



West Fork of the Black River in Apache County, Arizona.

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
Jennifer Johnson, Fish Biologist
Vacant, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologist
Vacant, Fish and Wildlife Biologist
Vacant, Office Assistant

Parker

Mitch Thorson, Fish Biologist
Brad Buechel, Fish Biologist
John Naugle, Biological Technician
Sean O’Kray, Pest Control Worker



Aquatic Species Conservation and Management

The Apache Trout crew finished their summer sampling season. The crew conducted removals on six streams, covered 17.8 miles of stream, removed 985 nonnative trout and collected 1,961 Apache Trout. The crew completed five barrier evaluations and seven population surveys.

Kirk Young and Randy Van Haverbeke continued to work on new action triggers for responses to various conditions that drive the Little Colorado River (LCR) Humpback Chub population. Trigger concepts continue to be refined. The conceptual approach appears to be viable for reducing the likelihood of mechanical removal of trout, an action of considerable interest to several

Southwest Indian tribes. Currently, the triggers are based on offsetting adult humpback mortality with juvenile recruitment rates, but also involve consideration of other biological and environmental factors. The triggers will require further review and discussion, but we feel we have made significant progress in this difficult area, and that they will be scientifically credible.

Randy reviewed a manuscript that will soon be submitted for publication, concerning the mainstem Colorado River Humpback Chub aggregation study. The manuscript is coauthored by Randy and other GCMRC authors and essentially summarizes aggregation

sampling from 1990-2014. During this round of review, Randy supplied material to bolster the Discussion section, since it is generally incumbent upon a biologist to “tell the story,” rather than simply present data, leaving the reader to interpret.

Randy continued to analyze the spring 2015 LCR data for incorporation into an annual report due next January. This included running abundance estimates within a robust design framework in Program MARK. Michael Pillow continued assisting Randy in this endeavor by creating capture histories for Humpback Chub in the LCR.

Aquatic Habitat Conservation

Jeremy Voeltz and Jess Newton worked with staff from the Regional Office, New Mexico FWCO, and Ex-

ecutive Committee from the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership to refine the scope of work for an FY15 project funded to improve/protect riparian

habitat on the Black Bob Allotment on the Gila National Forest. The project will benefit Loach Minnow, Narrow-headed Garter Snake, and other sensitive riparian species.

Partnerships and Accountability

Kirk Young is continuing to work on finalizing the Bear Wallow fish exclusion structure repair Cooperative Agreement with AZGFD. The project was selected for funding as a Mogollon Rim Emphasis Area project.

An agreement was drafted to cost share the work with AZGFD, and has been under review by AZGFD for several weeks.

AZFWCO staff completed FY2015 Accomplishment reporting in the FIS national database.

Cooperation with Native Americans

Jennifer Johnson along with assistance from Alchesay-Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery (A-WC NFH) and WORD (White Mountain Apache Tribe-Wildlife & Outdoor Recreation Division) stocked 17,000 Channel Catfish into several lakes and stock tanks on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The fish were grown and delivered by staff from the Inks Dam NFH in Texas.

Jeremy Voeltz and Jess Newton and staff from A-WC NFH worked on a letter to be sent from the Regional Director to the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Chairman to discuss ways to improve the genetic condition



Jennifer Johnson (AZFWCO) and crews from Alchesay-Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery and White Mountain Apache Tribe-Wildlife & Outdoor Recreation Division stocked Channel Catfish in several locations on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The fish were raised and delivered by Inks Dam NFH in Burnet, Texas.

Cooperation with Native Americans (*continued*)

of the Apache Trout brood stock maintained at Williams Creek NFH.

AZFWCO staff participated in the monthly Fishery Coordination

meeting among AZFWCO, A-WC NFH, & WMAT-WORD.

Jess Newton attended the Southwest Native American Fish

and Wildlife Society annual meeting in Reno, NV. At the meeting, Jess staffed an exhibitor's booth for Desert Fish Habitat Partnership.

Public Use and Outreach



An Apache Trout inspects its new home in a school aquarium on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation as part of the 'Trout in the Classroom' project. The project helps to educate students about these important fishes native to Arizona waters.

Jennifer Johnson delivered Apache Trout to two Trout in the Classroom schools both on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. One tank will be shared by two fourth grade classes at Seven Mile Elementary and the other will again be in the Biology classroom at Alcheyay High School.

Jess Newton was interviewed by a reporter from the Grand Canyon News regarding fish conservation in the Grand Canyon with a focus on non-native invasive species. This is for a regional follow-up article building on an article titled "Managing Non-natives to Save Colorado's Endangered Big River Fish." Link:

<http://www.fws.gov/ecological-services/highlights/06292015.html>

Michael Pillow finalized the three-part video series depicting AZFWCO's three primary projects in

the Grand Canyon and tributaries. The series is titled: "At a Glance: Fisheries Activities in the Grand Canyon." The videos are posted on the USFWS YouTube channel and shared by USFWS Southwest Region on Facebook. The projects are: [Mainstem Colorado River Humpback Chub aggregation monitoring](#), [Little Colorado River Humpback Chub monitoring](#), and [Little Colorado River Humpback Chub translocations](#). Click on the links above to check them out!

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 614 "likes" from 20 countries. Check us out at www.facebook.com/AZFWCO.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a dark blue rectangular background.

Leadership in Science and Technology

Jeremy Voeltz (with Jennifer Johnson as a co-author) presented at the national American Fisheries Society meeting in Portland, Oregon. His talk discussed ~10+ years of mechanical removal of nonnative trout found in Apache Trout recovery streams on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Brown Trout have been eliminated, or nearly eliminated from four streams.

Kirk Young and Randy Van Haverbeke are reviewing the Glen Canyon LTEMP EIS. The ~900+ page technical behemoth is taking a bit of energy to get through. Randy also provided Ecological Services with a list of important citations that are missing from the EIS concerning Humpback Chub and other native fishes.

Dennis Stone had phone and email correspondences with Dr. Craig Tucker (Director of the USDA Southern Regional Aquaculture Center) concerning the effects of dissolved CO₂ on fishes, and incorporated his information into a draft manuscript concerning the native and nonnative fishes residing in the Little Colorado River.

Workforce Management

Kirk Young filled the term GS-11 position in Parker. Chase Ehlo has accepted the offer and will begin work in November. Chase has a Master's Degree from Tennessee Tech and several years of

experience working with Razorback and Bonytail in the Lower Colorado River. Chase is also a published author and has given several presentations at professional meetings such as Desert Fishes

Council and will complement existing staff with strong technical and interpersonal attributes.

Kirk Young and Mitch Thorson provided orientation for AZFWCO's

Workforce Management (*continued*)

new term GS-5 fish biologist, Brad Buechel. Brad has a BS from University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, and has experience with salmon and trout in the Pacific Northwest and Idaho.

Jeremy Voeltz, Jess Newton, and partners conducted panel interviews for two AZFWCO vacancies: The Desert Fish Habitat Partnership Coordinator position and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife position.

Kirk Young secured additional quotes for outboard motor replacement and developed bid specifications for an electrofishing boat.

Mitch Thorson attended the Critical Thinking/Critical Writing class at NCTC.

Mitch Thorson collected water quality at Alamo Lake. Limnology and bacteriology samples were

sent to a certified laboratory for analysis.

Brad Buechel attended a 3-day Program MARK course in Boulder City. The short-course was provided by USBR for biologists working in the Lower Colorado River.

Brad Buechel, John Naugle, and Sean O'Kray attended Skid Steer Heavy Equipment Training at Havasu National Wildlife Refuge

Jennifer Johnson and Dennis Stone worked on developing standardized job hazard analysis documents for in-water sampling for the region. Jennifer updated and created new Job Hazard Analyses (JHAs) for USFWS field work in water bodies, and Dennis provided information and observations of working conditions in the field and reviewed material that Jennifer sent out.

Michael Pillow worked with Kirk Young and Randy Van Haverbeke to pack, organize, and make preparations for the upcoming Colorado River chub aggregation monitoring trip that launches at the end of August. Michael has also been coordinating with volunteers for the aggregation trip and the two fall Little Colorado River monitoring trips.

Michael also worked on packing field gear for the fall Little Colorado River Humpback Chub monitoring trips as well as reorganizing the storage and fieldwork staging facilities in preparation for the fall field season.

Jeremy Voeltz completed his required FY2015 Diversity and EEO training.

Jess Newton, Kirk Young, Randy Van Haverbeke, Dennis Stone, Michael Pillow, Vic Scott, Jennifer Johnson, and Jeremy Voeltz all participated in the AZFWCO all-employee conference call on August 26.

Upcoming Events

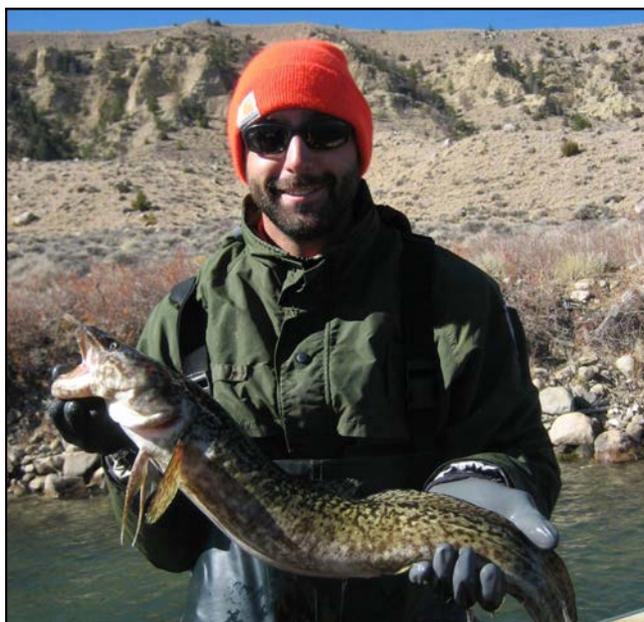
-The Desert Fish Habitat Partnership is accepting FY16 habitat project proposals through September 30. For more information, the 2016 Request for Proposals can be found at <http://www.desertfhp.org/>

August 31-September 18: Colorado River Humpback Chub Aggregation Sampling Trip

September 22-October 2: Little Colorado River Humpback Chub stock assessment I

October 23-November 2: Little Colorado River Humpback Chub stock assessment II

November 19-22: Desert Fishes Council meeting, Death Valley



Brad Buechel is the newest member of the AZFWCO team in Parker, Arizona. Originally from Wisconsin, Brad comes to Arizona from the USFWS Idaho Fishery Resource Office in Ahsahka, ID. Welcome Brad!

