



Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Monthly Accomplishments

February 2016

Fisheries Activities

Water Quality

This month's average dissolved oxygen level for the incoming water was 7.44 parts per million (ppm). Monthly pond dissolved oxygen levels increased and averaged 8.58 ppm (82.75% saturation), at an average pond temperature of 16.40° C which is a substantial increase from last month. The Lower Colorado River Authority has decided to release water for downstream agriculture this year since the lakes are almost full. This may have an impact on the filter and the hatchery's lake water quality since it will be drawn from Lake Buchanan.

Channel catfish

All of the FY15 fish are in their larger over-wintering production ponds. To-date, 62,926 are in production ponds for FY16 Tribal requests. These fish average 8.16 fish per pound (fpp) and 7.39 inches in total length. Overall, we still behind in length and weights on these fish because water temperatures have reflected a more "normal winter" temperature profile. Two mortalities were recorded for this population and recorded as bird predation. The 78 catfish, taken last month to assist the Marble Falls ISD with an aquaponics project, are doing well and have grown quite a bit considering the length of time in the much warmer water.

Production numbers for the FY14 Channel catfish are 3,603 averaging 1.95 fish per pound

(fpp) and 11.99 inches in total length. No mortalities were recorded for the month. These fish will be used as future brood stock and future reimbursable fish. Shipping some of these fish for Fort Hood starts early next month.

Currently there are 3,520 FY13 channel catfish averaging 0.93 fpp and 15.33 inches in total length. These fish will be used as brood stock in FY16 and future reimbursable fish. Some of the larger fish in this population will probably go to Fort Hood next month as well. No mortalities were recorded for this population.

Additional production also includes 541, FY12, catfish averaging 0.19 fpp and 26.31 inches in total length. These fish will be utilized for brood stock in FY16 and Fort Hood Reimbursable contract requests later in the year after spawning. Two mortalities were recorded for the FY12 population of fish this month. No external parasites were found during examination nor any bird marks.

Clear Creek gambusia

The original (FY2010) Clear Creek gambusia refugium population has now been in recirculation tanks for three full years and currently five years in refugium. There are still only five original refugium fish. No mortalities were recorded in the FY2010 population during the month.

A variety of activities occurred during the month of February. Some were above ground...



Austin Crane lifting the new HAZMAT building over the existing HAZMAT building! They did a great job.

....some were below ground



Hatchery staff repaired another drain line break. This one is on Pond 9 and had the same issue as the last ones.

and others were both!



ABOVE: PEC Electric CO-OP has installed the two new power poles for residences 2 and 3 so the electrical upgrade can occur.

The FY14 Clear Creek gambusia currently in isolation totals 56 fish. No mortality occurred during the month. There are currently 42, FY15, Clear Creek gambusia. No mortalities occurred for the month in this population.

All FY14, FY15, and F1's adults are now on a 14 hour on and 14 hour off light cycle. Staff has increase time so these fish are now on full light regimes for spawning. Water temperatures have also been increased gradually to better represent the late winter and spring seasons. Other water quality indices are being monitored to duplicate optimum water conditions for pre-spawning conditions. All of the FY14 and FY15 Clear Creek gambusia adults (100% pure) are doing well and staff has taken thirteen (13) F1 fry from one spawning female. This is a 65% increase in the number of live birth individuals but the season is still very early. One note of interest is that although we got the fish to spawn last year there is no way that any of these females could have held gametes to produce offspring this year.

The FY15 F1 Clear Creek gambusia total 244, of which; 152 are female and 92 are males. A single male F1 mortality occurred during the month. No external parasites were observed on the mortality. All of these fish have been moved into spawning tanks with approximately 1/3 of the population at densities identical to last years and the remaining 2/3 were put into larger tanks to represent production type density levels before months end. No genetic testing was performed on these fish this year.

Hatchery staff decided to see if we can get these fish to spawn, unaltered, in their first year. By spawning these we should get age 1 fecundity numbers for life history data since most of the fish we get from the wild are of unknown age. They will be genetically tested after spawning in FY16.

Personnel

Scott Walker attended Fisheries Academy at NCTC for two weeks. He reported back that the program was very good and well worth the cost.

Jerry Crouch, Maintenance Worker, has assisted Paul Dorman working with contractors and doing daily inspections with contractors performing Deferred Maintenance Projects. There are currently four going on the facility for the month; the new HAZMAT building, PEC installing new power poles for Residence's 2 and 3, backup generator install for production wells and digging up the incoming water valves at Raceway 1 and drain line 6 to install gate valves to create sump ponds out of Ponds 14 and 18 for future out-of-basin aquatic species.

All facility staff has their yearly EEO and Diversity training done and approximately one-half of the staff has the yearly FISSA training completed by month's end.

Maintenance

Staff performed routine equipment and facility maintenance during the month. Some minor repairs still need to be conducted but the all of the

vehicles and heavy equipment have been serviced for the year.

Paul Dorman and Jerry Crouch picked up a fish hauling tank from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Huntsville, Texas. This tank will allow us to haul fish greater distances and utilize a trailer we have on station that has not been used for a long time. Jerry Simmons installed a new pump motor on the flail mower and Paul Dorman worked with Savage Pumps in installing a new domestic water pump for the well that supplies drinking water for the residences.

Hatchery staff also got the drain line repaired at the kettle of Pond 9. Staff found the same situation as last year's break at Pond 5A which had a flexible rubber coupler and radiator hose clamps installed to connect old AC pipe and new PVC changed over from the ARRA Projects.

Visitors, Education and Outreach

Inks Dam NFH had 208 visitors for the month. The Friends of Inks Dam NFH (FOIDNFH) and other volunteers had a total of 66.0 hours for the month. They filled seed in the feeders for the bird blind, bird counts, printed out trail maps, got in some early landscaping, and bird lists to fill the trail heads and Visitor Center. No tours were given this month but they already three school districts signed up for Hatchery Outdoor Program (HOP) which starts in May. The HOP program is for local, 4th and 5th grade school districts to participate in many different outdoor programs.

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



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Current staff members

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