



Monthly Accomplishments

December 2014

Fisheries Activities

All the FY14 production Channel catfish and brood stock have been stocked into their over-wintering ponds and readied for next year's stocking and spawning seasons. Both seasons usually begin in May but depend a great deal on the weather for the spawning season.

Final ponding numbers for the FY14 Channel catfish production are 57,507 averaging 7.65 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.60 inches in total length. Earlier ponded fish from this year class are averaging 8.36 fpp and will be the fish ones stocked out for FY15 Tribal requests. A single mortality was recorded for the month. Migratory piscivorous birds have not decreased in abundance and with the prolonged cold weather, move further south soon.

Incoming water quality continues to improve but water temperatures have dropped for the third straight month. Incoming dissolved oxygen averaged 7.18 ppm and an average temperature of 11.0°C and into single degree C by months end. Feeding has, for all intents and purposes, stopped for all the catfish.

Currently there are 3,951 FY13 channel catfish averaging 1.99 fpp and 11.86 inches in total length. These fish will be used for future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. Additional production also includes 1,855 FY12 averaging 0.60 fpp and 17.16 inches in total length.

These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY15 and future Fort Hood Reimbursable contract fish. One mortality was recorded for the month.

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for two full years. There are now only 25, originally, trapped fish which have been on station for four and half years. Three mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month. All mortalities were female again and no external parasites or disease signs were observed in any of the mortalities. Mortality now is more than likely due to normal life expectancy.

The FY 14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation now number 157 fish. A total of two mortalities occurred during the month. The Asian Tapeworm treatment has been put off again because of construction inside the isolation/quarantine building. These fish did not need any additional stress during the construction phase and the treatment will begin in January.

Facility staff is still working with the two new feeding regimes. One is a flake food and the other is a frozen copepod that will aide in the nutritional balance of the gambusia diet. Although early in the experimentation, staff is still observing that both types are becoming preferred prey items.

It used to be an old storage building that housed a multitude of useful and non-useful parts, pieces and equipment that kept piling up and gathering more dust.



The galvanized coating was wearing off, windows were not even close to energy efficient but it was all we had.

To accommodate endangered species at Inks Dam NFH staff needed to find a place to isolate those species from all the other production fish programs that were



Cleaned out, cleaned up and starting to put in new tanks and plumbing.

occurring at that time. The Butler Building was the choice. This month the transformation continues. See more on last page.



The Butler Building got two new coats of paint inside and out. It also got a new sunshade for the south side of the building.

Hatchery staff has also been testing the light intensity into the tanks, from the light control system. Staff has determined that the lights have enough intensity but penetration into the tanks is too low. Staff has constructed new lids made from clear acrylic to allow better light penetration into the tanks. Once construction is completed inside the isolation/quarantine building these fish will go onto a 14 hours daylight regime.

Personnel

Hatchery staff has spent a great deal of time using up Annual Leave hours this month. It has been a long year with reduced staff levels and the time off is needed to begin “fresh” this year. Staff has also focused on paperwork and training to try to get ahead of required training and other paperwork before the “busy” season starts.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Hatchery staff started repairs, at



the end of the November, on lateral line 4 due to a several breaks in the line. Staff completed repairs and installed new valves, connectors, and almost 45 feet of new PVC pipe. Weather has prevented much work on the levee where it blew out part of the north side but it



should be repaired in January, weather permitting.

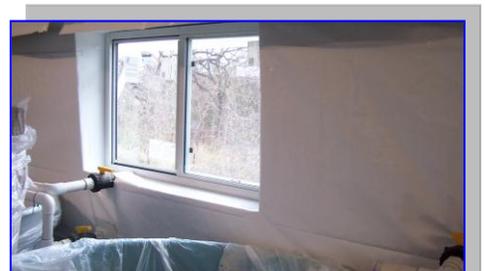
Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had a total of 113 visitors for the month of December. The majority of visitation occurred during the Christmas Holiday time when folks were looking for outdoor activities. Numerous people were here to hike on the trails and/or birding activities.

The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 27 hours for the month of December. The FOIDNFH membership worked on maps showing invasive species work they performed over the year for the FY14 Volunteers Working with Invasives grant we received. The FOIDNFH also held their 2nd Annual End-of-the-Year Dinner Party. Staff and volunteers gathered in good cheer and great food. With all in attendance the group celebrated Sue Kersey’s Honorable Mention for her picture of a Monarch caterpillar on a milkweed in the Regional Photo Contest. Sue Kersey is the person who takes a lot of the pictures for events here at Inks Dam NFH.

The Intermediate Sanction Facility (ISF) came out again this month and spent a day mowing and weed whipping.

They did the Park/Picnic area, along the river, around the Visitor Center and the old Meager Fish Camp area by the filter. The 5 man crew put in a total of 25 hours and greatly assisted the hatchery staff in keeping the facility looking presentable.



New energy efficient windows have been installed in the building and each window is lockable for extra security.



New insulation is going up to improve the extreme heat and cold experienced in this building at certain times of year.

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Southwest Region
Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery
345 Clay Young Road
Burnet, TX 78611
Phone 512/793-2474
http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/inks_dam/index.html

Current staff members

Paul Dorman	Project Leader
Scott Walker	Assistant Project Leader
Vacant	Environmental Education Specialist
Julie Burks.....	Administrative Technician
Gregory Landry	Fisheries Biologist
Daniel Huston	Fisheries Biologist
Vacant	Animal Caretaker (Term)
Larry Guerro	Motor Vehicle Operator
Jerry Simmons	Maintenance Worker
Jerry Crouch	Maintenance Worker