intensive efforts, the effort appears to have resulted in the complete elimination of the nonnative predator. Jennifer and Jeremy were also instrumental in constructing a fish barrier in lower Bear Wallow Creek on San Carlos Apache Tribal lands. The Bear Wallow barrier will extend trout

habitat by about 2 miles of and has provided an opportunity for the San Carlos Apache Tribe to become a partner in the Apache trout recovery program. Jeremy and Jennifer have developed immense trust with our tribal partners and have translated this trust into tangible conservation gains for the Apache trout and other species. These are just a few examples of Jeremy & Jennifer's contributions working with many partners. Congratulations to the two of you and we appreciate your leadership and commitment towards the conservation of Apache trout.

Partnerships and Accountability

Jeremy Voeltz and Kirk Young attended the annual statewide meeting of the Arizona Native Fishes Conservation Team. The group's charter was reviewed and a lengthy discussion about ways to get land management agencies to approve introductions or translocations on Federal lands (mostly USFS).

Jeremy Voeltz attended the annual meeting of the Arizona "6 species" Conservation Team. The group is updating the Arizona Conservation Agreement for Roundtail Chub, Headwater Chub, Gila Chub, Flannelmouth Sucker, Bluehead Sucker, and Zuni Bluehead Sucker. The Agreement was originally signed in 2006 and is in need of revisions. Following signature of the Agreement, the group will also update and finalize the Conservation Strategy to guide conservation activities for the species in Arizona over the next five years.

Dominic Barrett participated in the monthly Apache Natural Resource Conservation District meeting in Springerville.

In cooperation with the Apache Natural Resource Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, AZFWCO PFW hosted the Apache County Watershed Restoration Workshop. Eleven landowners from eastern Arizona attended the free event. Watershed Artisans, Inc., presented information about range management, types of erosion, restoration considerations, treatments and strategies, and construction of erosion control structures. As part of the workshop, the group also visited the

PFW-funded Milligan Valley Erosion Control Project.



Kirk Young attended the Glen Canyon Dam Technical Work Group meeting in Phoenix and presented an update on planning for a new Humpback Chub mainstem augmentation proposal.

Kirk Young drafted an intra-service Section 7 Consultation for the new Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery (WBNFH) water pump and pipeline. The new pipeline and pump will facilitate production and stocking of Rainbow Trout historically conducted at WBNFH. Through an Intergovernmental Agreement the new pipeline will be cost-shared with the state of Arizona (AZGFD) and trout will be stocked at Willow Beach, below Davis Dam, and at five sites on tribal lands (Colorado River, Mohave, and Quechan tribal lands).

Jess Newton and Mitch Thorson attended the Lake Havasu

Fisheries Partnership steering committee meeting and technical work group meeting. Discussions focused on (A) steps to complete the last remaining Partnership Action of constructing a new public fishing access facility and (B) transitioning into the Partnership's phase of maintaining fishing access facilities and habitat structures previously completed by the group.

Jess Newton and Kayla Barrett finalized the AZFWCO FY14 Annual Report.

AZFWCO staff participated in the monthly Fishery Coordination meeting among AZFWCO, A-WC NFH (Alchesay-Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery), & WMAT-WORD (White Mountain Apache Tribe-Wildlife & Outdoor Recreation Division).

Cooperation with Native Americans

Jennifer Johnson delivered approximately 200 Rainbow Trout to the Kaibab Paiute Indian Tribe for their annual youth fishing clinic in May.

Jeremy Voeltz continued coordination with the White Mountain Apache Tribe to include

summaries of Roundtail Chub data for populations on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation for inclusion in the Service's Species Status Assessment for Roundtail Chub.

Jess Newton, Kayla Barrett, and Jeremy Voeltz participated in a conference call with the Southwest

Tribal Fisheries Commission executive director and leaders from three National Fish Habitat Partnerships to brainstorm ideas for cooperatively completing fish habitat restoration projects on Southwest Tribal lands.

Public Use and Outreach

Jennifer Johnson, with assistance from Kayla and Dominic Barrett, set up AZFWCO's living stream at the White Mountain Nature Center. At the end of the school year, Apache trout from our Trout in the Classroom program will be moved to the display tank at the Nature Center. Thousands of people visit the nature center each year. This opportunity will allow AZFWCO to share the USFWS mission with thousands of people. Our display includes information on Apache Trout, conserving nature and fisheries, careers, volunteer opportunities, and activities for youth.



Dominic Barrett assisted with the 2015 Junior Turkey Hunter Camp hosted by Youth Outdoors Unlimited, Inc., AGFD, National Wild Turkey Federation, and others. Ninety-six junior hunters and approximately 30 youth (non-hunters) attended the free event. Twenty-four junior hunters harvested a turkey. Junior hunters and others visiting the camp

learned about turkey calling, hunting ethics, archery, trap shooting, wildlife conservation, fishing, and other outdoor interests. Dominic helped five junior hunters harvest a wild turkey. Three of the junior hunters that Dominic guided are photographed below after their hunt.



Kayla Barrett finished working with the graphic designer that she hired with the Multi-State Conservation Grant with DFHP, WNTI, and Great Plains FHP. Kayla was able to purchase water bottle stickers, two vertical banners, brochures, and a new logo for the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership.



Did you know AZFWCO had a Facebook page? We post information on our staff, upcoming projects, educational events, and volunteer opportunities across the state. We currently have 547 "likes" from 20 countries. Check us out at www.facebook.com/AZFWCO.

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The Desert Fish Habitat Partnership has launched #DesertFishFriday on their Facebook page! Learn about a different native desert fish every Friday (there are 179 species that DFHP works to conserve). We also post information on projects, request for proposals, pictures, steering committee news, and much more. Check it out at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Desert-Fish-Habitat-Partnership/193053497376208>

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Leadership in Science and Technology

The video montage produced by Mike Pillow and the Flagstaff AZFWCO office titled “At a Glance: Fisheries Activities in Grand Canyon” was presented at the All-Region Meeting on April 14 in Albuquerque. The video briefly describes the Flagstaff field office’s three primary projects in the canyon: Little Colorado River Humpback Chub monitoring, Little Colorado River chub translocations, and mainstem Colorado River chub aggregation monitoring.

Kirk Young, Randy Van Haverbeke, and Jess Newton participated in

conference calls on LTEMP models. Modeling was done to assess relative performance of 7 alternatives involving 18 strategies. A new hybrid alternative was unveiled that may result in increased trout production and reliance on trout management flows/trout removals. AZFWCO is working closely with AESO to assess effects to Humpback Chub and other species.

Kirk Young submitted a proposal for funding under the Mogollon Emphasis Area (MEA). MEA is a new prioritization “business model”

where important areas within the Region are identified for proactive funding. There is \$150,000 available for the Region for five emphasis areas. A proposal to modify the Bear Wallow Barrier to perform properly under the “new” fire-modified hydrograph in Bear Wallow Creek. Info on Emphasis areas can be found at: https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/R2_EmphasisAreas?

Workforce Management

Jennifer Johnson attended a chainsaw safety training course (equivalent to S-212) provided by the American Conservation Experience in Flagstaff, AZ. The course was composed of one day of classroom learning and two days of hands on training in the field. Jennifer Johnson completed the annual safety assessment for the Flagstaff ES office.

Jennifer Johnson updated the AZFWCO safety plan.

Mike Pillow sent the information packet to all spring volunteers and that includes the required paperwork for them to fill out and instructions for the online helicopter safety course. He also continued trip and travel coordination with the five volunteers that will be assisting with our Little Colorado River monitoring trip in May.

Mike Pillow assisted with packing,

preparing, coordinating personnel, and cleaning/unpacking after the April 2015 Little Colorado River Humpback Chub monitoring trip. The crew for this trip included five people from USFWS, three from AGFD, a graduate student from NMSU, and a volunteer from Albuquerque.

Mike Pillow completed the required Role-Based Security Training (RBST) to maintain his IT elevated account status.

Mike Pillow participated in the Rocky Mountain Research Station’s April safety committee meeting. Participants discussed upcoming safety inspections, the station’s chemical hygiene plan, laboratory chemical inventories, and the upcoming First Aid and Bloodborne Pathogens training at the station.

Jeremy Voeltz continued interviews for the Apache Trout seasonal

crew. Selections will be made soon, and the crew will start early or mid June.

AZFWCO supervisors and staff completed mid-year employee performance reviews. Vic Scott, Administrative Officer, attended a week of FBMS training at the regional office in Albuquerque, NM.

Upcoming Events:

Spring LCR HBC stock assessment trip II - May 19-29

Colorado River HBC Aggregation trip – Aug 27-Sept 14

Apache Trout field season begins – June

